

**A
GREAT
COLLECTION**

**THE ARCHIVES
OF THE
JEWISH LABOR MOVEMENT**



NEW YORK 1965

Sixty-Five Years

The great collection of books, pamphlets, documents, etc., known as "The Archives of the Bund," is now located at 25 East 78th Street in New York City. It has a long and dramatic history behind it.

Sixty-five years ago, in 1899, the Archives came into being. The previous year the Russian Tsarist Government undertook a thoroughgoing effort aimed at completely destroying the newly-established Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party and its strongest component, the General Jewish Labor Bund. Hundreds of people were arrested, among them about 70 Bundist leaders. One of them — the leader of the Warsaw Bundist Organization, John (Yosef) Mill — succeeded in escaping abroad. He and another pioneer of the Jewish Labor Movement, Zemach Kopelzon — as a result of a previous agreement with Arkady Kremer and Vladimir Kosovsky, members of the Central Committee of the Bund in Russia — organized in Switzerland the Foreign Committee of the Bund. One of his first undertakings was the establishment of the Archives.

This was regarded as a very important undertaking. It was clear that this revolutionary literature — periodicals, brochures, pamphlets and proclamations — which were published at great sacrifice in the underground printing shops and read with religious fervor by the aroused working masses, must not only fulfill this immediate mission but also be preserved as documents for posterity. In Russia, where the Tsarist Ochrana (Secret Police) was continually spying on the revolutionary movement, there was no place where a collection of illegal literature could be kept. Therefore the city of Geneva in free, democratic Switzerland was chosen for this purpose.

In the foreign organ of the Bund, "Der Yiddisher Arbeiter" (No. 7, 1899) there appeared the following notice:

"The Foreign Committee of the Bund desires to establish abroad the Archives, that is, it wishes to gather material on the Jewish Labor Movement in Russia and

Poland. Every Comrade will understand how important it is to have such material in possession. We therefore request that you send us at least three copies of every new periodical, every new proclamation, every new brochure which is being issued in Russia, either printed or hectographed. It would also be very important if we could, for example, receive semi-annual reports on the Jewish Labor Movement in this or that city."

Thus began the great collection of various reports and documents — hand-written, hectographed and printed — which had some relation to the revolutionary movement in general and the Jewish one in particular. In hundreds of cities and towns there were devoted collectors who regarded it as their duty to guard against the loss and confiscation of material on the Labor Movement and various matters relating to Jewish life, and who sent the material to the Archives in Switzerland.

For Students and Revolutionaries

The Archives kept growing and widening in scope. Around them was also established a fine library in various languages. In Switzerland at that time there lived many Jewish students who because of the percentage-quota for Jews in Tsarist Russia were unable to study in the institutions of higher learning in their homeland and had to go abroad to study in foreign universities and technical institutes. Many revolutionary emigres also lived there. Students and social research workers made good use of the Archives and Library for their studies and scientific works. In time the Bund Archives became an important research centre. Some documents and printed material were to be found only in the collections of the Bundist Centre in Geneva.

The founders and directors of the Bund Archives until after the First Russian Revolution (1905-6) were John Mill, Abraham Mutnik, Zemach Kopelzon, Arkady Kremer, Vladimir Kosovsky, S. Zeldov-Niemanski, Boris Frumkin, David Machlin and a number of other Bundist leaders who at that time were living abroad. After the First Russian Revolution the Archives were for many years — until the outbreak of the Second World War — mainly directed by Franz Kursky.

A Tragic Odyssey

For about twenty years — until after World War I — the Bund Archives remained in the same place in Switzerland. After World War I this small free country ceased being a gathering-place for revolutionary emigres and Jewish student youth. There was no reason any more for keeping the Archives in Geneva, and so its odyssey began. As to transferring this entire great collection of revolutionary material to a liberated, revolutionary Russia, which had formerly been the dream of the Bundist leaders, that became impossible after the Bolsheviks had seized power there. The new Bolshevik rulers did not recognize the social property of the other revolutionary, socialist parties and they would have seized everything. The Bund wanted its rich collection to remain at the disposal of free independent research and creative workers.

The Archives were then transferred to Berlin, which at that time was the main centre of the great Social-Democratic movement of the German working-class. The collection was installed in the building of the "Vorwaerts", which also housed the leadership of the S. D. Party, its main newspaper and institutions. In their new home too, the Archives kept growing, gathering new, important collections. Here, too, they were open for research workers and other interested parties. And so it continued until Hitler assumed power in 1933.

Saved from Destruction

The Archives were in great danger of destruction. Immediately after Hitler became German Reichs-Chancellor, Nazi Storm Troopers occupied the building of the German Social Democracy and confiscated its property. It seemed as if the Bund Archives too would be lost. There was little hope that it could be saved.

In this dire situation someone hit upon a clever idea: The Archives were nominally sold to the French Government and its Ambassador in Berlin ordered that it be crated and transferred to France. And thus it happened. The great collection of historic materials was saved from destruction.



Polish and Yiddish periodicals of the Bund and of the Bundist Youth Organization in independent Poland.

The institution now embarked upon a new life in Paris. Here, too, the collection became enriched. Here, too, it was utilized for various historical research projects. From the very first moment, since its establishment at the end of the nineteenth century, its leaders had laid down the principle that the Archives must be a living and active institution. Times changed; there came another social climate, other types of people. But the purpose remained the same—not to let the past be forgotten, not to destroy the building materials of history, but to preserve them for the present and the future.

The Nazi Robbery

Then came World War II. In 1940 the German Army occupied Paris and France surrendered to Hitler's military might. Again the threat of destruction appeared upon the horizon. It seemed impossible to save the materials by smuggling them out to another free country. But at the same time there was no desire to remain passive in the face of the great danger. There remained nothing else to do but to crate the materials and try to hide them, perhaps thus saving them. The crates were entrusted to the management of a Frenchman, who was paid for hiding them.

Terrible, bloody years ensued. The Nazi spy-apparatus kept searching every corner. Still the crated materials lay undisturbed in their hiding-place until there came the turning-point in World War II. The Allied armies kept getting ever closer to the French capital. The German Occupying Power began to evacuate Paris. And on a certain day German trucks drove up to the house where the Bund Archives were hidden.

Although the Archives had not been disturbed for more than four years, it seems that the German Occupying Power knew of their existence and their hiding place and had them on the list of important properties and materials which should be carted away to Germany. To save them from Nazi looting, as was done in 1933 in Berlin, was now not possible. The large number of crates were placed on the trucks and the Bund Archives disappeared.

Retreating Nazis Throw Away Loot

For months there remained no trace of the looted Archives. Later on, Bundists who remained alive after the bloody holocaust and returned to Paris heard that the Nazis were unable to carry away all of their loot and that part of it was simply thrown out on an open field near the capital. There they found, strewn about, libraries, art objects and other treasures. It was discovered that among the loot that was thrown away were also the rich collections of the Bund, which for nearly half a century had been gathered and guarded by so many devoted persons with so much love and sacrifice. The murderer of nations, the destroyer of cultures, fled in panic in the midst of his work of destruction, and thus the Archives were saved.

In America At Last

What should now be done with this institution after the German Nazis had murdered six million Jews in Europe, when no great free, creative centre of Jewish population remained on the European Continent? This was the problem with which the World Coordinating Committee of the Bundist Organizations had to wrestle. The answer seemed to come spontaneously: One-half of the scattered Jewish people now lives in America. Here is to be found the greatest Jewish centre with a large Jewish working class. Here must be established the place of refuge, the resting-place. Here must begin the new chapter in the dramatic history of the Archives.

Every new historic period has placed its stamp upon the institution — through the newly-gathered materials, through the external conditions of its functioning, through the people who utilize it. America, too, has had its effect upon it. Here there was a great increase in the mass of materials dealing with the American labor movement in general and the Jewish one in particular.

In order that the Archives may carry on their activities and develop further, there was created a special committee which provides its budget and generally supervises the activities. In the committee are represented the Bund, American Jewish labor organizations and trade unions. The official name now is: "Bund Archives of

ЕЖЕНЕДЕЛЬНАЯ ГАЗЕТА.

1905 r.

20 1.

30 Декабря.

В СЕОБЩИИ ЕВРЕЙСКИИ РАБОЧИИ СОЮЗЪ ВЪ ЛИТВѢ, ПОЛЬШѢ И РОССИИ (БУНАДЪ)

Послѣднія Извѣстія

ИЗДАНИЕ ЗАГРАНИЧНОГО КОМИТЕТА

No. 729

5 MAR (22 APRIL) 1995

ГЛАВНОЕ УПРАВЛЕНИЕ

No 1

1954 5 10

Жаңа Түрбунжа

ежедневникъ

СОДЕРЖАНИЕ: 1. ОБЩАЯ НАСТОЯЩАЯ МОДЕЛЬ
2. ЕЕ ЗАДАЧА — РЕШЕНИЕ КАПИТАЛИЗМА
ПОЛИТИКА — 3. 11. ВОПРОСАМИ ТАМ
ТАМ — 4. ОБЩАЯ НАСТОЯЩАЯ МОДЕЛЬ
ОБЩЕСТВЕННО-ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКАЯ И ИНТЕРДИЦИОН
ПОЛИТИКА — 5. ОБЩЕЕ СОДЕРЖАНИЕ
6. ОБЩЕЕ СОДЕРЖАНИЕ

[illegible]

11月25日

65

1975

STANLEY C. BRYANT

407 35 коп

Российская Социально-Демократическая Рабочая Партия.

Всероссийский Еврейский Рабочий Союз "БУНДЪ".

ГОЛОСЪ ЗУИДЪ.

WILHELM VON HUMBOLDT: ZENTRALE

Издание Центрального Комитета . . . Д.А.

ПЕТРОГРАДЪ.

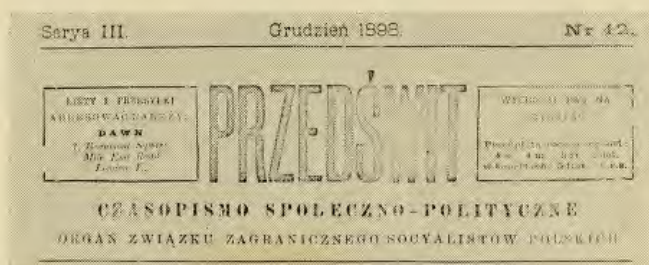
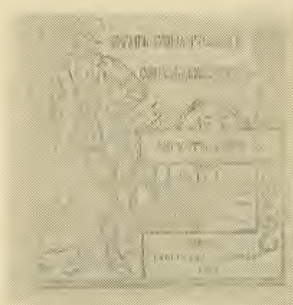
— 321114 18. 78. 10. 34. 19.

ВТОРИНА. 8-го августа

41

ПЕТРОГРАДЪ.

**Russian periodicals of the Bund during the years
1905, 1906 and 1917.**



Periodicals of the Russian Socialist parties and of the Polish Socialists.

the Jewish Labor Movement In the Name of Franz Kurski”.

The Important Task

Every generation *makes* history, its own. But that history gets *written* only in later generations. While it is being *created*, only details can be noted down. Only later can these details be built up into an entire structure. But history cannot be written when details are lacking. The task of the Archives is to gather and preserve for posterity the facts, the building materials for the structure.

The Jewish labor movement in Europe and America has played a great part in the events of the past 75 years. Its part is to be seen in the struggles of Jewish life, in the struggle for liberty, in the thoughts and deeds of the international labor movement. The glorious role played by the fighting Jewish working class must not, dare not, be omitted from the historical works which are now being written and will be written later on. Lacking the necessary facts and notes, the participation of the Jewish workers in the *making* of history will be either ignored, distorted or falsified in the history that will be *written*.

Gatherers and Guardians of a Historic Heritage

Our Archives represent the great ingathering and the devoted guardianship of the rich heritage of words and deeds which former generations have bequeathed to us. Its books, periodicals, pamphlets, brochures, proclamations, etc. run into the tens of thousands — in Yiddish, Russian, Polish, German, English, French, Spanish, Hebrew, Ukrainian, Lettish and a number of other languages. To enumerate all of them here would be impossible. This must be done in a great catalogue. We shall therefore limit ourselves to a general description.

The great bulk of the material consists of descriptions of the revolutionary, socialist and labor movements, of their history, struggles and problems in Europe and America — from the middle of the 19th century until our time. To these are added other materials which



DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS AND VOICING THE DEMANDS OF THE
TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

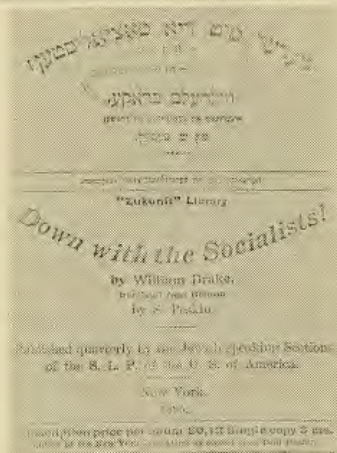
Vol. XVII

JANUARY, 1910.

No. 1

Supreme Court of the United States.

OCTOBER TERM, 1909.



Unity and Victory

SPEECH OF
EUGENE V. DEBS

Before the State Convention of the American
Federation of Labor, at Pittsburg,
Kansas, August 12, 1908

Socialist and trade-union publications in the United States.

are in one way or another related to the above-mentioned movements.

The materials are in various forms:

Manuscripts — reports of meetings, conferences and conventions; the correspondence carried on by leaders and active workers; unpublished literary works.

Proclamations — illegal and legal.

Brochures — illegal and legal.

Revolutionary, illegal periodicals.

Legal periodicals of the labor movement.

The daily newspapers of the Bundist movement.

Books on social problems, socialist theory, the labor movement, Jewish affairs.

A collection of literature and reports on the Jewish Holocaust, resistance and death during World War II.

Placards and photographs.

Material on hundreds of cities and towns, writers and personalities or special events.

There are in the world today a number of archives where much material may be found on the socialist and labor movements. No archives contain everything, and ours is no exception to this rule. But our institution does have much material, both hand written and printed, which can be found nowhere else. This is particularly true regarding the material on the Jewish labor movement. No serious, scientific work on the history and problems of the Jewish labor movement can be written without the materials which are to be found in the Bund Archives.

Broadening Its Scope

Having started as a specifically Bundist institution, the Archives during the years have broadened their scope considerably. They became enriched by acquisition of important materials of a large number of social movements and political groups — not only about Jews and not only from the Socialist sector. Below are listed parties, trends, movements and problems, about which materials can be found in our Archives:

1. The General Jewish Labor Bund of Lithuania, Poland and Russia.

2. The Russian Social-Democratic movement — from

Ferdinand Freiligrath's

sämmtliche Werke.

Die

Pariser Commune

von dem
Berliner Gerichten.

Eine Studie

über deutsche-preussische Rechtshand-
len

von
F. F. Freiligrath.

Erster Band.

New-York, 1858.

Verlag von Friedrich Gerdhard.

Veranschaulicht.

Text und Bild nach der Natur.

Das

Communistische Manifest

Neue Ausgabe

Mit einem Vorwort der Verfasser.

Chicago, 1883.

Uebersetzt von Eduard Bernstein, Herausgeber des Sozialistischen Monatshefts.

Old Socialist publications in the U.S.A. and Germany (1858, 1875, 1883).

"Osvobozhdenie Truda" and "Soyouz Russkikh S. D." up to the Mensheviks and Bolsheviks.

3. The Populist movement in Russia; The Socialist Revolutionary Party, and particularly the Yiddish literature of the S. R.'s.

4. The P.P.S. (Polish Socialist Party) and its Jewish section; the Social Democrats of Poland and Lithuania; "Proletariat" and other groups of the Polish labor movement.

5. Poale-Zion, "S.S." (Socialist-Territorialists), "Sejmovtsi", "United Party".

6. The Lettish S.D. Party; the Georgian, Armenian, Ukrainian S.D. Parties.

7. The Anarchists, particularly the Jewish groups.

8. Socialist groups among political emigres at various times.

9. The Jewish Socialist movements in Galicia and Bukowina before World War I.

10. The Jewish Socialist movement in Rumania.

11. The revolutionary movement in the universities and high schools of Russia.

12. The 1905 Revolution in Russia.

13. The Zubatov movement of the so-called police-supervised socialism in Tsarist Russia.

14. General Zionists and Territorialists.

15. The Religious Labor movement among Jews.

16. The pogroms and the self-defense corps.

17. Anti-Semitism in Russia and the struggle against it.

18. The Jewish middle-class parties in Russia, Poland and other countries.

19. The general and the Jewish Communist movement in Russia and other countries.

20. The 1917 Revolution in Russia.

21. The International Socialist Labor movement, the Socialist International.

22. The Bund in Poland, Latvia, Rumania between the two wars.

23. Jewish Socialist organizations in a number of countries of mass Jewish immigration.

24. The Socialist and trade-union movements in the United States .

25. The trade-union movement in independent Poland.

26. The Jewish parties in independent Poland.

27. The cultural movements among Jews, particularly the "Zisho" (Central Yiddish School Organization in Poland).

28. The economic situation of Jews in various countries.

29. Biographies of writers and communal leaders.

30. Annihilation and resistance of Jews in Europe during World War II.

This list far from exhausts the fields about which the Archives have printed and other material for research and study. The past century, which was so rich in events, problems, struggles, movements, historic catastrophes and revolutions, is recorded in the wealth of material that is to be found in the rooms of the Archives in the Atran House for Jewish Culture at 25 East 78th Street, New York City.

Centre For Research and Study

Every day students and research workers may be found sitting in the rooms of the Archives. Some of them continue working for weeks, months and even years. Among those who visit the Archives are to be found writers, social scientists, students and labor leaders. They search for and find the material they require. A number of students of universities in various American cities, as well as from England, Israel, South Africa and Australia, have been working in the Bund Archives on their Ph.D theses. There are also a large number of ordinary people who come to get information on various matters, particularly on their former towns in Europe or on the Jewish labor movement in America.

A number of books which were published during the past few years are based upon our Archives materials. Some of these volumes could never have been written without the raw material which is in our possession.

A Duty and a Privilege

The materials, which are now so highly esteemed and so eagerly sought, were saved three times: from the

destructive hands of the Tsarist secret police, from Hitler's Storm Troopers in Berlin and from his acts of destruction during World War II. But the danger is not over yet — not even here in free America.

The danger, to be sure, is of another character, but it is also serious. The ravages of time are a threat. The paper is becoming ever older, and here rescue work is necessary. Some of these collections must be preserved, photographed and micro-filmed. Also the broadened scope of activities demands more space and new installations.

All this means increased expenditures to cover the costs of rent, wages and the preservation of important materials — making photostats and films of documents and publications which in time will fall apart.

Our income is derived from contributions by individual members and yearly payments by Jewish labor organizations and trade-unions, as well as from various lump-sum payments. The Archives are continually expanding and are being more and more utilized (no fee is required for using them). The only thing which prevents its further expansion is lack of proper financial resources.

Everyone who does not feel that "let there be a desert around me and after me may come the deluge" is in duty bound to participate in the preservation of the Archives of the Jewish Labor Movement. This is not only a duty, but also a privilege.

The Committee For The Archives

Executive Members: Yefim H. Yeshurin, chairman; L. Nelson, vice-chairman; E. Nowogrudsky, secretary; B. Tabachinsky, treasurer; David Meyer, executive director.

Committee of Experts: G. Aronson, J. S. Hertz, A. Menes, Dr. Alexander Erlich, Jacob Pat, C. S. Kazdan, Dr. E. Scherer.

Committee Members: M. Alexandrovitch, L. Oler, J. Gutgold, Murray Gross, Adolph Held, A. Stolar, R. Zukerman, E. Rabkin, B. Shefner.

Bund Archives of the Jewish Labor Movement

Atran Center for Jewish Culture

25 East 78th Street (Room 502)

New York, N. Y. 10021

