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PLAIN TALK

BY ALFRED SEGAL

AMAZING MR. LEVEY

I came upon Mr. Levey (Richard Michael Levy, that is) in the International Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians. I have known Levis, Levys and Leveys who turned themselves into Llewellyns or maybe O'Shaughnessys but Richard Michael, born O'Shaughnessy, chose to be a Levey, instead.

His brief biography in the cyclopedia read:

"Levey, Richard Michael (real name O'Shaughnessy) born in Dublin 1811, died June 28, 1899 in Dublin. Irish conductor and composer of light opera. Conductor, Theater Royal Orchestra. Composer of 50 overtures. Arranged music for 44 pantomimes. Founder, 1850, of Royal Irish Academy of Music."

Yes, he had deliberately abandoned being an O'Shaughnessy in Dublin to live and die as Levey.

"How come?" I asked him. You may wonder about a feat of journalism that interviews a man who has been dead all of 51 years and resting in a grave in Dublin. It's easy if you smoke a pipe. You draw a couple of deep inhalations and there's the ghost of old Mr. Levey in your living room, sitting in the spacious chair.

That's how it came to pass that I was interviewing Mr. Levey the other evening . . . "How come, Mr. Levey? . . . I had pointed out that many a Levy and Cohen aspire to other names. I had heard of a Cohen who became Mr. Priest by translating himself into English and there was the born Levy who, according to legend, died Lively.

"You see, Mr. Levey, how rare you are! An O'Shaughnessy converting himself into a Levey in Dublin. Please explain."

Mr. Levey's Irish countenance twinkled in the classic Irish way . . . "It was a joke on a Jewish friend of mine in Dublin whose name was Levey. I was a fellow given to practical joking and for a good joke I would even give up the grand old name of O'Shaughnessy which I surely did."

Even in Paradise he hadn't given up his penchant for practical joking. Only the other week he managed to purloin the famous trumpet of the angel Gabriel and, even while Gabriel was hunting it high and low, Mr. Levey, versatile musician that he still is, played "Irish Eyes" on it.

It was all in line with the prankish way he did with the other Levey's name long ago . . . "Och," he told me, "that other Levey was an excellent gentleman, if ever there was one. A fine broth of a fellow and me and him were as thick as shamrocks at St. Patrick's day, blessed be that holy name."

"He always drank with me to the hallowed name of St. Patrick on his great day and I drank with him to the hallowed name of Moses who set the people free, on the Jewish Passover. That was the way together of me and Abe (Continued on Page Eight)

Arabs Refuse to Support United Nations

TEL AVIV--(ISI)—Syria's determination to remain neutral in the East-West conflict has been announced by Premier Nazem El Qudsi, according to the Cairo Arabic Radio. Nahas Pasha, Premier of Egypt, is understood to have informed British Ambassador to Egypt that Egypt considers the Korean war to be a civil war and of no concern to her.

The Egyptian daily, Al Ahram, approved Egypt's refusal to support last week's Security Council resolution on Korea.

The leader of the Iraqi Independent Party has announced his party's support of the neutral stand taken by Egypt on the Korean war, according to the Near East Arabic Radio. He declared that the Arabs could never take up an aggressive stand, even if the Western Powers returned Palestine to them.

AMERICAN POLIO EXPERT VISITS ISRAEL

HAIFA (ISI)—Dr. John Paul, Yale University professor and international poliomyelitis specialist, arrived in Israel this week for consultations with the Ministry of Health.

Rabbi Pekarsky Appointed Director B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation at Hebrew University



Rabbi Maurice B. Pekarsky

Rabbi Maurice B. Pekarsky, outstanding Hillel director and well-known American Jewish educator, has been granted a year's leave of absence from his post as director of the B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation at the University of Chicago to institute the B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. The Foundation in Jerusalem will be the 200th Hillel unit.

Rabbi Pekarsky sails for Israel the middle of August together with his family.

ISRAEL SUPPORTS SECURITY COUNCIL ON KOREA

JERUSALEM—(ISI)—The Government of Israel has joined 42 other members of the United Nations in condemning the breach of the peace in Korea. Israel's Cabinet met this week in extraordinary session at the home of President Weizmann and adopted the following resolution in reply to the Security Council's appeal for support:

46th Anniversary of Dr. Herzl's Death Marked By Ceremonies in Jerusalem

JERUSALEM (JTA)—A memorial flame was lighted here this week on the grave of Dr. Theodor Herzl, founder of political Zionism, in commemoration of the 46th anniversary of his death. Participating in the ceremonies were members of the Israel Parliament, Jewish Agency, surviving representatives of the first Zionist Congress, Chief Rabbi Isaac Herzog and Mayer Daniel Auster.

Illuminated by searchlights, Herzl's flag, which had served as the emblem of the first Zionist Congress, was raised over the tomb. Selections from Dr. Herzl's writings were recited during the ceremonies. Throughout the entire day honor guards from the Israel Army and youth organizations stood constant watch over the tomb on Herzl Hill.

"Fighting Irish" Aid UJA Campaign For Settlement In Israel

As a gesture of the interest of the "Fighting Irish" in the rehabilitation of Jewish refugees abroad, the Notre Dame Alumni Association of New York has made a contribution to the United Jewish Appeal to aid in the settlement and reconstruction in Israel of thousands of homeless Jews from all parts of the world.

EDITOR OF JEWISH DAILY FORWARD IS 90 THIS WEEK

NEW YORK, (JTA)—The 90th birthday of Abraham Cahan, editor-in-chief of the Jewish Daily Forward, will be celebrated with a public dinner in September, it was announced here this week. Mr. Cahan will reach the age of 90 this week.

The dean of Jewish journalism and one of the most colorful personalities in American Jewry, Mr. Cahan has attained a distinctive place in American literature as a novelist and short story writer. However, most of his years were devoted to building up the Forward and to cementing the Jewish Labor movement. His "Rise of David Levinsky" has been acclaimed as one of the best American novels of this generation.

Mr. Cahan is a strong supporter of Israel. A chair in labor history has been established in his name at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He has been fighting Communism ever since the Communist Party came to power in Russia.

"The Government of Israel opposes and condemns aggression wherever it may occur and from whatever quarter it may emanate. In fulfillment of her obligations under the Charter, Israel supports the Security Council in its efforts to put an end to the breach of the peace in Korea and to restore peace in that area. The Government of Israel hopes the United Nations will continue its endeavors to align all the Great Powers in common effort for safeguarding the peace of the world."

Israel's Parliament overwhelmingly upheld the Cabinet's action and gave its approval in a 68 - to 20 vote of confidence. This followed the defeat by 79 votes to 19 of a Mapam motion for a vote of no confidence.

In presenting the Government's resolution to the Knesset, Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett emphasized that Israel has always maintained a policy of non-identification with either bloc in the cold war. However, preservation of peace is the cardinal principle of Israel's foreign policy and it has supported the United Nations as the main instrument for the realization of this aim.

Mr. Sharett stressed that the principle of non-identification still stands. But it "cannot be perverted into repudiation of world peace, nor can it serve as a pretext for running away from responsibility towards the United Nations, nor can it be turned into a weapon which instead of preserving peace, might well affect the security of Israel itself."

The Foreign Minister said that the Government was well aware of the fact that the Security Council had taken its decision on Korea in the absence of one of its permanent members. The USSR's absence from the Security Council and its withdrawal from other UN organs was a "matter of profound regret to the Government of Israel, giving rise to grave concern for the future," he declared. Israel had supported Secretary-General Trygve Lie's efforts to bring the Soviet bloc into the UN. At the same time, Israel's Delegation to the UN had done all it could to preserve and strengthen relations of friendship and mutual understanding with the Soviet Delegation.

"Without justifying the withdrawal of the Soviet Union, the Government of Israel has a genuine understanding for the considerations which impelled the step and favors the continuation of special efforts for the restoration of the Security Council to full strength," Mr. Sharett stated.

However, as a member of the United Nations which has un-

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A WORD TO OUR CANTORS

By Nathan Ziprin

At the recent convention of Jewish cantors, there was uniform complaint against what was called the attitude of indifference in the Jewish communities toward the cantorial functions of the synagogue. There was also much complaint against the so-called "trial method" or "trial hearing" practice in selecting cantors.

Frankly speaking we are admirers of chazanuth. Yet we cannot go along with the main thesis of our cantors. If our Jewish communities did not really recognize the cantorial functions of the synagogue, chazanuth would not be so widely practiced an art in our midst. If anything, there is an excessive weakness in the other direction, often to the detriment of more important functions. Many are the congregations spending heavy money for chazanim when the funds could well go for Jewish education or for a more competent spiritual leader. Admittedly, chazanuth has played a vast role in Jewish tradition and synagogue life. But values must be judged on a comparative basis. The teacher, the educator and the rabbi is still in the forefront of our fabric.

As to the "trial method" evil, we would like to know on what other basis the selection is to be made. It would be hardly fair to ask a community or synagogue to rely, let us say, on a certificate from a cantorial organization. In matters of taste there must be another yardstick. Frankly, we cannot see any indignity in a rehearsal. It would be unthinkable for a vocal orchestra to engage a singer without a "trial" and we see on reason why our cantors should claim immunity from that practice. With the exception of top-notchers, even rabbis are asked to prove themselves before they are engaged by a congregation. It would be preposterous to engage a rabbi on the basis of his certificate and then discover he did not meet the specific requirements of a community or synagogue.

If there has been a deterioration in the attitude toward the cantor, the blame rests elsewhere. A cantor who desecrates the Sabbath immediately after he has been the beseeching voice at orthodox services cannot expect respect. A cantor who becomes a vaudevilian during between-seasons can hardly complain about the waning prestige of the cantorial profession. A cantor who makes it his business to attend the synagogue only on the occasions when he is to perform can hardly complain when there is murmuring and resentment. A cantor who thinks so highly of his services as to become unavailable to people with lesser means can hardly enhance his profession.

There is a great field for chazanuth in our community. Unless the cantorial organizations clean house that field is bound to turn barren.