

East Looks West Israel Adapts Talmud to Modern Ways

By Maurice F. X. Donohue

Inquirer Foreign Correspondent

TEL AVIV, Israel, Aug. 4.

THE most sensational news papers here are filled with rumors of an impending cabinet crisis over the vexed question of the place of rabbinical courts in a modern secular state...

The formula is simple. It is to do nothing that will force any re-orientation of the ancient Talmudic code that knit world Jewry together during the 1500 years of misery since the code was formulated in Tiberias in the fifth century of the Christian era...

The root of the trouble, of course, is the old Turkish legal code, which had been taken over intact by the British. The Turks were so weak they could not bother with the details of administering their empire and left all the business of "personal status" to the religious communities.

"PERSONAL status" means matters of marriage, divorce, dower, alimony, affairs of children and absent persons, ratification of wills and administration of estates—all the business of the civil courts not involving quarrels between two men over money...

But with women stenographers getting themselves killed in battle, with the fastest way being to avenge a woman on the land and in the councils of state, and with the influx of western Jews matured in the concept of the equality of sexes, it is obviously impossible to retain the Talmud's strong masculine bias.

Under the Talmudic code, a man can divorce his wife by a simple decision but a woman can never divorce her husband (although she can get a separation allowance; one key to a solution)...

THE only hitch is "the absconding husband" who leaves the country. This is being worked over. Present Palestinian law has no provision for an automatic presumption of death after seven years' absence...

Actually the rabbis have always used economic pressure to help women escape the chains of the Talmud, the easiest way being to assign a very heavy separation allowance to maintain the wife until the husband agrees to a divorce and lump sum payment...

They will get the men engaged in rewriting the civil code are bent on making a secular state where any person of any sex, nationality and religion can live. But although they know little of the Talmud, they are trying to do a historical disservice for the all but incredible achievement of this single book in retaining the identity of the scattered Jews of the world and think it unfair to corrupt the text.

AFTER two thousand years of dispersion the Jews make up a complicated fabric that is the product of every climate, continent, culture and concept of life. Thus there is a small contingent of highly religious Jews in a straggling—about 130 persons—who attempted to make their own separate peace with the Arab Legion. They wanted to live near the Walling Wall and cared absolutely nothing about anything else.

All these divergent elements are being knit together. The remarkably broad-viewed approach of the non-religious Socialists governing the state will help produce in this generation the unity the new state needs desperately in the critical times ahead.

As a sidelight I was fascinated today to discover among the highest social circles here the same emphasis on the necessity for ending dual citizenship of Jews as I had encountered in London from persons close to British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin.

Bevin wants all the Jews to stand up and be counted; Israeli or non-Israeli. The Jews here say that is an excellent idea which they already had evolved and will insist on. "Mr. Bevin is absolutely right."

It is more than not wanting free riders. To these people citizenship in the secular state of Israel is more than the realization of the ancient dream of the people called Jews. It is a chance to live in a modern, vital state which is bringing the finest concepts of modern life to a feudal Middle East.

Washington Background

Meat Lobbyist Cut Up By Halleck's Bum Steer

By The Inquirer Washington Bureau Staff

WASHINGTON, Aug. 4. REPRESENTATIVE CHARLES A. HALLECK (R., Ind.), House Majority Leader, emerged from the Republican policy meeting the other night and ran into an anxious lobbyist for the meat industry.

"What did they decide, Charlie?" asked the lobbyist breathlessly. Halleck pulled a sad face and said: "I've got some bad news for you. The heat or something has driven the boys crazy. They decided to go for rationing."

The lobbyist paled and started to run for a telephone. Halleck called him back. "You guys have really got the jitters," he said. "I was just pulling your leg."

To belong to Washington's Fossils Club you have to have been retired. The Fossils were organized about eight months ago by Dr. Harvey L. Curtis, retired 72-year-old Bureau of Standards scientist.

Dr. Curtis rounded up seven retired friends and suggested they form a club to "have a little fun." The Fossils pay no dues; the only requirement for membership is that the applicant shall be male and retired from his life work.

The Fossils meet periodically, open their meetings with the singing of old songs and then talk. Dr. Curtis tries to keep the oldtimers from indulging in the old man's weakness—talk about the past. At a recent meeting they talked mostly about Russia.

Charles O. Pratt, candidate for the Republican Congressional nomination from the 8th Virginia District—his running against a newspaperman, Tyrell Krum—has come up with the only new idea in politics we have heard of in a long time.

Pratt, who lives in Arlington, a Washington suburb, informed the Republican voters there that he would have six baby sitters and a registered nurse to look after juniors while the parents visited the polls.

The will of the late General of the Armies John J. Pershing named a committee to examine his files and correspondence and determine whether any part of them should be published. Those he named were Gen. George C. Marshall, now Secretary of State; Col. John Callan O'Laughlin, publisher of the Army and Navy Journal; Col. George F. Adamson, and Francis Warren Pershing, the General's son.

Senator Glen Taylor, of Idaho, running mate of Henry A. Wallace, no mean filibusterer himself, chided the Republicans the other day for disparaging the stamina of the Dixiecrats who are trying to talk the anti-poll tax bill to death.

"When Senator Langer (William Langer, R., N. D.) and I were filibustering against the draft bill," Taylor said, "the Senate remained in session for 24 hours and we were put through our paces. I think it is a very unkind discrimination against the Southern Democrats for the Republicans to help them out by interrupting continually and recessing at 5 o'clock every evening. I don't think the Republicans are letting the Southern Democrats show their true mettle."

Most filibusters are hotly resented by the advocates of the measure under fire, but the Republicans have not found it in their hearts to resent the Dixiecrats' assault on the anti-poll tax bill. In fact, they have not even attempted to conceal their amusement over the spectacle of the Southern bolters killing off one of the measures advocated by the Democratic President in his civil rights program.

Senator Kenneth S. Wherry (R., Neb.), the majority whip, with a straight face moved to invoke censure the other day, the Republicans could not repress their snickers.

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AMERICAN citizens who wish to make sure that they would remain on our side, and to promise their protection if they did so. So instead of talking the vicious defeated supermen what they had to do, we began asking them to side with us. To preserve German confidence in our strength, the democracies had to maintain their position within the isolated city of Berlin.

But once Germany was divided, the democratic position in Berlin became untenable. It could be held against resolute Soviet opposition only by war. Since the democracies did not want war, they had to get out of Berlin or to remain there on Russian terms.

General Clay is an Army engineer with no previous diplomatic experience. General Draper is a former partner in the banking house of Dillon, Read & Co. with no particular knowledge of international affairs.

Between them, these four have shaped American policy in Germany. They have gone from one error to the next, they are striving to keep Germany united. This was exactly what the Russians wanted.

CLAY, Murphy, and Pollock successfully opposed that. Their reason was, the Germans would not like it. Since the Ruhr was not detached, elementary security for the West required that Germany be divided. Yet this was not done until the Russians made unity impossible.

Sylvia Porter Nation Fails To Profit by Experience

LIBBY HOLMAN

THERE'S nothing unusual about what's happening to us now this cost of living spiral, I mean. It always has gone that way. First we have had war, then inflation, then deflation. The trouble with some of us is that we thought we could and would manage it better this time.

Why didn't we accept as inevitable the fact of global inflation following global war? Why did we have the arrogance to think our generation would be better equipped to handle economic "laws" than past generations?

And why don't we shake ourselves into straight thinking and accept as certain the prospect of deflation following inflation? I HAD a long talk yesterday with an economist whose cynicism has kept pace with his years (and he's no youngster).

We began with a discussion of the President's anti-inflation program and his conclusion was: "Forget it. Nothing worth while can come out of this session and it's too late to do anything anyway."

We went on to a discussion of new housing legislation and his conclusion was: "This is no time to be encouraging building. Materials and labor are being used to the limit in construction now. What we should do is discourage building for several months so prices can be knocked down to within reason."

WE THEN proceeded to the question of the next move in the economic cycle, and his conclusion was: "This is the last gasp. The cracks in the structure are showing every day. The last stage is always the most explosive and most highly publicized."

After this spiral runs its course, the deflation trend will set in. The next President will want that downturn in the early part of his administration so the setback can be forgotten by the time his party is up for election again.

"I'm a little worried," confessed Martin. "This housing bill. A lot of people are going to be sore at us Republicans for not passing it."

"Why don't you pass it?" suggested Ed. "Pass it?" repeated Martin. He looked at Ed peculiarly, as if this were a totally new idea.

"The war ended in November, 1918; the controls came off almost at once; the inflation cycle intensified; the peak in the over-all cost of living was reached in mid-1920; rents reached their high in December, 1924, or four and one-half years after the total cost of living top."

THE signal for the bust back in 1920 came in the Reserve Board's credit-restriction policies—policies which involved sharp increases in interest rates and money borrowing costs, restrictions on bank loans, a slump in U. S. Government bond prices...

After its policies went into effect, the Reserve Board got the blame for the 1920-21 break. It also got the blame for the 1937-38 recession when it adopted similar restrictive policies.

Now open your newspaper, read the headlines on Congress near-ings. Read the arguments that the Reserve Board can do the job if it will use its powers and clamp down. The men are different; the words changed a bit; the basic "meat ax" approach is identical.

ON VACATION WALTER WINCHELL and DANTON WALKER are on vacation. Their columns will be resumed upon their return.

THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME

PHYFE LAUGHED HIMSELF INTO STITCHES WHEN HE DREW A CARTOON HE HAD SUGGESTED ABOUT THE WAY HIS NEIGHBOR DRUMM BURNED RUBBISH

OH-HO-HO! LOOK! HE SEES IT NOW! OH-HO-HO! LOOK AT THE EXPRESSION ON HIM—HE'S BURNED TO A CRISP HA HA HA! I'M GONNA BUY A HUNDRED COPIES OF THAT PAPER AND—OH-HO-HO!

DRUMM! YOU SNEAKING, SNIVELING POLECAT! YOU BLACK BLOT ON THE FACE OF CIVILIZATION! I KNOW WHO YOU MEANT WITH THIS TAKE OUT THAT UPPER PLATE AND FIGHT LIKE A MAN!

BUT WHEN DRUMM SENT IN ONE ABOUT PHYFE AND HIS LOUD RADIO, HIS SENSE OF HUMOR SUDDENLY DISAPPEARED.

Gossip of the Nation

Ed Sullivan

NEW YORK, Aug. 4. THINKING OUT LOUD—Roxy's shrewd showman, A. J. Balaban, and Paramount's managing director, Bob Weisman, only Broadway theater biggies not afraid of television, permitting their stage stars to appear on top programs.

"You don't fight progress," reasons Weisman, "you marry it. Trying to hold back television is equivalent to the daffy reasoning of old-line managers who tried to build spite fences against radio in its early years."

They're out of business but radio stars are getting five-figure salaries to appear in vaudeville. It'll be the same thing with television stars, so Paramount is getting in on the ground floor and cashing in on the publicity value of the newest "medium."

Warner's Strand and Loew's Capitol are deathly afraid of television competition, hastily inserting a non-television clause in stage contracts. They'll get over that, even though the wedding may be of the shtetn classification. Night clubs are all for television.

MRS. BARNEY JOSEPHSON gave \$600 to the Wallace campaign; Libby Holms \$200. When Leo Durocher won the 1941 pennant for Brooklyn, beating Boston at the Hub, he was fired the same night by Larry MacPhail.

At 3 A. M., MacPhail phoned, canceled the outing. It was on that trip that singer Tony Martin stood up to make a victory speech. One of the Dodgers hit him in the face with a hot steak. "No salad," ad libbed Martin, and sat down.

MARINES all over the world will drink a toast to Lt. Gen. Earle E. Rocky and wish him the best as he starts on his honeymoon with Susan McGee Richards. It was the then Maj. Gen. Rocky who commanded the fabulous 5th Marine Division in the battle of Iwo Jima, captured after 35 days of bloody fighting and dying. It was at Iwo Jima that Congressional Medal of Honor winning Sgt. John Basilone was killed leading his machine-gun platoon toward Motoyama Airfield No. 1 when a mortar burst got him.

At this point I made some feeble noises to the effect that my country can handle it better than that. Up went his eyebrows; down went his mouth into mocking lines. "You disappoint me," he said. "You almost sound like an idealist. What gave you the notion that we would manage it better this time than last?"

"What basis have you for thinking that your generation is more prepared to deal with economic cycles than any other?" Seeing the way things are going in mid-1948, I must confess he has too much reason on his side for my comfort.

IT ISN'T unusual at all of course. To put our plight into proper perspective, we need only go back to the aftermath of the First World War. Even though that was a relatively short, relatively inexpensive conflict, the pattern of up-down is today in evidence.

"Sure," said Martin. "You start posing these socialistic housing bills, and you go no security left in this country. We can't keep our free enterprise system if the Government goes around building houses for people. It changes the rules of the game. It shakes everything up, and kills your security as a business man."

"Then you have to expect a lot of people to be sore at you," said Ed. "If that's security."

"THIS civil rights thing," he said. "I guess we might lose some votes on that. Do you think people will blame us if we don't crack the filibuster?"

"Well, you might have announced that you were prepared to stay in session until Christmas," said Ed. "That could have discouraged the filibusters. You kind of handed it to them when you talked of a two-week session. I think you could have passed the anti-poll tax bill."

"You mean pass it?" asked Ed, again with an expression indicating that this was a startling thought. "Sure. Just pass it."

"Oh, no, Ed. Speaking for myself, I'd be worried about passing it. It violates States' rights. This country is built on States' rights. You shake up the whole Government structure if you kick out States' rights. Anything can happen after you do that. It wouldn't be safe."

"Okay, so you're safe, and a lot of people are sore at you," said Ed. "If that's safe, you're safe."

THE Labor Front Wallace Out to Win Unions Today

By Victor Kiesel

IF YOU vote the straight Wallace ticket, his party will picket for you, large scale. It's a new switch on the old Tammany technique of sending breadbaskets to the party faithful. The Progressives play their politics with pickets.

Hollywood Dan Duryea To Rob Store In Crime Test

By Dorothy Manners

HOLLYWOOD, Aug. 4. BEAUTIFUL blonde Collette Lyons gets the comedy lead in "The Lone Wolf and His Lady" at Columbia.

Collette Lyons has been turning out these "Lone Wolf" for years, but this particular one gets the "A" treatment for a couple of good reasons. The first is a build-up for Collette, who is a top singer and a natural for musical comedies.

Second item of interest is that Ron Randall, Australian discoverer, makes his Hollywood debut as the "wolf."

Dan Duryea, movie bad man, will rob a Hollywood drugstore Friday the 13th—and it is not for a scene in a movie!

Dan has agreed to be the "bandit" in an official demonstration before FBI and police officers of a new crime detecting camera. Invented by Sam Rabin, Los Angeles furniture man, the automatic gadget can be installed in banks, jewelry stores or in homes. The slightest pressure on a concealed button starts actual filming of robberies and other crimes in progress.

It is what they hope, the new camera will be the greatest "witness" ever presented in a courtroom.

The Duryea "robbery" takes place in a crowded drugstore right at the height of the noon activity—and watch, they aren't telling the particular store.

A trade paper makes an interesting study of the ebb and flow of current events on the box office. With war talk everywhere, comedies are booming at the ticket windows. The latest Abbott and Costello picture, "Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein," is cleaning up and is the No. 1 grosser in many parts of the country. It may even beat "Buck Ruggles."

Heavy dramas always take a nose dive when the real life goes gets tough—witness "Mourning Becomes Electra."

Another odd observation is that war pictures get a big play in war times and die like dogs in peace times.

Hollywood in Shorts: Lowdown on the Gertrude Michael case is man trouble. Ain't it always? Audie Murphy slipped a diamond ring on Wanda Hendrix's finger last night, which makes the engagement official.

Louis B. Mayer's party honoring E. K. Killebrew, head of Chrysler, and also the homecoming of his daughters, Irene Seimick and Mrs. Vivian Goetz, was one of the events of the week.

Claudette Colbert was an animated fashion magazine cover in a white eyelid embroidered dress, laced with black velvet ribbon.

Barbara Stanwyck, in a pale pink and white print, looked like a debutante whizzing around the dance floor with Robert Taylor, one of the grandest guys in this town.

Felice Vanderbilt upheld the glamor department, holding up a tres decolette white satin. I saw Joan Crawford chatting for quite a spell with the Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.

Staying on and on until the wee small hours were Danny Kaye and Sylvia Fine, the former of the "The Guy Who Sings," and Joe Pasternak, Joe Schenck and 500 others.

Situation in Berlin is considered too serious to permit American stars touring camps in Germany to enter the "danger" zone.

This news was brought back by Janis Carter, the latter in Italy with a session of movie making and personal appearances in Europe. The U. S. military authorities said they were glad to have her around—but not in Berlin.

Janis made two movies abroad, "Her Wonderful Life" and "La Boheme." The latter in Italy with Maria Eggerth and Jan Kiepura. When in Columbia going to give her a singing role in an American picture?

Samuel Grafton

Ed Sullivan

"Don't Do Anything" Is Offered as a Program

ED RAN into Martin, his old rival into opponent, on the evening train.

"Hi, Ed," said Martin. "Say, who do you think is being helped most by the special session, you Democrats or us Republicans?"

"I think we could each put what we're getting out of it into our left eyes and never feel it," said Ed.

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THE Labor Front Wallace Out to Win Unions Today

By Walter Lippmann

From achieving what was promised and expected, it has become a comedy. Commenting on this, Life magazine said the other day that "Western Europe, having produced the idea of union, has not produced the energy and leadership required to make it a reality."

The editorial says with much eloquence that "mediocre leaders" have not been compelled to act because the people are suffering from "a fatigue of the mind and soul."

No doubt that is true. But may it not also be true that the leaders and the people are listless and dispirited because they are trying to do a thing which cannot be done, namely to integrate a mere fragment of a continent which is economically and politically indivisible? So it seems to me.

And we cannot unite it politically because we do not know what to do with Western Germany. For the Western German state, if unarmored, cannot enter the Western Union; if it is rearmored, it will be the master of the Western Union, and able to make its own independent deal with Russia and the East.

We have learned that we cannot collaborate in the management of Europe and that we cannot divide Europe and manage the separate parts, does it not follow that we must negotiate on a radically different basis? What can that new basis be except to recognize that our objective is no longer to govern Europe from Moscow, Washington, and London but to work out the conditions under which the attempt of the non-European Powers to govern Europe can safely be liquidated?

