

JACK TELL'S NEWSPAPER

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## WE WERE SLAVES UNTO PHAROH

By Sidney Pellte

Opening a Haggadah at the Seder table we find that, like all other festive occasions in Jewish life, the service begins with the traditional Kiddush. Certain special introductory rituals follow and a pointed reference is made to the plate containing the Matzohs, all present proclaiming that "this is the bread of affliction which our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt." The youngest person present then recites the well-known Ma Nish-ta-nah, and the reading of the Haggadah is on its way.

Refer now to the opening sentence of the response to the questions propounded by the youngster. It starts with the phrase: "Because we were slaves unto Pharaoh in Egypt..." Why were our ancestors in Egypt to begin with, and how did they happen to come to slaves of Pharaoh? The explanation given in the Haggadah that "we have come to sojourn in the land" is only a part of the answer. The fact is that it was Joseph, the Premier of Egypt, who was responsible for the migration of the Jews to that country. The Haggadah reminds us that the patriarch, Jacob, was living in Canaan with his family and that there was famine in the land, the same famine that Joseph had predicted, some seven years earlier, would strike Egypt.

After the now much-publicized, touching reunion of the brothers, Joseph, acting on instructions from Pharaoh, asked his father to come and live in Egypt, Pharaoh offering the "best of the land." The invitation was accepted, although only "to sojourn." Thus it was that Jacob and his family went to live in the land of Goshen. There the population explosion which had been promised to Jacob, and to Abraham before him, followed.

Time passed, and Joseph and those of his generation passed on, as did the Pharaoh whom he had served so well and who had befriended his father and his fathers' people. Meanwhile the Jewish population had increased to undreamed of proportions, and was continuing to grow. The new occupant of the Egyptian throne, to whom the exploits of Joseph on behalf of the prior Pharaoh were unknown, entertained no benevolent sentiments towards the Jews. Indeed he adopted, and encouraged the Egyptians to exhibit, a hostile attitude towards the people whom he regarded as strangers in his land, fearing that they might join Egypt's enemies in case of war. That his fears were groundless made no matter; he was determined to oppress the Jews in the futile hope of preventing their increase. Thus came about the enslavement of the Jews under Pharaoh; the indirect, unpredicted, and wholly unexpected outcome of an act of kindness on the part of a monarch and the sagacity and cleverness of his Jewish Viceroy.

It is an interesting sidelight on this bit of biblical history that in Joseph's administration for the food supply during the period of the famine, it was the Egyptian people who became enslaved, giving up first their money, then their possessions and land and finally their freedom. Their lands were later returned to them, but 1/5th of all they produced had to be paid to Pharaoh, for his benevolence.

organization. The Birchers, striving for respectability, had to renounce some of the ridiculous theories they expounded at the beginning and on the way up. No, they didn't mean it when they said Pres. Eisenhower was a Communist. Smear was the order of the day by this secret society.

But the pendulum is now on its backswing. Congress is about to investigate these organizations. Last Sunday a one hour documentary was shown on television. "Danger on the Right" was a presentation under the auspices of the local chapter of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. Mrs. George Brookman, Eileen to you and us, brought the show to our and your attention.

After years of wondering when and what will come along to combat this terrible evil, with a snap of the finger our wonder and worry is being resolved.

The documentary proved clearly, unquestionably, the nonsense, the futility, the stupidity of the purpose and course of the John Birch Society. At last an intellectual, thorough response is being made to the wild charges of the irresponsible society.

Like we said at the beginning, folks, everything is turning out all right.

## TELL TALES

"One Man Plus The Truth Constitutes A Majority"

BY JACK TELL



## PASSOVER MARVEL

(The following information was gathered from the Columbia Encyclopedia, The Story of Pesach published by a commercial matzoh company, and Tolstol.)

How much can be added to a story that has been commemorated and told in every Jewish family during the annual Seder? True, each year the ceremonial portion of the traditional party dwindles, while the menu for the feast keeps expanding in proportion to the new products that hit the market, labeled Kosher for Passover. The soup-to-nuts Seder now includes canned soups, frozen meats, all flavors of soda pop, many kinds of candy and after-dinner mints - all legitimately in keeping with Passover dietary laws, and stylish.

But the story persists, nevertheless. It had its inception long before Moses, when Jacob's son Joseph, was sold into slavery by his brothers. Joe, with his Jewish "kup" interpreted a dream of the king Pharaoh which saved Egypt from starvation. All Joe did was store up grain during the years of plenty for food during the years of starvation.

Generations later, another Pharaoh, panicked by interpretation of a nightmare, ordered all Jewish male babies cast into the Nile. That's when Moses was set adrift in a waterproof basket and was rescued by the Pharaoh's daughter, to grow up in the palace.

Moses, who never forgot he was a Jew, belted an anti-Semite and had to go into hiding. He married the daughter of a Priest and became a sheep grazer.

One day near Mt. Sinai, a voice from a burning bush commanded Moses to set the children of Israel free. Moses tried to reason with Pharaoh but it was no use. Strong measures were needed. A plague brought death to every first-born Egyptian. Pharaoh was glad then to get rid of the Hebrews, who took off in a hurry. Three days later, Pharaoh changed his mind and set out after the Jews with the Egyptian army. The Israelites practically had to eat on the march as prepared food didn't have time to let the dough rise so the short-baked bread came out unleavened - now known as matzohs.

Then came the incident at the Red Sea where the waters parted to let the Hebrews across, only to come together again to drown the Egyptians. After 40 years of wandering, the Israelites settled in Canaan, the Promised Land beyond the Jordan River. But Moses never got there.

It was God's will that Moses should get a look at the Promised Land from Mt. Pisgah before he died of old age. Exactly when Moses received the Ten Commandments from God is not clearly identified. Our belief is that Moses was in constant touch with God and all liturgical law was promulgated through him. From the Ten Commandments came all accepted criminal codes and mandates of human ethics practiced in civilized countries.

Leo Tolstol, the Russian novelist and philosopher who died in 1910, came up with several answers to the question: "What is a Jew?" Some of his responses are appropriately significant to the story of Passover.

He wrote: "Let us see what kind of peculiar creature the Jew is, which all the rulers and all nations have together and separately abused and molested, oppressed and persecuted, trampled and butchered, burned and hanged - and in spite of all this he is yet alive."

"The Jew is the religious source, spring and fountain out of which all the rest of the peoples have drawn their beliefs and their religions."

"The Jew is the pioneer of liberty. The Jew is the pioneer of civilization. Ignorance was condemned in olden Palestine more even than it is today in civilized Europe."

"The Jew is an emblem of civil and religious toleration," wrote Tolstol, who went on to quote Moses in remote and savage times when the principal ambition of the nations consisted of crushing and enslaving one another: "Love the stranger, Moses commands, "Because you have been stranger in the land of Egypt."

"The Jew is the emblem of eternity," wrote Tolstol, who continued, "He whom neither fire nor sword nor inquisition was able to wipe off from the face of the earth, he who was the first to produce the oracles of God, he who has been for long the guardian of prophesy, and who transmitted it to the rest of the world - such a nation cannot be destroyed. The Jew is everlasting as is eternity itself."

After reading the writings of Tolstol, who authored "War and Peace," "Anna Karenina," and other monumental works, you kind of get the unequivocal, indisputable feeling that the Jewish religion is here to stay. Let's keep it that way no matter how you celebrate Passover. Incidentally, Tolstol was not Jewish.

## BIRCHER SQUELCHED

Everything is turning out all right, folks, as we knew it would.

You see, in this great, big, wonderful country of ours, there is a unseen equalizer, a hidden leveler, which somehow brings things back to status quo whenever they seem to stray too far in any direction.

Back in the roaring 20's during the aftermath of World War 1, with the stock market soaring to unheard of highs, prosperity was at a peak and prohibition an accepted circumstance. With prohibition came illegal booze and bootleggers galore. The illicit sale of liquor became the biggest racket of all time, enticing gangsters and hoodlums away from prostitution, smuggling and dope. With millions upon millions in cash at their disposal, organized crime gangs cropped up in all sections of the country. With money as the passport, the journey was easy for nefarious characters to gain control of lawmaking politicians, police who enforced the laws and courts where laws were adjudicated. There seemed to be no end to the unhealthy situation and no way out of the grips of the unholy.

Just when all was hopelessly lost, up cropped Thomas E. Dewey and other fearless prosecutors. The Achilles heel in the impregnable position of the gangsters was the little-thought-of, mild, income tax evasion laws.

There was a time when Communism was the order of the day and persons at all levels strove to get on the band wagon. This extremity on the left was soon combatted by McCarthyism, which removed the Commys from style and brought on an equally dangerous menace. In due course the junior Senator from Wisconsin became an also ran.

In the back wash of the extreme measures of the McCarthy movement, other rightest organizations came into being. As usual, the placid, run-of-the-mill American Joe was concerned with making a living, supporting his family and minding his own business. But rabble-rousers were at work planning and plotting to upset the equilibrium of our status quo. The American Nazi Party and the John Birch Society among others were formed and commenced using every and any means for recognition. The Rockwell mob, capitalizing on all the "good" Hitler did for this little old world of ours, are continuing the tactics of the Fuehrer, like a calf nibbling on the teat of anti-Semitism for sustenance. They're no-where yet, so we'll dismiss them with a yawn.

But the John Welshers are another story. After grouping around for recognition, with secret membership lists, outlandish accusations against American's most respected citizens, hidden innuendoes about Jews being behind the Communist movement and Commys supporting Civil Righters. The John Birchers suddenly got a lucky break. Through some quirk of circumstance Barry Goldwater got the Republican nomination for the presidency. Now the Birchers came into their own. More than a million joined the ranks of this questionable

## traditional way to make a Seder

- 1 CANDLES** are lighted by the mother of the house to usher in the festival of Passover. The benediction which she pronounces over the candles gives a religious meaning to this simple act. An abundance of light symbolizes joy and festivity, and the soft candle-glow adds an aura of spirituality to the Seder table.
- 2 A CUP OF WINE** is placed at each table setting. The sanctification of the Holiday is pronounced over the first cup. Three additional cups are drunk during the course of the Seder, making a total of four, to symbolize the four expressions of the Lord's promise to redeem the children of Israel and deliver them from bondage.
- 3 THE HAGGADAH** (literally "the telling") contains the complete Seder ceremonies in their prescribed order (Seder). The first part of the book concerned mainly with the history of the Jews' deliverance from Egypt, is read before the meal. After dinner follows the second portion consisting of prayers of praise and thanks to the Almighty.
- 4 MATZOH** represents the "bread of affliction" eaten by the Jews in Egypt, and also the bread that had to be baked during their hasty flight when there was no time for leavening. Three matzot are placed in the Seder tray. Half the middle matzoh, saved for the Ajikomon (dessert), is playfully "stolen" by a child and ransomed for a prize.
- 5 THE Z'ROAH**, a roasted shank bone, is placed on the Seder tray. It represents the ancient sacrifice of the Paschal lamb (Pesach) which had to be eaten roasted. Pesach, the Hebrew name for Passover, also refers to the Lord's passing over (pasach) the Jewish homes during the plague visited upon the Egyptian first-born.
- 6 THE BEITZAH**, a roasted egg placed left of the Z'roah, symbolizes the required offering brought on all festivals in the Temple. The egg, while not itself sacrificed, is used in the Seder as it is the Jewish symbol of mourning (in this case for the loss of the Temple where the sacrifices were brought).
- 7 THE MAROR** or "bitter herbs" (usually horseradish) is placed in the middle of the tray and symbolizes the Jews' bitter suffering under the Egyptian yoke. Directly below is the Chazereth, another piece of bitter herbs, commemorating the custom of eating Maror sandwiched between two pieces of Matzoh.
- 8 THE CHAROSET**, placed beneath the Z'roah, is a mixture of chopped apple, nuts, cinnamon, and wine designed to look like the mortar used by the Jews in building the palaces and pyramids of Egypt during centuries of forced labor. Before the Maror is eaten, it is dipped into the Charoset.
- 9 THE KARPAS**, a piece of parsley or lettuce placed to the left of the Charoset, symbolizes the meager diet of the Jews in Egyptian bondage. It is dipped into salt water in remembrance of the tears they shed in their misery. The Karpas also signifies Springtime, the season of Passover.
- 10 THE CUP OF ELIJAH**, filled with wine, is kept on the table throughout the Seder in the hope that the Prophet Elijah may appear as a messenger of the Almighty and announce the coming of the Messiah. Thus, in the midst of their memories of the past, the Jews look forward to the day of universal peace, love, and brotherhood.

## TEEN SCENE

By Vickie Grafman



The Las Vegas B.B.G. is holding a dance in the Temple Youth Center April 24 to strengthen their drive for new members. The dance will be from 8:00 to 11:30 and is open to all Jewish teenagers ages 14-18. The admission will be free and there will be a live band.

College coeds in for Passover are Merle Grafman and Ginger Gilson from San Fernando Valley State College; and Elaine Katzman from San Jose State College. Also in for the holidays is Linda Rabin, who works for a lawyer in Los Angeles.

Those U.S.Y. members who participated in the Teenage Seder last Sunday at 5:30 were Billy Brown, Marty Kravitz, Mark Toscher, Larry Brown, Jan Klein, and Frank Dase. Girls who acted as hostesses and helped with the preparing of the Seder were Vickie Grafman, Ruth Pearson, Sharon Kersch, Judi Gold, Joan Weinstein, and Brianna Dase.