

American Zionist History

NEW YORK -- The first fruits of a major research project in American Zionist history are about to appear, according to Professor Ben Halpern, director of the project at Brandeis University.

With the support of the World Zionist Organization, preparatory studies have been going on for the past four years at Brandeis University and at Columbia University's Department of History. A number of these studies, prepared as doctoral dissertations at Brandeis are being made ready for publication as monographs. They will be followed by a synthetic historical study of American Zionism being written by Professors Halpern, of Brandeis University, and Arthur Hertzberg, of Columbia University.

The preparatory works include studies of both groups and individuals who have played significant roles on the Zionist scene in the United States, ranging from monographs on the State Department in the Roosevelt administration, to others on Hadassah, Louis Lipsky, Felix Warburg and Felix Adler. Included are analyses of religion and secularism in the World Zionist movement, the American Jewish leftism in the

1920's and the question of the Jewish national home in international law.

The first of these studies being prepared for publication are those dealing with the Truman administration's Palestine policy and American Jewish leadership (by Zvi Ganin) and Allon Gal's examination of Louis D. Brandeis' Zionist activity.

"The whole field of Zionist history is in a process of extra-ordinary expansion in Israel itself, and in the United States, Britain and France," according to Dr. Halpern, "and the work being stimulated by the Zionist history project, here and in Israel, is a major contributing and formative factor in this growth.

"The filter - down effect of solid knowledge of American Jewry in Israel, and of Israel in America, and of the history of Zionism in both countries," he said, "will be felt over a whole generation. To the existing well - established scholarly centers in Israel, at the Universities of Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv and Haifa, the beginnings of strong centers at Brandeis and Columbia Universities have been added.

"How to consolidate and secure the future of these beginnings is a subject deserving serious consideration. The obvious necessity is to build them up into broader structures of modern Jewish and Israeli historical research."

Professor Halpern is preparing the first half of the synthetic history from the beginning of Zionist effort in the United States to 1937, and Professor Hertzberg is writing on the period from 1837 to 1976.

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"The year 5,737 which we are now welcoming, finds the Jewish people, as so many times before in our long history, with much to be grateful for even as we have much about which to be apprehensive.

"For our people in Israel, we can be thankful that her borders are quiet, that her citizens, while still taxed with the high cost in effort, time and resources that their continued independence requires, have reasonable hope of seeing the coming year through to its close without another outbreak of war.

"We are grateful also that they have been able to alleviate the suffering of their neighbors to the north, engulfed in the tragedy of a civil war. We take pride in Israel's example of humanitarian action extended even to the unfortunate among her enemies.

"In other lands, from the Soviet Union to Argentina, Jews are not so fortunate. The increasing incidence of anti-semitism in a country that was one of the most enlightened in South America causes us great anguish even as does

the continuing oppression of our people in a country whose mistreatment of Jews is an historic wrong.

"To all Jews for whom freedom is only a distant hope, our prayers go forth on this New Year and with them our pledge to do all we can to assist them in their plight that they may enjoy the blessings of freedom even as we do in our country.

"That our fellow Americans continue to regard the preservation of freedom, here and elsewhere as the highest task of a democratic society, is certainly the greatest reason we have for looking toward the New Year 5,737 in a spirit of optimism.

On behalf of my colleagues and myself I wish for our friends, neighbors and associates in the larger community, and for our family in the Jewish community, a peaceful and a happy New Year.

TEL AVIV (MDA) -- One hundred and nineteen women, housewives for the most part, from the development town of Beit Shean recently enrolled and completed a 6 week MDA First Aid Training course, held under the auspices of Magen David Adom.

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