

THE CHARLOTTE JEWISH NEWS

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On The Issues ---- By Ira Gissen, Va/NC Director ADL

Honoring the Memory of Lemkin and Six Million Martyrs

This column is dedicated to the memory of Raphael Lemkin and the six million Jewish martyrs to whom he devoted his life.

Raphael Lemkin's name will not be recognized readily by most otherwise well informed readers. Perhaps that is because he died a quiet death, alone and in poverty in a New York hotel, back in 1959. Mr. Lemkin may not be recognized because he lost most of his family when the German military machine crushed Poland in 1939. Few people remember that he escaped to the United States. Even fewer know that he taught law at Duke University and at Yale

University.

But although you may not recognize his name, almost everyone recognizes his extraordinary achievement.

He coined the word "genocide." He drafted a Genocide Convention for adoption by the United Nations and devoted the remaining years of his life campaigning for its adoption by the member nations.

The Genocide Convention, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948, declares that genocide is an international crime and requires the nations endorsing the Convention to punish those nations who commit

genocide. More than 90 nations have joined the Convention.

Every president of the United States from Harry S. Truman to Ronald Reagan (with the exception of Dwight D. Eisenhower) has called for its approval by the United States Senate. It has taken 37 years for the United States Senate to approve it. President Reagan endorsed the convention in 1984 and again in 1985 he wrote to the Senate majority leader, Robert Dole of Kansas, reiterating his support.

Finally, on February 19, 1986, in a vote of 83 to 11 the Senate approved the treaty outlawing genocide.

Nathan Perlmutter, National Director of the Anti-Defamation League, declared, "It is fitting that when at long last passed, it was an overwhelming bi-partisan expression of the best instincts of the American people."

The ratification was of special significance to Senator William D. Proxmire, Democrat of Wisconsin, who for 19 years has urged approval whenever the Senate was in formal session. He made more than 3000 speeches in favor of the treaty.

The 11 who voted against the treaty were: Senators East and Helms of North Carolina, Jeremiah Denton of Alabama, Jake Garn of Utah, Barry Goldwater of Arizona, Charles E. Grassley of Iowa, James A. McClure of Idaho, William V. Roth Jr. of Delaware, Steven D. Symms of Idaho, Strom Thurmond of South Carolina and Malcolm Wallop of Wyoming.

Raphael Lemkin is remembered.

Editorial

Being Free

This month we will be celebrating the festival of Passover, which according to Biblical history is the first and oldest of the Jewish holidays. We have always associated it with freedom... our forefathers were freed from Egyptian bondage.

As American Jewry, we are indeed fortunate to be part of a free society, able to worship in our homes and synagogues. However, we must guard against being too free... too free to surrender ourselves to total assimilation in today's society... too free to give up our spiritual and historical entities. We must instill in our children the pride of being Jewish, of worshipping as a Jew, of carrying on the traditions of Judaism. Our people must survive.

Unfortunately, there are those elsewhere who are still enslaved and who are still seeking the opportunity to cast off the chains of their oppressors. The following was written by 34 Jews from Kiev to their sisters and brothers in America:

"All Jewish people throughout the world will sit at special gatherings, Sedarim, as though we were one family. Our common Seder table stretches thousands of miles and is divided by land and water. Yet, we all are united together as one.

"We see the beautiful eyes of our Jewish sisters and feel the strong handshake of our Jewish brothers. Your support gives us new strength to continue in our struggle for freedom. We shall read the Haggadah at the Seder table. It teaches us to celebrate Passover like our ancestors in Egypt. But the history of Exodus is not only history to us. It is a reality.

"They force us to forget our national traditions; they don't allow us to come to the synagogue on the Shabbat; we cannot learn basic Hebrew language and the history of Israel. Many of us are imprisoned for our desires to go to Israel. We shall overcome our modern Egypt, like thousands of years ago, we shall overcome our enemies of today. All Jews in the world: 'Shelach Et Ami': Let My People Go! Next Year in Jerusalem."

During your Seder remember to recite the "Matzo of Hope":

This Matzo, which we set aside as a symbol of hope for the Jews of the Soviet Union, reminds us of the indestructible links that exist between us. As we observe this festival of freedom, we know that Soviet Jews are not free to leave without harassment; to learn of their past; to pass on their religious traditions; to learn the languages of their fathers; to train the teachers and the rabbis of future generations. We remember with bitterness the scores of Jewish prisoners of conscience who sought to live as Jews and struggled to leave for Israel—the land of our fathers—but now languish in bondage in Soviet labor camps. Their struggle against their oppressors is part of an ongoing effort, and they shall know that they have not been forgotten. As Soviet Jews assert themselves they are joined by all who are aroused by their affliction. We will continue until they emerge into the light of freedom.

May you have a happy Passover.

— R.M.



Behind the Headlines:

The Jews of Yugoslavia

BELGRADE (JTA) — Inhabitants of a land with a unique complex of six republics and two autonomous provinces, the Jews of Yugoslavia lead the good life — a life of relative ease, security and almost total non-discrimination. Together with their coreligionists, Moslem, Catholic and Orthodox, they co-exist in harmony and tranquility in a state where no one faith dominates to the detriment of any other.

With the approval of the

authorities, the Jewish community in 1985 sent teams to participate in the 12th Maccabiah in Israel, and Yugoslavia was the only country in the Eastern and Balkan blocs to do so. Tel Aviv and Zagreb are initiating a twin-city relationship.

Dragan Wollner, president of the Zagreb Jewish community, voiced the hope that diplomatic relations between the two nations would be announced within the next year

or two as a formal expression of the de facto recognition that presently seems to exist.

No Anti-Semitic Manifestations

Although Yugoslavia is a leader of the non-aligned countries and the PLO has an office in Belgrade, the government exerts strict control of the Arab students in the University of Belgrade. There are no anti-Semitic manifestations, nor would they be tolerated were they to occur.

**The Jewish Calendar
Candlelighting**

- Apr. 4 - 6:29 p.m.
- Apr. 11 - 6:35 p.m.
- Apr. 18 - 6:40 p.m.
- Apr. 23 - 6:44 p.m. (First Seder)
- Apr. 24 - 7:43 p.m. (Second Seder)
- Apr. 25 - 6:46 p.m. (Shabbat Chol Hamoed Pesach)
- Apr. 29 - 7:49 p.m. (7th Eve of Pesach)
- Apr. 30 - 8:49 p.m. (8th Eve of Pesach)
- May 2 - 7:52 p.m.
- May 9 - 7:58 p.m.



Special Notice

**All Copy for
May's Issue
Must be in by
April 6**

**Advertising by
April 10**