

# Israeli Freedom Party

## Reply Made to Recent Letter. Aims of Party Detailed

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

Most of the names signed to a letter which appeared in THE TIMES of Dec. 4 attacking Menachem Beigin and the Israeli Freedom party are unknown to us. But we are sure that Sidney Hook will be astonished to learn that the contents of the letter to which his name was appended are a compilation of the irresponsible fulminations which appear at intervals in The Daily Worker.

We think that Professor Hook would be as interested as we to receive some evidence in support of the charges made in the letter you published, which are strangely similar to a column in The Worker of Nov. 30. We who have championed the cause of Hebrew liberation for a number of years have, of course, been subjected to this barrage in the past. Our most thorough investigations have failed to produce any support for them. Those who have made them to us have remained strangely unresponsive to our requests for substantiation.

The assertion in the letter's opening paragraph that the Freedom party is "closely akin in its organization, methods, political philosophy and social appeal to the Nazi and Fascist party" is a blatant falsehood. The assertion that "until recently they (Mr. Beigin's party) openly preached the doctrine of the Fascist state" is another lie, equally unsusceptible of any proof.

### Excerpts From Platform

The party, which was formed only a few months ago, cannot already have established a record of such iniquity as is attributed to it. Quoted below are a few necessarily brief and disjointed excerpts from the party's platform:

"A free democracy in which the people are the source of authority. The people, and the people alone, have the right of decision with regard to all problems of their national existence.

"In this democracy all citizens will be guaranteed full and unconditional enjoyment of civil liberties and human rights and equality of opportunity, regardless of origin, race, religion, political affiliation or sex. \* \* \*

"The government of the people will continually strive to raise the standard of living and the opportunities for advancement of the workingman, to assure every citizen the minimum essentials of life and to eliminate economic and other privileges tending to create distinctions between man and man and class and class.

"It is the undeniable right of all workingmen to unite in trade unions which will strive—alongside the state—for the continuous betterment of the workingman's standard of living. \* \* \*

"The state shall endeavor to create conditions most favorable for the development of industry, agriculture, commerce and national resources. \* \* \*

The distorted description in the letter of the capture of the village of Deir Yassin is another case in point. As any objective correspondent who was in Palestine at that time will attest, there is no ground for characterizing the attack on this village as an act of wanton massacre. The Irgun was operating under an agreement which provided for close coordination with other defense forces. The story of the attack on Deir Yassin was told anew in THE TIMES of Nov. 30. What was not pointed out even then was that the capture of Deir Yassin was vital to the defense of Jerusalem. At the risk and cost of a number of Hebrew lives the Irgun gave loudspeaker warnings to the inhabitants to withdraw peacefully. The Arab marauders from Syria and Iraq, who were using the village as a vantage point against the Tel Aviv-Jerusalem road, prevented the population from leaving and made it necessary for the Irgun to conduct a house-to-house struggle for the village. Loss of life is highly regrettable, but it is one of the unfortunate concomitants of war. There were undoubtedly non-combatants killed at Deir Yassin. The atom bomb which leveled Hiroshima was incapable of distinguishing between soldier and non-combatant, but its use was nevertheless justified. It is in this light that Deir Yassin must be viewed.

## The Irgun and Strikes

The falsehood that the Irgun has been used to "break strikes" was somewhat more particularized in The Daily Worker article. There it was stated that "in 1946 Irgun members made a violent assault on textile strikers in Petach Tikvah." Careful investigation discloses that in 1946 at Petach Tikvah there was jurisdictional strife between independent unions and the trade union monopoly of the Mapai. The Irgun was in no way involved in this and no one else has ever alleged that it was.

The allegation in the letter that the Irgun or the Freedom party preached racism was also made in The Daily Worker. The best refutation of this is information just received that Arab Moslems and Christians, Circassians, and Druses in northern Palestine have joined the Freedom party.

In view of all this, it seems supererogatory to deal with the other vilifications contained in the rest of the Dec. 4 letter. It may be significant that the letter finally complains that "the top leadership of American Zionism has refused to campaign against Beigin's efforts."

KONRAD BERCOVICI, LOUIS BROMFIELD,  
RUTH CHATTERTON, MORDECAI  
DANZIS, GUY M. GILLETTE, FOWLER  
HARPER, BEN HECHT, NATHAN  
GEORGE HORWITT, AARON KOPE,  
JOSEPH MORSE, PAUL O'DWYER,  
Rabbi BARUCH RABINOWITZ, WILL  
ROGERS JR., MAURICE ROSENBLATT,  
HARRY LOUIS SELDEN, IRVING  
SHENDELL, JOHAN J. SMERTENKO,  
ANDREW L. SOMERS, ALEX WILF,  
ISAAC ZAAR, WILLIAM B. ZIFT.

New York, Dec. 10, 1948.

NEW YORK TIMES  
DECEMBER 15, 1948