

IN THIS ISSUE

Documentation

At the end of the war, in 1945, Feivel Podomski (Podéh) recovered the history of the Hashomer Hatzair cell at Lodz, which existed to the end of the Ghetto in that city in 1944. As source material he used papers he founded in the empty Ghetto. When the Ghetto was set up a factitious sensation of Jewish life was created and this flourished and was strengthened when a kind of farm was erected in the Maryshin suburb, where (members of) the youth movements, including Hashomer Hatzair, got their training. This chapter ended early in 1941 when Rumkowski, the head of the Ghetto, demanded that the youth movements put work squads at his disposal.

Ilana Weinreb-Levron spent the years of German occupation in the "Arian" part of Warsaw with false papers. She volunteered at the time of the Polish rebellion in August 1944 and kept a diary, in which you can sense the atmosphere that prevailed in the units of the "Armia Krajowa" (Official Polish Underground), when a Jewish girl had to conceal her identity, even in the days of rebellion against the Nazis.

Articles

Dan Mikhman tries to clarify the word of "Rescue during the Holocaust". Notions are blurred but he tries to distinguish between help and rescue; between material aid extended to Jews wherever they lived: Nursery food or other objects and rescue operations, i.e. transfer of as many people as possible to places of relative safety. He distinguishes between 5 stages of rescue operations: A) The period of the shock, when the Nazis came to power in 1933; B) The relative quiet which contributed down to the Cristal night and the annexation of Austria in 1938; C) To the outbreak of the war; D) From the beginning of the war to the decision on the "Final Solution"; E) The period of extermination. The author shows the way how to arrive at investigation of the cause that led to this situation.

It seems that the Holocaust was a peculiar and universal (ubiquitous) phenomenon, which needs no further proof because of its overwhelming size and the central place it occupies — but it seems that it is not so. Israel Gutman quotes philosophers of our generation, who try to classify Nazidom as just one of the ordinary regimes or forces of rule. Even those, who judge things more severely and classify the Holocaust as a form of "genocide", do not regard it as something entirely outside human behaviour. They try to argue, that similar things have happened in the past: to Armenians, Gypsies, on American Indians, Biafrans — or at Hiroshima. But there are worse: those who deny the fact of the Holocaust; and this concept is spreading: "Systematic extermination simply did not occur"... There was a war with a lot of suffering and people were killed on all fronts... The author tries to explain what was peculiar to the Holocaust: It was murder on an unprecedented scale hallowed by an ideology; and the Germans conceived and planned it. They also were the main perpetrators.

Joseph Elgazi has taken up one side of the subject : that the Holocaust is being denied altogether. He speaks of the very widespread literature occupied at teaching the public, and above all the new generation, which did not witness the horrors of the war, that there never was anything called Holocaust. This literature is being propagated in Europe and America, in Australia and South Africa. It originated shortly after the war in Switzerland. The author, who has studied this literature thoroughly, found that the first of these books was written in France by Paul Rassignet, a former socialist leader and Buchenwald prisoner, in 1949. Later-on he published more books and many others followed in his footsteps. The arguments brought forward are manifold. E.g. "There is no documentary proof that a plan for the 'Final Solution' ever existed ; even existed, the alleged document originated in the Communist Countries ; Not 6 million Jews were exterminated, but only one — may be only a hundred thousand ; The Germans had only a minor part in the killings", etc. etc. There are, of course, various degrees of cleverness and sophistication, but it is a phenomenon that is spreading and behind it there are political organizations with ample means ; so that we have to think of way to fight this new departure.

Diving into documents and letters of the period between the rise of the Nazis and the war, which are to be found in the Archives of the American Jewish Committee at New York, **P. A. Lazin** tries to explain the reaction of this Committee to the crisis in German Jewry, and to uncover the motives for actions or failure to act. He analyses the attitudes of one rather important Jewish organization among those who took part in the efforts to help the Jews caught under Nazi rule in the period before the war. This analysis lets us catch a glimpse of the peculiar motives, local and personal, behind activities. Efforts of the Committee at the time were mainly directed at making the administration take steps against Hitler's Anti-Jewish acts. These were hesitations about proposing measures to that purpose in Congress. It becomes clear, that, in contradiction to prevailing views, the Committee did not have much influence on the administration and it's policy. In spite of it's disappointment the Committee refrained from exerting it's pressure in public and chose a policy of quiet diplomacy. Yet, simultaneously steps were taken to arouse public opinion against German Antisemitism.

The topic broached by Alexander Donat in "Yalkut Moreshet" (No. 21) continues to arouse discussion, pro and contra. This time the writer is **Israel Aviram**, himself a survivor of the horrors which had an impact on his views on Providence. He enters into a discussion with Abraham Korman on two points, while distancing himself from Donat — to an extent. This is with regard to a single testimony on an important subject.

Non-Jews in the Hall of Fame

This is something new in our periodical. We bring here a reveal of things, as told by **Otto Busse**, a German who owned a painting enterprize in Bialystok under Nazi Rule. He was one of those few Germans who assisted in rescuing Jews with all their might. More than that : he even helped Jewish underground fighters with arms, when he had realized the extent and the horrors of the extermination. Otto Busse himself tells

of his fight against the Holocaust in Bialystok in a very modest description he sent to the Yalkut from Germany.

One of those whom Busse rescued, **Haika Grossman**, has to add a number of details on Otto Busse, the wonderful man, the believer and helper and his deeds.

Menashe Rosenberg describes a rescue operation carried out by Non-Jews. He went to visit the little Danish township of Gilleleje to find out additional details on that ervellous episode. He also took a number of pictures on the spot and found one of the active members fo the Danish underground.

This man is **Gilbert Lassen**, who, to this day lives at Gilleleje. He relates his activities in the Anti-Nazi underground from the Spring of 1943 to the Summer of 1944. In his article you'll find a great many facts and details on the methods in use in those days and on the connections with non-occupied territory (Sweden) which centered around the operation to rescue Danish Jews.

Source Material and Testimonial

The history of the Jews of Munkacz during the World War is being told from a direct source: **Eliahu Rubin**, director of the Hebrew Gymnasium until it was liquidated. It is testimony on relations within the Jewish community and it's leaders and it also shows the more and more deteriorating attitude of the Hungarian Government which reached it's climax in the general expulsion to Auschwitz in May 1944. In this testimony we see the leaders of the community on the background of the fate which overtook the whole of the Hungarian Jewry and the inhabitants of Munkacz in particular. The record brings to life the atmosphere and the cruel circumstances: persecution and finally transportation to the extermination camp.

Testimony from a different source brings **Joseph Eisner**, who tells of the days of terror in Lwow that began with Operation Barbarossa and went on until the city was retaken by the Red Army. On the 22nd of June, 1941, Nazi terror took place of normal, quiet life. Personal adroitness helped the author to escape the "Actions" at Lwow and brought him to Kawa-Ruska. After several flights in both directions between these two places he found a haven of refuge in a country-house, belonging to a transport company in one of the suburbs of Lwow — until, on the 27th of July, 1944, the first Russian soldier reappeared.

Books

Yehuda Bauer reviews a recently published book by Eliahu Ben-Elisar, "Foreign Policy of the Third Reich and the Jews", and he finds it an **astounding book**: No sources are mentioned and there is contradiction between contents and title. He finds exaggerations and errors; no mention is made of how German Jews reacted. The author maintains — says the reviewer — that Hitler used Antisemitism as a political means to achieve domination over Europe.

Edited by :

Yehuda Bauer, Shalom Cholavsky, Israel Gutman,
Rozka Korczak, Abba Kovner, Yehuda Tubin

Published by Moreshet
& Sifriat Poalim

All rights reserved ©

Printed in Israel


YALKUT

MORESHET

P E R I O D I C A L

No. 28

October 1979



YALKUT
MORESHET
PERIODICAL

No. 28, NOVEMBER 1979