

# THE JEWISH CRITERION

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Telephones—P. & A. 623 Main. Bell 2893 Grant

CHAS. H. JOSEPH, Editor

DAVID ALTER, Manager

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## WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?

One of the most annoying problems with which every decent Jew must try to solve is the "Jewish-Politician" evil. Conditions are constantly growing worse. Self-seeking Jews who in a mad scramble for political recognition and power are utterly losing sight of their duty to their people and to their religion are bringing upon the Jewish name in this community the greatest criticism. Daily newspapers are filled, just before each campaign, with obnoxious drivel, encouraged by the few young Jews who are out after political jobs. We agree heartily with all the representative Rabbis and Jewish papers in the United States who echo the sentiment of Rabbi Stephen Wise, the powerful New York leader, who said: "I have only the utmost contempt for the fifth rate Jew who uses his Judaism upon which to climb to a seventh-rate political office. And whenever such a Jew runs for office I always do all in my power to thwart his mean ambitions."

We ask the self-respecting Jewish members of our community to consider the spectacle that is being presented this week in the columns of the daily press. On every side is "Jew, Jew, Jew"—the "Jews on the Hill" won't do this, and "the Jews on the Hill" refuse to bow to "Russian methods" and the "Jews on the Hill" will do this. If all this disgraceful business keeps up we know full well what all representative Jews would like these politicians to do.

We again notify all political parties that there is no Jewish vote. We again emphasize the truth that no reputable Jew seeks to exploit his faith or his people to secure political office. We again reiterate as strongly as we can that every worthy Jew appreciates the duty and responsibility of American citizenship and that we vote as American citizens and not as Jews. We further repudiate, utterly repudiate, the pretensions of those self-styled Jewish leaders, who would have factional politicians believe that they control a Jewish vote.

We quote in its entirety an article

in one of our local daily papers to indicate to what lengths our BRILLIANT JEWISH POLITICAL LEADERS will go in their wild scramble for publicity and cheap political gain.

### HILL DISTRICT HEARS THE FACTS

Enthusiastic Meeting in the Third Ward on Behalf of Anti-Magee-Flinn Candidate.

#### ADOLPH EDLIS IS SCORED

His Methods and Purpose of Securing the Arrest of His Co-Religionists Criticised.

"Efforts of the Magee administration to drive the Jews of the Hill district into line for the Magee-Flinn candidates were shown up and subjected to severe denunciation at a crowded meeting in the Miller street school last night. Voters from all portions of the Third ward were present at the immense gathering in behalf of the anti-Magee-Flinn Republican candidates. The mention of their names was applauded and every denunciation of the policy of Magee henchmen in first inducing the Jews to break the law and then arresting them for doing so was greeted with unmistakable approval.

The tactics which have been employed by City Treasurer Adolph Edlis in sending out a notice to the storekeepers telling them to stay open on Sunday in order to get them arrested by the Magee policemen, so that the Magee magistrate, Louis Alpern, could discharge them and place them under obligation to support the Magee-Flinn candidates, were laid bare by Attorney Simon Sher and Peter Glick, who made a strong plea for fair play for their fellow countrymen.

Alderman Samuel Frankel, one of the anti-Magee-Flinn leaders in the Third ward, after calling the meeting to order introduced Attorney Joseph Reich, as chairman.

#### Putting on Finishing Touches.

"On the 30th day of last September we cleaned Magee and Mageeism out of the county," said Reich. "On this occasion we are about to put the finishing touches on the job and clean up the city. The candidates who are fighting against this system are young men of clean records. They have a message to convey to you and are not afraid to come and present their case to you as a man to man."

Attorney Sher, who is a Taft candidate for alternate delegate to the Republican National convention in the Thirty-first district, was the first speaker, and received a cordial welcome from his friends and neighbors. He said that he had spoken many times on that platform, but this was his first appearance as a candidate. He told the people why he favored the nomination and election of President Taft, who, he declared, was

entitled to a second term on the record he has made in the last three years. Coming down to local issues he said in part:

It is time that the Jews of this community resented the tactics that are being employed in order to drive them into line for any candidate. It is a shame to think that a man occupying the position in this city that Mr. Edlis does would stoop to the methods of which he has been guilty. We find him sending out a circular which says in effect: "Jews, break the laws if you want to." I said once before on this very platform that any man who gives the men of my race such advice is no friend. The law is the law. The Jew has no more right to break it than anyone else. If it is wrong, agitate and have it changed. Instead of advising the Jews to break the laws, Mr. Edlis should be the leader in an effort to have the laws changed that are unfair to them. But to advise them in such a way as to get them into trouble never.

#### Purpose of the Address.

But Mr. Edlis has a notice sent out advising the Jews to go ahead and break the laws and keep their stores open on Sunday. And then what do we see? We see the purpose of the advice in a very short time. After the storekeepers open at the behest of Mr. Edlis a Magee policeman comes to their doors and tells them that they are breaking the law. Their names are taken and they are summoned by postcard to appear before a Magee magistrate. They appear and are told that there is to be a primary on April 13 and that if they vote right, everything will be all right. And after the primary they will be left unmolested until there is another election, and then the whip will be cracked again. Those are methods which are worthy of Russia, but should find no place in this free and enlightened country, and by your votes on April 13 you can serve notice that you have reached the place where you will not stand for them now or ever again. It is time to assert yourselves and I hope you will do it in a manner so potent that your will cannot be mistaken.

We ask ALL the representative Jewish Bodies of this community: "What are you going to do about it?" You all have time for other and less important matters. But we warn you that nothing is hurting the Jewish name in this city more than this Jewish political business. The newspapers are "playing it up." On every side we hear our neighbors questioning this "coming Jewish power." It is time that this handful of men be swept aside; it is time that Jewish organizations begin to take some action to acquaint all these gentlemen who are making capital out of the name "Jew", that if they persist they will be no longer tolerated.

Are you going to let this disgrace continue? Are you going to allow the years of right living and right-doing in your community to be offset in a short time by such outrageous procedures. WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT, ANYWAY?

Progress The Tree of Life Synagogue last week very informally celebrated its fifth year in its new location. The members of the Ladies Auxiliary presented the congregation with a check for \$500 to reduce the mortgage on the building.

This congregation has gone steadily forward during the incumbency of Rabbi Coffee, and too much praise cannot be given to him for the manner in which he has conducted the work of the Congregation. The Tree of Life cannot be said to be an Orthodox congregation, but, while it retains the important features of the usual Orthodox service, at the same time it tries to interest the younger members. This is a little different than the radical orthodoxy of certain other Rabbis who endeavor to make a spectacular display of themselves in order to assure to the world that they are really Orthodox. A congregation such as the Tree of Life is typical of the conservative spirit in American Judaism, and we believe that the time must come when even the rigid conservatism of today will be slightly modified to meet the demands of the present and future generations. And no Rabbi who seeks to do that which is best for his faith in a PUBLIC capacity as congregational leader, but must bring to his work a broad and tolerant mind. Every man has a right to his convictions so long as those convictions do not operate to a manifestly positive injury to the cause. When his opinions conflict with the best interests of the Jewish movement then he should be removed as was the case with a certain young Rabbi in New York.

The time has come in the history of Judaism when the light of rationalism should be conserved. We cannot and must not retrace our steps to the past; if we do we shall have very few followers and many will be lost entirely to the faith.

Dr. Coffee has used common sense in the conduct of his work and he is to be commended for his splendid success in solving a most difficult situation. The Congregation is to be congratulated upon his consistent progress and we trust it will continue to increase its power for good.

### The English Jew

In commenting upon the death of Mr. Arthur Sassoon the various newspapers speak of the great intimacy that existed between the Sassoon family with English nobility, especially so with King Edward and the present King, George. And what is true of this noted English Jewish family is equally true of a score and more of other prominent English Jews. And it is significant that the social position of the English Jew is infinitely higher than that of his co-religionist in this country. In New York the Jews have absolutely no social position except among their own. Their dollars are accepted for the promo-