

Passover Observations

By SAMUEAL SILVER

On Passover we remember that the Egyptian monarch was hard of heart. He refused to let the Jews leave bondage even when he was smitten by plague after plague.

In our day Egypt still has a Pharaoh. He is as obdurate as his ancient predecessor. He too has sustained plague after plague, and his heart is as hard as ever.

They quip that Nasser now goes to shul regularly; he is praying for Moses to come back and take the Jews out of Egypt again.

Passover also reminds us that many fights for freedom have been inspired by the original Mosaic insurrection. We rejoice on Pesach because the holiday is a signal that man's yearning for emancipation can be fulfilled if he will show the same intrepidity as Moses and history's first group of "freedom fighters."

When the U.S., liberated by George Washington and his followers, was born, the impulse on the part of many was to see in this nation the recrudescence of the ancient struggle for independence against the notorious Pharaoh who "did not know Joseph."

No wonder someone has said that liberty speaks with a Hebrew accent.

In the American Negro world the Passover saga also inspired the movement toward equality. Martin Luther King was catalyzed to initiate the modern surge for Negro freedom by the example of the Mosaic thrust, as described in the Bible and as celebrated around the Passover table. Alas, certain Negro leaders now speak of a "death of the civil rights movement." They are seeking to reverse the drive towards equality and have taken refuge in a kind of a "Negro" bigotry. So can idealism be blurred and deferred.

As we celebrate Passover our eyes are turned towards the much-promised Land and we realize, that the modern Israelis have not yet won complete freedom. In every age, the Passover Hagaddah says, we must struggle all over again to win the prize of ease from bondage.

Let us then add to our celebration of Passover the resolve to do our part in bringing about the full redemption of Israel. To do this we must relay the truth about the Middle East.

The truth is that the Arab leaders are the greatest enemies of their own people, keeping them in the same kind of degradation which Pharaoh visited upon the slaves of old. What the Arab leaders are afraid of is not Israel so much as the twentieth century, for they see in



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the triumph of Zionism the loss of the autocratic control over their people whose lot in Arab countries is often more squalid than in the refugee camps. And responsible for the refugee problem are not the Israelis, but the Arab leaders who urged the Arabs to leave Palestine.

The truth is that American Jews must support Israel not only because that land is good for the Jews but because it is good for America. Israel represents the cause of democracy. When American diplomats fail to give

full support to Israel they not only encourage terrorism; they weaken the fabric of democracy.

The truth is that modern man is still not accustomed to the new breed of Jew in Israel. As Abda Eban and others have said, the world clings to the image of the obsequious Jew afraid to hit back. Well, sir, the world will have to become familiar with a new brand of Jew who will no longer meekly and weakly accept opprobrium and oppression either in the Middle East or in Brooklyn. And may the time come soon when this new Jew will break the silken chains bind him behind the Iron Curtain!

The truth is that Israel has been the target of unjustified calumny only because she is small. Larger nations can engage in aggression and the world looks the other way. When America does this she betrays her soul.

The truth is that even "moderate" Arab leaders have not yet brought themselves to say that they will accept the fact that Israel is. Only the combined pressure of the Big Nations, listening to what is best in their consciences, and the might of Israel will bring the Arab leaders to the realization that they must abstain from their desire to annihilate the Jewish republic.

We will have fun at the Seder table. We have earned the right to observe the meaningful festival of Passover. But we must not "pass over" our responsibilities to keep the spirit of this precious holiday alive through our deeds and our personal link-up with the process and procession of bringing truth and freedom to the entire world.

GROSSINGER, N.Y. (WNS) -- The national director of B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation cautioned the Jewish community against "confused judgements about Jewish college youths active in New Left campus movements." Rabbi Benjamin Kahn said "confused critics" of campus activities "compound" their "inadequate understanding of the attitudes and convictions of Jewish youth in the New Left by losing sight of two salient facts -- about five percent of the 350,000 Jewish student enrollment is engaged in New Left activities and affiliation with the New Left does not necessarily mean a rejection of Judaism and Jewish identity."

NEW YORK -- Heading an impressive array of government dignitaries, American communal leaders and friends of Magen David Adom, Congressman Emanuel Celler, National Chairman of the American Red Magen David Adom, helped break ground for the Baifa Magen David Adom Medical Complex in an elaborate ceremony held in that city.

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