

THE SPANISH INQUISITION

Mr. Madariaga's Reply

To the Editor of THE JEWISH CHRONICLE

Sir.—Much as I appreciate Mr. Barnett's courteous and even generous remarks, at the beginning of his review of my book "Essays With a Purpose," in your issue of last week, I feel bound to draw the attention of your readers to the serious misrepresentations and errors of fact in his last paragraph.

To point out the undeniable and important share taken by prominent converso Jews in the birth and even in the working of the Spanish Inquisition, and to remark that the persistence and consistency of the anti-Jewish attitude in Spain was injected into the Spanish character from the Jewish character where it belongs more originally and naturally, is by no means to "lay on the Jews own heads" the "countless barbarities of the Inquisition."

Nor do I think that an impartial and informed historian of the Jewish people would subscribe to Mr. Barnett's dictum to the effect that "there is nothing in the methods, climate, or circumstances of the Inquisition and its foundation which remotely recalls the Jewish character or faith." For intolerance is well established as a characteristic of at least certain periods of Jewish history. As for barbarity, I went out of my way to point out that "the Spaniard stood in no need of any Jew as to ferocity or civil war," and this sentence, which Mr. Barnett quotes, demolishes his accusation.

I have endeavoured to deal with this subject of the Jews and Spain in an impartial and dispassionate way; and I regret that Mr. Barnett has not been able to read me in a like spirit. He has no right to attribute to me the purpose of defending the action of the Catholic Church in the last resort. He would not have written such a thing if he had been more conversant with my work. He is wrong in fact about my being "a faithful son of the Catholic Church," for though I was born and baptised a Catholic I belong to no religion and practise none.

SALVADOR DE MADARIAGA.
The Reform Club,
Pall Mall, London, S.W.1.

NATIONAL SHECHITA COUNCIL

Work for Small Communities

To the Editor of THE JEWISH CHRONICLE

Sir.—The National Shechita Council, a comparatively new organisation (a meeting of which you reported last week), deserves to be complimented on the indispensable work which it does, especially in supplying the needs of the smaller provincial communities.

This body, since the end of the Second World War, has supplied many Jewish communities in provincial places which have consistently been finding it difficult to find the necessary personnel and shechita equipment (*chalafim*, etc.). The community should be grateful to this body that they are able to meet the essential needs of our communities.

MAURICE SOLOMON.
24 Woodlands,
Golders Green, N.W.11.

BIOGRAPHY OF JUDAH MAGNES

Reviewer Criticised

To the Editor of THE JEWISH CHRONICLE

Sir.—Mr. Sacher's last salute to an old opponent is somewhat less than urbane. But there are many ways of treating the dead, and Mr. Sacher has the right to choose his own. One wonders only whether a review of Professor Bentwich's biography offered the proper place or occasion.

Readers of a review wish to be given a brief survey of the book under review and an account of its principal conclusions. I have read Mr. Sacher's review several times, but find in it little besides evidence of the personal feelings of the reviewer. He seems to dismiss Dr. Magnes summarily as a handsome and golden-voiced megalomaniac with a taste for martyrdom and a blind eye for realities. Yet the very persistence of his spleen (Dr. Magnes died in 1948) suggests that its object was something more than that.

It is no secret that in his lifetime Dr. Magnes was a controversial figure. The puzzle is how a man who dared to think otherwise than in accordance with the Zionist party line was yet so greatly beloved in Zion itself; and Magnes was beloved not only by a small circle of political adherents but by a great multitude all over the country, of all ranks of society, and all types of opinion, who at his death grieved for him as for a personal friend. His political views may

have appeared "unrealistic," but political "realism" is notoriously short-sighted; and it should not be forgotten that Magnes's views were basically those adopted afterwards by the Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry which might well have determined the future of the country.

I believe myself that the key lies in Dr. Magnes's character, and I am glad that Mr. Sacher calls attention to it. Magnes was, first of all, sincere. He spoke and acted from the heart. Second (and more unusually), he had the gift of compassion. He felt with other people. And it was because he felt with other people that his political and social opinions were what they were.

May I offer an example of this? Magnes was the first person in the country (to my knowledge) to interest himself in the state of the prisons, and during the last melancholy years of the Mandate he was the recognised intermediary between the all-too-numerous prisoners and the authorities. It mattered nothing to him that many of the prisoners on whose behalf he intervened were members of the terrorist groups which from 1929 on had threatened his own life. Here were men and women—in most cases, unfortunately, boys and girls—strayed, erring, misled, but, for all that, human beings, and as such they called out the humanity in him. It is as a human being, a great human being, that I and many others are glad to remember him.

(Dr.) LEON ROTH.
3 Merton Street,
Newnham, Cambridge.

HILLEL FOUNDATION AND STUDENTS

Hospitality in Nottingham

To the Editor of THE JEWISH CHRONICLE

Sir.—Miss Joy C. Balonov, Hon. Secretary of the Jewish Society at Nottingham, is quite justified in her contention, in her letter of January 14, that smaller groups such as her own should receive assistance from the Hillel Foundation.

However, to say that the Nottingham community is small and that they have afforded these temporary residents no assistance, is neither correct nor just.

In the first place, Nottingham is justly proud of its position in the ranks of the leading provincial communities, with a tradition for charity and hospitality second to none. The Nottingham Jewish Community Centre, where weekday kosher meals are obtainable, has welcomed these Jewish students.

Rabbi Dr. Posen, at the request of the Society, arranged for hospitality for a dozen students. Not one arrived. The Jewish Society of Nottingham University has never approached this congregation officially with its problems. We would be most willing to co-operate.

The question of Jewish accommodation is a particularly thorny one, but every effort will be made if and when some official approach is made.

J. SPUNGIN,
Hon. Secretary.
177 Rolleston Drive,
Nottingham.

COLONEL A. M. LYONS, O.C., has been elected a member of the Court of the Worshipful Company of Patten Makers.

TIMES FOR BEGINNING OF SABBATH

15-Minute Changes Introduced

To the Editor of THE JEWISH CHRONICLE

Sir.—The attention of your readers is drawn to the alterations in the times for the commencement of the Sabbath, which I judge have been authorised and approved by the Beth Din, to take effect from Friday next, February 11, as they are printed in the new edition of the "Jewish Year Book."

On that day the Sabbath will begin at 4.45 p.m. (instead of 4.30, which in past years was the time for this period of the year), and there will then be regular 15-minute changes until April 29, when the Sabbath will begin at 8 o'clock Summer Time, and it will remain at 8 o'clock until August 26, when it will change to 7.45 p.m. and decrease by 15-minutes until it reaches 3.30 p.m. on December 2.

I presume that these changes have been approved, because the half-hour difference was considered by many as too great an alteration of time, especially when, as in previous years, three successive Sabbaths were announced to begin at 4 p.m.; three at 4.30 p.m.; and three at 6.30 p.m. With the new changes there will not now be three successive weeks on which the Sabbath will begin at these times.

I think that the changes now approved by the Beth Din are a welcome improvement, and I think, too, that the Beth Din should also consider a later time than 8 o'clock for the commencement of the Sabbath, especially during the long summer days, when it is still daylight at 8 p.m.

S. KLEIN.
130 Cheviot Gardens, N.W.2.

BEFRIENDING DEPRIVED CHILDREN

Scheme for the Guardians

To the Editor of THE JEWISH CHRONICLE

Sir.—We note the letter, "Befriending Deprived Children," in last week's issue, with interest, because we ourselves have already started a scheme intended to satisfy the very need outlined by your correspondent.

However, our particular scheme was limited to "homes" under the Jewish Board of Guardians, because we felt that owing to the multiplicity of committees already then existing to help the Jewish Orphanage, Norwood, that this urgent and obvious need of friendship for deprived children, was already being satisfied. Apparently this is not so.

Our scheme consists in arranging for children who have no relatives or regular friends to be taken into a normal Jewish home at monthly intervals. Since the child goes to the same home on each occasion, we feel that the bond of mutual trust and friendship, which your correspondent so rightly thinks desirable, will be established.

Young parents with children of their own have already come forward to bring this idea to fruition. Surely there must be many others who would be willing to do likewise now that the machinery is established, and so satisfy the need for the Jewish Orphanage as well.

ALAN COHEN, LEWIS CUTLER,
PHILIP MORRIS.
110 Dorset House,
London, W.1.

REARMING GERMANY

Workers' Circle's Attitude

To the Editor of THE JEWISH CHRONICLE

Sir.—May we have the courtesy of your columns to correct certain impressions which may have been formed by your readers, after reading the report in your issue of January 21, of the Board of Deputies' meeting of January 16.

The rearming of a people who, twice in recent history, have brought the world to disaster, is something Jews in particular must view with alarm and dismay. The barbarous massacre of 6,000,000 Jews is too recent a memory for us to view the rearmament of Germany with equanimity.

It is beyond belief, therefore, that the Board of Deputies is not as concerned as any other Jewish organisation over this issue and needs prodding by a party organisation seeking political prestige.

The Workers' Circle Peace Committee, named as staging the demonstration at the Board of Deputies' meeting, is composed of only a few branches of the Workers' Circle, controlled by Communists through the usual apathy of the general membership. It does not represent nor can it claim to represent the Workers' Circle in any way. It is doubtful whether it would exist at all if the members of the branches concerned knew of its existence.

We wish to make it quite clear that the Workers' Circle as a whole is not responsible for the activities of the so-called Peace Committee, and we refute its right to use the name of our society for political purposes.

H. WALKER,
Secretary, Branch 3;
L. COLTON,
Chairman, Branch 6;
S. LEWIS,
Secretary, Branch 15.

"Circle House,"
22 Alie Street, E.1.

NON-JEWS IN A.J.Y. CLUBS

Small Number of Members

To the Editor of THE JEWISH CHRONICLE

Sir.—It would appear that my letter concerning non-Jews in A.J.Y. clubs has caused a great controversy among your readers.

I think that correspondents in your paper have rather given the impression that A.J.Y. clubs are filled with non-Jewish members. In point of fact, there are between 3 or 4 per cent non-Jews in all A.J.Y. clubs.

Mr. B. Pentol in his letter (which appeared in your issue of January 14) stated that he might not have interpreted my words as I would like them to be interpreted. Let me straight away assure him that nothing could be further from the fact. It is only people who are either extremely old fashioned in their view or possibly have never seen the inside of a youth club who can make such remarks concerning the purposes of a youth club.

If a non-Jew wishes to enrol as a member of a Jewish club, and he is willing to appreciate that the club is basically Jewish; then there can be no question other than that he must be accepted as a member of that club.

This whole question arose, simply because I was asked to give my own point of view at the Members' Council Conference concerning the acceptance of non-Jews into A.J.Y. clubs. Because I

gave my honest opinions on this and many other subjects I have constantly been criticised. I appreciate that other people can have various points of view as to whether clubs should open their doors to non-Jewish members, but on the other hand, I cannot appreciate that anyone can hold the view that no non-Jewish person should be allowed to enter and to use the amenities of a Jewish youth club.

Before any more of your readers are led to believe that there are more non-Jewish members of A.J.Y. clubs than Jewish, I would ask you, Sir, to end this controversy. Those people, such as Mr. Pentol, who seem to believe that anyone who disagrees with his point of view is in need of mental care, should come and spend a few nights at a youth club, which I am willing to arrange. Mr. Pentol can be assured that he will change his tune within a very short space of time.

G. DAVIS,
Ex-Hon. Secretary,
Hackney Boys' Club.

4 Martello Street,
London Fields, E.8

DUTY ON PARCELS TO ISRAEL

Overcharging Alleged

To the Editor of THE JEWISH CHRONICLE

Sir.—I wish to register a complaint about what seems to me and many of my acquaintances the excessive duty charged on parcels sent to Israel.

Not long ago I received a letter from a close relative there, informing me that £11 had been levied on a package containing two woollen dresses, to fit a year-old child, which had been purchased at a West End store for £2 10s. The dresses in question were of a strictly utility nature, as can be seen from the cost alone. There can also be no question of over-valuation by the customs officer as the official receipt from the store had been enclosed in the parcel.

We in England and America often feel that we should like to help our relations and friends in Israel by sending them parcels of foodstuffs and clothes for birthdays and holidays, but when one considers that the person at the other end may be charged as much as 100 per cent of the value of the goods sent, it seems hardly worth while. In this particular instance the gentleman in question could afford to pay the duty, but I, myself, when collecting packages at the post in Israel some months ago, frequently saw people coming up with dockets for parcels, only to return empty-handed because the charge was so high that their pockets could not meet it, and the parcel was returned to the sender. Others paid up at much hardship.

Sir, it is only to be expected that some duty be charged, but surely in matters of this nature a certain sense of proportion has to be used. One cannot go around charging for the sake of charging.

(Mrs.) J. B. OSTERWEIL.
15 Portman Square, W.1.

AID SOCIETY VISITS ORPHANAGE

The newly formed South-West London Orphan Aid Society visited the Jewish Orphanage, Norwood, recently, where they were received by Mr. Herbert B. de Mesquita, the Chairman of the House Committee. Mr. H. Content, the Chairman and former Principal of the Orphanage, pledged the support of the society.

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