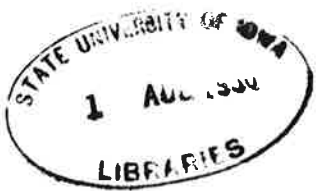


Prop

**The Jewish  
Labor**

**Bund**



*Published by the*

**World-Coordinating Committee of  
Bundist and Affiliated  
Jewish Socialist Organizations.**

175 East Broadway New York 2, N. Y.  
ORchard 4-1587

**Bulletin**

Vol. III, No. 5-6 (26-27)



May-June, 1950

**WORLD PEACE — BUT NO APPEASEMENT**

This is no time to submit to feelings of complacency and ignore the fact that the world is at a crossroads. The Communist advance into the territory of the South Korean Republic is a clear indication that somewhere in the Kremlin the bosses of world Communism decided to probe with bayonets the ability of the democratic world to resist naked aggression. The prompt political action of the United Nations, which appealed to all its members to defend the South Korean Republic with all the means at their disposal, as well as the immediate effective response of Washington and London and their willingness to use ground, naval, and air formations to stop the aggressor, was a welcome sign. The democracies learned since Munich, 1938, that appeasement is not the way to stop an aggressor fighting for world domination.

The Soviet Union not only rejected the appeal of the United Nations. She derided the proposals of Washington and London to help stop the shooting war in Korea by her declaration that to take such steps would mean to interfere with the internal affairs of an inde-

**Contents:**

1. **World Peace — But No Appeasement.**
2. **The International Socialist Conference in Copenhagen.**
3. **Reminiscences from Soviet Turkestan**
4. **The Conspiracy of Silence.**
5. **Two National Conventions.**
6. **Eightieth Birthday of Louis de Bruckere.**

pendent nation. The only response of the Soviet Union was to increase her vicious propaganda. The Kremlin stepped up the fabrication of lies for world circulation to a degree which has no precedent even in Russian history. The Communists stooped so low as to even put forward the fantastic accusation that the U.S. dropped potato-bugs on the fields of the nations behind the Iron Curtain. According to this propaganda campaign, the roles in Korea were reversed: The North Korean aggressors were depicted as knights of peace, while the United States politicians were described as Wall Street sharks who dreamt morning, noon, and night of invading North Korea.

There seems little doubt that the vicious lying propaganda of the Russians makes an impression on some of the oppressed, the ignorant, and the hungry of Asia and elsewhere in the world. It is foolish to discount the force of this propaganda, just as it is intolerable to leave it go unanswered. It is one of the peculiarities of our time that the Communist totalitarian regime is more sensitive to world public opinion than were the fascist ones.

Along with the military operations in Korea against the aggressor, the democratic world should greatly step up its own propaganda, increase its own information service, use every possible means of defying the Communist lies, of permeating the world with

the true data and the real facts, of exposing the Communists, disguised as apostles of peace, in their true light. We should never forget that propaganda of the truth is an effective weapon in the struggle for maintaining world peace.

As Socialists as well as Jews, who have always suffered most from wars and periods of world armed conflicts, we are deeply concerned with preserving world peace. If there ever was a time when it was imperative not to lose one's temper and to maintain an impartial perspective and a clear vision of the future, it is now. The democratic world needs now more than ever before not only military leaders, but wise statesmanship. The stakes are nothing less than world peace.

## The International Socialist Conference — Copenhagen

In the first days of June, 1950, representatives of the Socialist movement gathered in Copenhagen, to hold yet another international Socialist conference. This conference, just as the former ones, was organized by COMISCO—the International Socialist Committee, which appears to be slated to take over the functions and the duties of the pre-war Socialist International.

The Conference in Copenhagen was an important step toward closer cooperation and fraternal understanding between the various Socialist organizations—members in COMISCO. The Socialist gathering in Copenhagen was surely the most important of its kind after World War II.

One of the most complex issues on the agenda of the Conference was named the "Principles of Democratic Socialism". Guy Mollet, General Secretary of the French Socialist Party, was appointed by COMISCO to broach this problem. In his opening

speech he drew the attention of his audience to the various present-day approaches toward Socialism. He mentioned also the approach of the BUND toward socialism and democracy. Morgan Phillips, the Secretary of the British Labor Party, underlined the fact that the British Laborites are not disciples of Marxism, and explained the British attitude toward Socialism and the theory of class struggle.

Ollenhauer, the representative of the German Socialists, was the official speaker in connection with the second important issue on the agenda of the Copenhagen Conference. His report on the still existing concentration and slave-labor camps in the Soviet Union and in some countries behind the Iron Curtain, including the Soviet occupation zone of Germany, impressed the delegates. He made a vivid comparison between them and the former concentration camps of Nazi Germany. He did not omit to mention the atrocities and the appalling practices of the Franco-regime in Spain.

Morgan Phillips of the British Labor Party discussed the issue of world peace, and the dangers of a third world war. The speaker impressed the audience with his belief that a united and firm stand of the West and all other democratic forces could avoid a new world catastrophe.

The BUND World Coordinating Committee was represented at the Copenhagen Conference by Paul Olberg—of the BUND in Sweden, and Rafal Ryba—of the BUND in France. In the discussion which followed the report about the concentration camps and slave-labor, Rafal Ryba on behalf of the BUND called the attention of the delegates to the murder in Soviet Russia of Henryk Erlich and Victor Alter, members of long standing of the Executive Committee of the Socialist International. "We shall never forget this execution," exclaimed Rafal Ryba, "and I hope the Socialist movement the world over will remember this crime." Rafal Ryba further depicted the complete liquidation of Jewish cultural life that took place in the Soviet Union and deplored the recent deportations

of Jews from the border provinces of the Soviet empire. He protested fiercely against the practice to retain forcibly the Jews wishing to emigrate from the Soviet Union and other Iron Curtain countries. He appealed to the delegates to request freedom of departure for Jews in these countries. Rafal Ryba concluded that individual liberty and national independence were assured only when totalitarianism, fascism, race hatred, and anti-Semitism, as well as all the evil forces of capitalist reaction, were irrevocably defeated.

The representative of the BUND delegation also took part in the discussion about world peace and the dangers of a third world war. He maintained that the democratic camp must carefully choose its allies in its struggle to assure world peace. Citing the Franco regime in Spain as an example of a country which cannot be considered our companion in the fight against world Communism, the speaker warned against failing to distinguish between the real allies in our fight against Communism and dangerous reactionary groups within every nation.

## REMINISCENCES FROM SOVIET TURKESTAN

### DAVID BATIST — IN MEMORIAM

*In the whirl of bloody events unleashed by the Second World War, many a good member of the BUND disappeared tracelessly, perished in the Soviet prisons and "re-education camps." Among them was David Batist. A short message, based on rumors, reached us, explaining that he had died somewhere in exile.*

*Recently we received a touching account of his last weeks and days, written by an unknown to us woman, a former camp-mate of David Batist, now in London. She is not and never has been a member of the BUND.*

*We print this document verbatim as an eye-witness record of human behavior in times of unrivaled agony.*

David Batist was a worker in the tailoring trade; a member of the Central Council of the Jewish Socialist Party (BUND); a trade-unionist, and for many years an alderman of the City Council of Tarnow in the West of Poland. He was in charge of the social welfare of the city. A self-taught man, he was interested also in the problems of education for the adults.

When the war broke out in 1939, he fled before the Germans to the East of Poland where he was arrested by the Russians, sentenced to long-term imprisonment for God knows what imaginary political crimes, perpetrated allegedly before the war, and sent to a labour camp in Russia together with a great many of other Polish citizens.

I never heard about him until we met in January 1942 in an asylum for sick Polish citizens in the Russian Turkestan. It was the tragic time that has cost so many lives. After the memorable for us, prisoners, treaty between Stalin and General Sikorski, many Polish citizens were released from their labour camps, prisons and deportation camps. As soon as they regained freedom, they tried to leave the places of their confinement situated in a deadly climate in search of the representatives of the Polish Embassy in Russia or of the Polish Army. This break of hundreds of thousands people through the immense country without adequate means or provisions was really a tragic epos of an unhappy nation.

After many dangers and adventures I was lucky enough to land in the above-mentioned asylum. There I saw him for the first time. Middle-aged, ugly, limping, emaciated after two years of prison and labour camps and after a recent pneumonia, dressed in rags, by one remark he attracted my attention from the very beginning.

It was my first evening there, we had nothing to eat, it was cold, no beds, no bedding, no stove, no possibility of proper washing because of lack of wash-basins, soap and towels, we all looked like ghosts. Somebody asked him where he had spent his day. And the answer was: "In the library. It is placed in an old and once beautiful mosque, there are some theoretical books and it seems to be easier to forget about hunger, when reading. Only one never knows whether one will be strong enough to come back. Especially with my ailing foot..." And he laughed such a little laugh of a man who is joking.

I looked up. Library, a joke, all these were things from the past.

He noticed my astonishment.

"You must keep your courage and hope," he told me, "we are probably saved, it is a matter of some months, or perhaps some weeks. It is possible we shall be allowed to go abroad, where the British or

the Americans will take care of us. To be patient, to believe in the future and to help each other,—that is the only thing we can do at the moment. It is a turning of history and we are sitting in a merry-go-round."

"Who is this man" — I asked Mr. B., a higher civil servant of my native town.

"You ask about Batist" — he answered — "we were together in prison and in labour camps. He suffered more than the others, because he spent a lot of that time in solitary confinement and was treated much worse than any of us. Not only because he is a socialist. His greatest sin was, that he always intervened and protected and defended other prisoners. You can imagine it didn't help him too much. You will find me a bit exaggerated" — he added — "but he is like a saint. So we called him there. We loved him all and I had not the slightest hope he would survive his trials."

The next morning Batist came to tell me that I should try to come into contact with friends in London by sending them a telegram. I was so weak and hungry that each unnecessary movement was too much for me. So I refused this chance, as the Post Office was very far from our stay. But he didn't stop annoying me and went with me, encouraging me all the time during this exhausting walk. At one time we were both so hungry and miserable that I got angry and told him to go away and let me die in peace. But he kept insisting, he lost neither courage nor hope. At last we reached the office, the telegram was accepted and sent away and while going home we had the luck to buy some currants.

We sat down on the sandy road in the outskirts of the town and ate greedily the sweet and dirty fruits. Around us was the desertlike landscape, no trees, no gardens, only some slums built from clay, where gloomy people were housing.

"How sad is this country" — he said. "Love only would be able to change it and make it happy. Love and forgiveness, that's what is missing in this land of slavery and hatred."

It was not easy to survive this time. We were there more than thirty persons, among them old retired judges and higher officers, civil servants, teachers, workers, professional men, beggars, and some young disabled men, Poles and Jews together. Every day somebody was dying from exhaustion, but nevertheless, we had the feeling of being privileged, as we had a roof above our heads, a piece of bread daily and we were not forced to work.

Soon the epidemic of typhus spread in the whole county and, as every day new men were coming dirty and with fresh supply of lice, soon we had the epidemic in our asylum. We could not get rid of lice, as very few of us could change linen and washing in cold water did not destroy lice. Each encounter was dangerous. But we fought the insects as far as it was possible and we tried to get the sick quickly into the hospital, which was soon opened in the town.

Then came the unhappy case of Mr. K.

Mr. K. was a tailor worker, a member of the BUND, too. He came here very exhausted after having been in prisons and labour camps. He had nothing of his own, besides an old winter coat, a ragged suit and ruined boots. When he got ill on typhus he was taken to the hospital. Two weeks later he came back, very weak, unable to care for himself and in a dreadful state of filth. As there was no place in the ward, so he told us, and all the beds were occupied, he was left for two weeks in the waiting room on the floor. As he was not in bed, nobody cared for his cleanliness and so he was left ill, as he was, lying in his winter coat, without even a wash.

There was a terrible panic when he came back. People knew enough about the implications arising from such a state of dirt, after a typhus disease. So he was shut up in one of the empty spaces around the yard and nobody wanted to get in and to care for him, in fear of infected lice.

Nobody — but David Batist.

He washed him, bedded him up on his own only blanket, cared for his daily food, that was not an easy task — encouraged him in moments of despair and weakness. Until he brought him back to life.

Then he fell ill himself.

At the same time I got typhus too. We were both taken to the hospital by the same dirty droshka (cab). Nobody believed, at least neither of us both, that we had much chance to survive. For the first time I saw Batist sad and for the first time he spoke of himself. He told me that his wife and his little beloved daughter were both in Tarnow. He hoped they could perhaps manage to be saved from the Germans, who then occupied the town.

“Just now I know” — he said — “I shall never see them again. But should you survive, as I feel you will, please tell my daughter all about me. Promise me, will you?”

“Of course” — I answered — “but we have equal chances to survive.”

“No. I am a dying man, I feel it too well.”

I don't remember much more. I had lost consciousness for some time. I awoke being terribly cold and lying on the stony floor in the anteroom of the wards. And Batist in his hospital coat was standing near me shouting:

“I protest, there must be places found when there are sick people here. I protest to such treatment of the suffering. Go and find a place. I protest!”

As there was no place in the women's ward, thanks to his interference, I was put in a bed in the men's ward for two days, as I was later told. Only once during this time did I recover my senses for a moment and I caught a glimpse of Batist, sitting on the bed of an Uzbek-man and feeding him like a nurse. He was

getting food from many people, especially from members of his Party, and he distributed it among other patients without any discrimination, humane in the deepest sense of the word as he was, until his end.

He died on the first of March, 1942, after nine days of illness. As I was later told, the doctors had advised him to lie down quietly and not to take interest in other people's fate. But he could not resist being helpful. Until the moment when he himself lost his senses, he was fighting for the welfare of his fellow-men.

He left nothing, when he died, except his plain crooked walking stick, that was taken by Mr. B., his prison friend, as a souvenir.

After the end of the war I tried to find his wife and his child, but I got news they were both destroyed in a German crematorium.

Nothing remains after him, no written words, no clever speeches, no home, no child, not even a grave.

May these few words allow to linger a little longer this faint shade of a man who in the most barbaric time, when people were often turned to beasts, kept alive by his noble example the greatest virtues of humanity: courage, hope, helpfulness, wisdom, and the ability of sacrifice for other human beings.

MARIA GORCZAK

## THE CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE

The "New York Times", a newspaper that took a sympathetic attitude toward the State of Israel since the very first day of its creation, published on June 9, 1950, a report from Tel-Aviv, written by Gene Currihan, containing among others the following accusations against the State of Israel:

1. The Palestinian staff of the United Nations sent in a report that Jews are mistreating and torturing Arab refugees for smuggling the demarkation line in order to return to their homes and land possessions.
2. The representatives of the United Nations in Palestine possess photographs to verify these accusations. Among these photographs are pictures of bleeding hands with nails torn out and of other body disfigurements.
3. That the Arab infiltrators are locked in a concentration camp, beaten up and deprived of the necessary food to keep them alive.
4. That captured Arab refugees are driven back to the demarkation-line under the fire of machine-guns and thus exposed to the lack of water and food in the desert, resulting in their death.
5. That the Jews do not permit the Arab owners of farms located on the Jewish side of the demarkation-line to reap their harvest.
6. That the Government of Israel has not kept, in regard to these farms, an unwritten agreement concluded at the time when the demarkation line was established.
7. That the Government of Israel does not control the activities of its armed border patrols in this respect, and reveals a complacent attitude as far as the mistreatment of Arabs is concerned.

The "New York Times" of June 15, 1950, published the following vague denial from Israel:

*An Israeli Army spokesman was quoted here yesterday as denying charges made in Jordan that Arab infiltrators into Israel had been mistreated while being returned across the frontier.*

*The spokesman's statement was cabled from Tel-Aviv to the Israel Office of Information in New York. It said that a group of infiltrators had been taken to a point one and a half kilometers from the frontier, "in*

The Intensity of Jewish Inquiries

accordance with standard practice", and had been shown the direction to Jordanian territory and had been released within sight of an Arab Legion post.

"During the period in which they were in custody", the statement declared, "the infiltrees were adequately fed. Investigations have shown that charges of deliberate maltreatment were baseless."

The BUND monthly UNSER TSAIT comments on the subject as follows:

\*\*\*The matter is a painful one for every Jew who refuses to disregard the principle of human rights. We never fail to protest whenever our own rights are being violated. And the subject is painful not only by merit of its own implications, but also because of the total silence with which it was received by the Jewish daily press in America.

We know well that there is no dearth, within Jewish public opinion, of demagogues who, rather than take up the merit of the subject, will attack us and attempt to silence their own conscience by repeating the old and senseless arguments about our being "enemies of Zion". Against this type of argument we are powerless. \*\*\*We do wish to emphasize, however,

that the Jewish interests and goodwill toward Jews are truly jeopardized by the conspiracy of silence which envelops the subject of this article.\*\*\*

\*\*\*We should certainly like to learn that the grave accusations cited above are false. But when UN authorities, and even the U. S. State Department, concern themselves with the matter, and when photographic proofs of torture are brought forward, the few anonymous lines are certainly not the kind of denial called for.\*\*\*

At any rate it is better and more proper when there is no contrary evidence, to brand the crime as such than to pass over it in silence. By doing so the guilt is fixed upon those who actually committed the terrible crimes or who are directly responsible for them; silence causes the guilt to be shared by the Jewish public at large.

And one more point: Historical experience teaches that in a nation where a regime of violence and lawlessness is established regarding "strangers", "its own" citizens are likewise not too certain of treatment according to the principles of human rights.

## TWO NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

At the end of May, 1950, the Workmen's Circle, the largest Jewish fraternal order in the world and the International Ladies Garment Workers Union held their Golden Jubilee National Conventions almost at the same time.

It was more than a coincidence. Jewish immigrants from Eastern European countries, in particular from Russia, participants and active members of the revolutionary movement to liberate the people of Russia from the despotic czarist rule that persecuted

them mercilessly, helped to create both the mentioned organizations a half century ago. Most of the pioneers and the founders of the Workmen's Circle as well as of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union at that time came from the ranks and files of the famous Jewish labor movement, BUND, that educated the Jewish working population and led them in the intrepid struggle for liberty, democracy, and Socialism. Many a historical upheaval during the last fifty years obliterated old cherished values and created new ones.

The people of Russia succeeded in ridding themselves of the czarist tyrants only to fall easy prey to the totalitarian forces of Communism, which robbed them of their freedom as well as of their elemental human rights. After the totalitarian regime in Russia liquidated the BUND, revolutionary traditions were taken over by the BUND in independent Poland. The leadership of the Polish BUND enabled the Jewish working population of that country to elevate itself toward new goals of cultural advancement and political achievements. In 1939, before the outbreak of the Second World War, the Polish BUND was the largest and most influential force among the three and a half million Jews of Poland, and commanded the majority of their votes during the last municipal elections of that country. The subjugation of Poland by Nazi Germany during the bleak years of the Second World War, and the annihilation of Polish Jewry by the Nazis put an end to the existence of the BUND in Poland. An attempt made by the remnants of the former Polish Jews to carry on with a BUND organization in Poland after the Second World War was nipped in the bud by the Polish Communists, who are ruling the country with the help of the Kremlin bayonets. The BUND members scattered by the squalls of the Second World War all over the world remained faithful to the traditions of the BUND and carried on its old activities in their new homelands.

## EIGHTIETH BIRTHDAY OF LOUIS DE BRUCKERE

The BUND World Coordinating Committee sent a cable to Louis de Bruckere, one of the most prominent Socialist leaders in the world, on the occasion of his eightieth birthday.

The cable expressed the BUND's deepest reverence and sentiments of attachments to the great Socialist thinker and veteran. "Your life", it said, "has al-

During all these tragic events the leaders of the Workmen's Circle and of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union provided shelter for the BUND refugees from across the ocean and helped to maintain the movement over there. The BUND delegates, coming to the United States on lecture campaigns and to raise funds for their movement, always met with a deep understanding and a sincere fraternal feeling on the part of the leaders of the Workmen's Circle and the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. David Dubinsky never forgot that he had belonged to the BUND in his youth, and was always ready to lend a hand while the movement was in dire need. It was he who led the campaign of protest and indignation against the murder, by agents of the Soviet Secret Police, of the two BUND leaders — Henryk Erlich and Victor Alter. Among all the trade-union leaders he was the most dilligent and relentless fighter against Communist hypocrisy.

The mutual relations between the BUND and the two mentioned organizations were always the friendliest. The representatives of the BUND in the United States as well as of the BUND movement as a whole have always harbored best fraternal feelings toward the Workmen's Circle and the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. At the Golden Jubilee Conventions of these two organizations, these feelings were expressed by BUND representatives.

ways been a courageous struggle against tremendous odds for the cause of justice, liberty and Socialism. . . . Your noble enthusiasm kindled the hearts of millions, and imbued them with the desire to carry on their struggle for a new way of life. . . . The Jewish Labor Movement before and after the Second World War has always regarded you as its devoted friend . . ."

The University of Iowa Libraries

175

Vol

del  
got  
wo  
Vi  
Ur  
spur  
li