



Harry Golden's "Only In America"

"THE GREATEST JEW"

The death of David Selznick, who produced the classic "Gone with the Wind," saddened me because it recalled a story my friend the late Jimmy Street once told me.

Jimmy Street was a very successful writer but before that he was a newspaperman. He was so good that managing editors broke their codes and some of them rehired him four, five and six times. Jimmy needed rehiring often because he was--well, let's put it gently--fond of bending the elbow morning, noon and night. (In later years, of course, Jimmy was a guiding beacon in the Chapel Hill Alcoholics Anonymous. Whenever an alcoholic needed help, he always called Jimmy because Jimmy was a lot more interesting than any of the other reformees. Jimmy always responded.)

In the midst of this sobriety, Jimmy told me one night, "David Selznick is the greatest Jew in America."

The statement amazed me. I had never met Mr. Selznick; I could safely presume he was an upstanding man, a credit to the movie business, generous to his

shule perhaps, but in Jewish affairs? Never heard of it.

By what virtue did Jimmy, a Catholic turned Baptist, turned Unitarian, turned Episcopalian, instruct me on "great Jews"?

It all went back to the time a tough editor fired Jimmy for the fifth time. Jimmy decided not to ask for his old job back. He bought a copy of the "Saturday Evening Post," secreted himself in a hotel room, and counted the words of the short story of the week. Then he sat at his typewriter and wrote a short story and when he had the requisite number of words, he quit and mailed the story off. The Post bought it. Jimmy called it, "Nothing Sacred."

Two weeks later he had a check with which he proceeded to bend his elbow. During the celebration, David Selznick contacted Jimmy and said he was interested in buying the story for a movie. Jimmy, on the telephone, said sure, anything. And sure enough, Selznick arrived at Jimmy's apartment later with a check for the movie rights.

Said Selznick, "I forgot to discuss with you the future

rights. I hesitate to ask you now." And said, Selznick, with discretion, "Have your lawyer or an agent get in touch with me and we will complete that part of the deal."

Jimmy grabbed the movie check and forgot all about future rights. Nothing Sacred as a movie starred Fredric March, John Barrymore, and Carole Lombard. It was made later into another movie with Jerry Lewis, and into a play and then into a musical called "Hazel Flagg." It is still playing somewhere in one form or another.

"That's why David Selznick is the greatest Jew in the world," said Jimmy. "Had he offered me \$500 extra for those future rights that night, I would have signed anything. But he was a gentleman. He wouldn't take advantage of a man, not himself."

Through his whole life, Jimmy Street was always receiving a royalty check of one sort or another from Nothing Sacred. And according to his lights, David Selznick was, "the greatest Jew in America."

CREDIT FOR KIDS

It is helping the economy but ruining some boys and girls for life: high-school credit, some jewelry stores call it. Teen-credit, say some of the sport stores.

They make it easy. Come and get it--weejuns, London Fog coats, madras shirts, the whole kit. Some of the stores charge 8 per cent on the unpaid balance. At the end of four months the kid has paid \$300 for \$200 worth of merchandise which was worth \$95 to begin with, and which has already been discarded, out of style. One store advertises, "All the credit you want," and the kids buy and buy.

They have all discovered that kids between 13 and 18 are ready for exploitation.

In addition to the credit, the kids also have an allowance.

The great joy of an allowance, of course, is not reserved for the small fry. Rather, it is the parents who dole out the money who pleasure themselves with reminiscences of how, when they were young, they didn't get an allowance but had to mow the neighbor's lawn or run errands.

My classmates and I on the Lower East Side of New York received an allowance of two pennies a day, back there in 1908-1914. One penny was for lunch at one of

Barney Glazer's Glazed Bits



Hollywood, Calif. (TCNS)-Suzann F. Cohen, of the Canadian Jewish Review, read my recent account of actor Nehemiah Persoff's experiences while making a movie in the Outremont section of Montreal. Said Suzann, "The district is Outremont (Nehemia and I stand corrected) and it is not a parochial and chasidic district as described. Only about two or three blocks of this large section provide a nucleus for yeshivah and the rest is sophisticated, elegant and extensive."

Nehemia explained, "For our film, we were using a house adjoining a park. Out of a crowd of approximately 100 children and adults who left their play to crowd around us, not less than 90% spoke Yiddish, were interested in anything topically Jewish and also understood and/or spoke Hebrew."

"The local rabbi, who had come from Boston, provided me with information about the local Jewish residents, which Mr. Glazer's story did

Mr. Nathan Straus's free milk stations. For a penny you could drink all the milk you wanted. And it was pasteurized. Mr. Straus was a pioneer in the pasteurization of milk. The second penny was for candy, and there were vast possibilities in those days for a penny.

Today the little girl next door gets a \$5 a week allowance and so does her 16-year-old brother, but he also has a second hand car which cost \$690. His father says, "Tommy is paying off his car, \$1 a week. Isn't he wonderful?" Papa had raised Tommy's allowance \$1 a week to take care of that weekly payment to him on the car.

Tommy also gets a manicure once in a while but despite all of this, his mother tells me, "Tommy isn't happy," which confidentially was the best news I heard in a month.

But, back to the allowance. According to the Wall Street Journal, which not too long ago ran a front-page story on kids as capitalists, the true crisis of the allowance is when the 11-year-old wants to subscribe to Playboy. After all, the allowance is his money, and does father want to be called an Indian-Giver?

not exaggerate.

"Mr. Glazer wrote that Outremont has almost a total Jewish population, a fact that Miss Cohen did not challenge. He reported correctly that if and when we shoot our film, 'Call It Sleep,' with Yiddish dialogue in Outremont, we hope to capture its old -/country Yiddishkeit, which, admits Suzann, does exist."

"At no time did Mr. Glazer say that Outremont is completely parochial and chasidic. That was apparently the lady's assumption."

"If Outremont has only two or three blocks as a nucleus for yeshivah, it should be noted that when we shoot our picture there it will taken even less than two or three blocks to capture the full flavor of the community's parochial and chasidic atmosphere."

"From what I observed and from what Suzann contributes, the chasidic area, like Israel, may be small but its spirit and message should reach around the world."

MAZELTOV to Anita and Shimon Wincelberg on the recent birth of their son, Jacob. Shimon recently adapted Paddy Chayefsky's "Gideon" for "Jews and History," new University of Judaism program for a fall television showing.

IN HIS SICK-SICK autobiography, "Memoirs of an Amnesiac" (Putnam,) Oscar Levant writes a healthy detail of an unforgettable era surrounded by his psychosomatic illnesses. In his con-

fessional, the brilliant pianist-wit, addicted to pills and barbiturates, dwells on the mores of people in show-business, serious music and gang rule.

LITTLE Jackie Heller (5' 1" - 109 lbs.), host for the Las Vegas Sands Hotel Celebrity Theater, has been commuting to Hollywood where he plays Mr. Big for Producer-star Morey Amsterdam in "Don't Worry, We'll Think of a Title." Seen only in sitting position throughout the picture, Mr. Big's height limitation isn't revealed until he stands up in the film's final scenes.

Amsterdam told me the following golf story. The Pope asked Arnold Palmer to represent the Vatican in an Israel golf tournament but, in order to make it look official to enter as "Father Palmer." When Palmer returned a week later he told the Pope, "I lost." "Who beat you?" asked the Holy Father and Palmer replied, Israel entry, "The Rabbi Snead."

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