



Friday, August 22, 1952

A Nazi Blot

For some time now we have been reproducing isolated instances of what we termed a resurgence of Nazism or at least a signal of the creation of a neo-Nazism. But we have been aware of a certain frustration, a lack of conclusiveness to our pleas. Last week a story quite similar in tone was given rather wide attention in the daily press. Though it is no more conclusive of the German status than any other incident, it has given rise to more consideration and thought than any such event since the war.

The event, of course, was the suicide of Philip Auerbach, former Restitution Commissioner of Bavaria, who was convicted by a German court, dominated by ex-Nazi judges, of embezzlement. The crime was purportedly committed in connection with funds allotted to Jewish victims of Nazis and culminated in a verdict last Thursday which sentenced Auerbach to 30 months' imprisonment. During the trial, which began in April and which proved a target for anti-Semitic propaganda, the former official was accused of illegally paying out 3,000,000 marks in false claims to Jews during the five years when he was head of the Bavarian State Restitution Office, originally set up by the allies.

At the time of the trial, an appeal to John J. McCloy, American High Commissioner at the time, to transfer the case from a German court to an Allied court, brought no results. The court which convicted Auerbach was composed of five judges, three of whom were known as former members of the Nazi party. It is interesting to note that Auerbach was himself a war-time inmate of the Auschwitz concentration camp and has, since the war, been a vigorous opponent of reviving Nazism and has led public protests against such revivalist incidents as the bombing of a branch office of his commission in Nuernberg in March, 1947; repeated desecrations of Jewish cemeteries in Bavaria; and the acquittal in March, 1950, of two former Gestapo officials charged with war crimes.

Admittedly, we are in no position to pass upon the guilt or innocence of Herr Auerbach in relation to the charges by the German court. We take our cue from the Manchester Guardian, liberal English journal which declared editorially:

"The trial lit up as with a searchlight, the sad hatreds which have been seething there during the seven post-war years . . ." and it declared that while the technical charges against Auerbach might have been juridically

proved and legal justice done, there was question as to "the moral and political advisability and even justification of this trial . . . the tone and setting of the Auerbach trial seem to have been even more questionable than the fact of its being held. A Free Democratic member of the Bavarian Parliament declared that it was 'disgraceful' that former Nazis should try a Jew and compared the presiding judge's conduct to that of Preisler, a notorious judge of Hitler's People's Court. In spite of Jewish protests, the proceedings were started during Passover . . ."

We feel that Herr Auerbach's suicide should prove a sufficient danger signal to the free world—a signal of one more Nazi blot in a resurgent wave of terror.

Our Community Bereaved

Last week, our entire community marked the death of one of Pittsburgh's pioneer citizens, Mrs. Barnett Davis. In truth, she mothered so many of the institutions and organizations which we hold dear today that her loss has touched every niche of Jewish and community life.

To whatever endeavor she touched, Mrs. Davis gave a unique warmth and sincerity, and sorely needed inspiration. More than one generation of Pittsburghers can recall the friendly hand which she extended to newcomers in our community.

In 1898 Mrs. Davis founded the Ladies Hospital Aid Society, the infant group which was instrumental in establishing the Montefiore Hospital. She headed the Society from its founding until 1918 and during those years brought much progress and growth to what is now one of the nation's outstanding medical institutions. It is for this reason that she is often called the "Mother of Montefiore Hospital."

The B'nai Israel Synagogue is another of the local institutions which may claim Mrs. Davis as one of its founders. In 1904 she and a group of earnest workers, gave life to this congregation which has prospered and expanded tremendously during her lifetime. She lived to see that Congregation all but complete its magnificent building program. Among the facilities of the expanded synagogue is the Mrs. Barnett Davis Assembly Hall, named to perpetuate the contributions and organization which she gave to the B'nai Israel.

Among the other organizations which shared Mrs. Davis' enterprise were the Jewish Home for Babies and Children, of which she was president for many years; Pittsburgh Chapter of Hadassah of which she was honorary director; she was honorary national vice president of the Women's League, United Synagogues of America; she was also an active worker and an early member of the Zionist Organization of America.

The most unique fact about Mrs. Davis' life is that she will be memorialized in a manner far more significant than through the institutions and or-

ganizations to which she gave so unstintingly; she will be remembered through her family which has been instilled with her generous tradition. Her sons, her daughter, her daughter-in-law, her son-in-law, and her grandchildren have all accepted and carried through major responsibilities in behalf of their community. Thus, high in the ranks of the UJF, Hadassah, Council on Jewish Education, B'nai Israel, Federation of Jewish Philanthropies, and other organizations, you will find her children.

* * *

Almost within hours of Mrs. Davis' death, Morris Schwartz, another of Pittsburgh's outstanding leaders, passed away. Still a comparatively young man, Mr. Schwartz yet faced years of leadership among the Jewish community. An ardent Zionist and a sincere worker on behalf of traditional Orthodox Judaism, Mr. Schwartz has given his time and energy to the numerous charitable and educational institutions of our Jewish home.

He was a past president and active member of the Poale Zedeck Congregation, where members remember him with love and admiration as a worker and a friend. In addition, he served as a board member of the Jewish Home for the Aged and of the Hillel Academy; he was a former chairman of the Pittsburgh Histadrut; a member of the Board of the Hebrew Free Loan Association; he was an active worker on behalf of the Jewish National Fund and numerous similar charitable organizations. Within the general community, he was particularly active in the James Weldon Johnson Camp for Colored Boys.

Morris Schwartz's death came as a shock to our community. His loss too will be sorely felt and will create a tragic vacuum in the midst of our active Jewish community.

The Outlook adds its voice to others which this week have expressed the bereavement of a community at two such tragic losses.

THE AMERICAN JEWISH
OUTLOOK

Albert W. Golomb
Publisher

Shirley Levine
Managing Editor

Jane L. Stern
Associate Editor

Harry Abrams, advertising director; Flora Isaacs, home economics; Harriet G. Cohen, society; Marcia Gingold, Sam Goldberg, circulation.

Published weekly by the Outlook Publishing Co., 405-407 Commonwealth Building, Pittsburgh 22, Pa., ATlantic 1-1600.

Subscriptions \$3.00 per year.

Member American Association of English-Jewish Newspapers. Exclusive right to Jewish Telegraphic Agency and American Jewish Press Services.

SERVING THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1934