



Calling on President Kennedy, with Herbert H. Lehman, to discuss civil rights issues and discrimination, 1962.



With Ambassador Menshikov, Lehman, Premier Mikoyan, Irving M. Engel, protesting Soviet Jews' plight, 1959.

IN MEMORIAM JACOB BLAUSTEIN 1892 · 1970

At 9:30 p.m. on Sunday, November 15, 1970, a heavy pall descended upon the American Jewish Committee. Jacob Blaustein passed away. I have tried to put into words something of the essence of Jacob as a person and as a leader of the Committee.

The American Jewish Committee feels a sense of emptiness by the loss of one of its giants. For three decades, his life and the life of the Committee were inextricably interwoven. He served as Chairman of its Executive Committee from 1943 to 1949, as its President from 1949 to 1954, and as one of its most vigorous and colorful leaders for all of the remaining years of his teeming life.

A full catalogue of his achievements would be endless. But if he had done no more than the three I shall mention, the AJC and all of Jacob's fellowmen could indeed say "Dayenu."

Jacob played a leading role in the introduction of the Human Rights provisions into the United Nations Charter, and with Judge Proskauer spent

A resolution, presented by David Sher, Chairman of AJC Board of Governors, and adopted by the AJC National Executive Council, at Houston, December 5, 1970.

six continuous weeks at the International Conference in San Francisco which established the United Nations.

Later, with an uncommon blend of determination and diplomacy, Jacob hammered out with David Ben-Gurion and his government a statement clarifying the precise political nature of the relationship between American Jews and Israel, taking for his platform the landmark AJC declaration, "Jews in Israel are Israelis, Jews in America are Americans. We reaffirm this proposition with all that it implies." Consistently with this concept, he worked continuously and assiduously and effectively to build Israel into a virile economic and social entity.

Subsequently, for a number of years he was the moving force in the Commission for Jewish Material Claims Against Germany and virtually single-handedly procured not only for Israel but for the rebuilding of the shattered Jewish communities of Western Europe the reparations paid by the German Federal Republic to the Jews of the world. To this task, Jacob brought to bear not only his humanitarian concern but the negotiating skill of which he was a renowned master. Indeed, he gave to every one of his communal

endeavors all of the acumen, diligence and forcefulness which brought him to the zenith of American enterprise.

But formidable as were all of Jacob's contributions to Jewry and to mankind, Jacob as a person glowed through Jacob and his good works.

Jacob's variegated personality was a complex of many vivid characteristics, one of the most conspicuous of which was his hardihood — physical, intellectual and moral. He appeared to be an indestructible man. It seemed inconceivable that Jacob could ever die or even age. It is impossible even now to believe that his intense voice has been forever stilled, that his searching eyes have been forever closed and that his powerful mind will forever slumber.

When Jacob determined to attain what he considered a vital goal, he became an irresistible force in the path of which there could be no immovable object; and when he set himself to stand against an end he regarded as wrong, he became an immovable object against which there could be no irresistible force.

Nobody expended more time, took more pains, poured out more energy, lavished more profuse attention to

carry out with zeal and with zest — and with a sense of deep satisfaction — his unremitting determination to accomplish a result he regarded as right.

Jacob's critical intelligence taught him never to be swayed by a slogan or captivated by a cliché. He invariably reached the heart of a matter — not always by the quickest route. Jacob's passion for thoroughness had first to be satisfied.

Jacob belonged to the nuclear age. No stationary object of sculpture could ever memorialize, let alone express, his dynamic personality. Not even a mobile could convey the rhythm of his perpetual motion. Even the miracle of the modern missile would be suitable as a symbol only if it were first stripped of the retro-rockets which arrest the velocity of its course.

Not only Jacob, but his family became a part of the AJC. It was so much an element of his life that it inexorably became an element of their lives, and the Blaustein tradition remains well sustained in our councils.

We can but utter the lament reserved for a few rare figures: "A prince has fallen in Israel;" and, we add, "in all mankind."

Thank God he lived. □



To rebuild Europe's Jewish communities: at 1955 Conference of Hope, with (left) Sara and Herbert Ehrmann



The library at AJC headquarters, part of Jacob and Hilda Blaustein Center for Human Relations Research.

Dr. JACK COPE

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