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South Africa Jews seen vital link in evolving new policies

By PHILIP HOCHSTEIN

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa— This country, where I have spent the past eight days after two days in Rio de Janeiro as one of 12 Jewish editors invited by Pan-Am Airways and the South African Tourist Corporation, is a highly controversial country. It is either the most tolerant of the world's many repressive countries or it is the least libertarian of the world's few remaining democracies.

However one may interpret the sharply contradictory trends in South Africa's treatment of its racial problems, there is no doubt that this is a society that is very much on the move, if in diverse and sometimes opposite directions. Thus, the very same society that persists in pushing Apartheid for the segregation of the races also moves away from denigrating the cultures of the Black man. It is now generally regarded as bad form for a white man, however exalted he thinks his position, to refer to his Black employe as "boy." The most ardent champion of white rule has begun to concede that the Black man has a right to his dignity and to be addressed respectfully.

The extensive and deep ignorance of the racial problem I brought with me to this country has been considerably magnified by the visit and I am advised on all sides that this ignorance would grow with a prolonged stay. All South Africans with whom I spoke, from ultra-liberal to ultra-right, seemed to agree that social attitudes are evolving faster in South Africa than anywhere



RESPECTED CRITIC: Once castigated and denounced, Mrs. Helen Suzman, severest critic of South African Apartheid, is now treated respectfully by leading conservative political spokesman as they seek to evolve more subtle approach to ethnic problems.

else on this explosive continent, so that yesterday's truth can be today's falsehood.

Contradictory trends

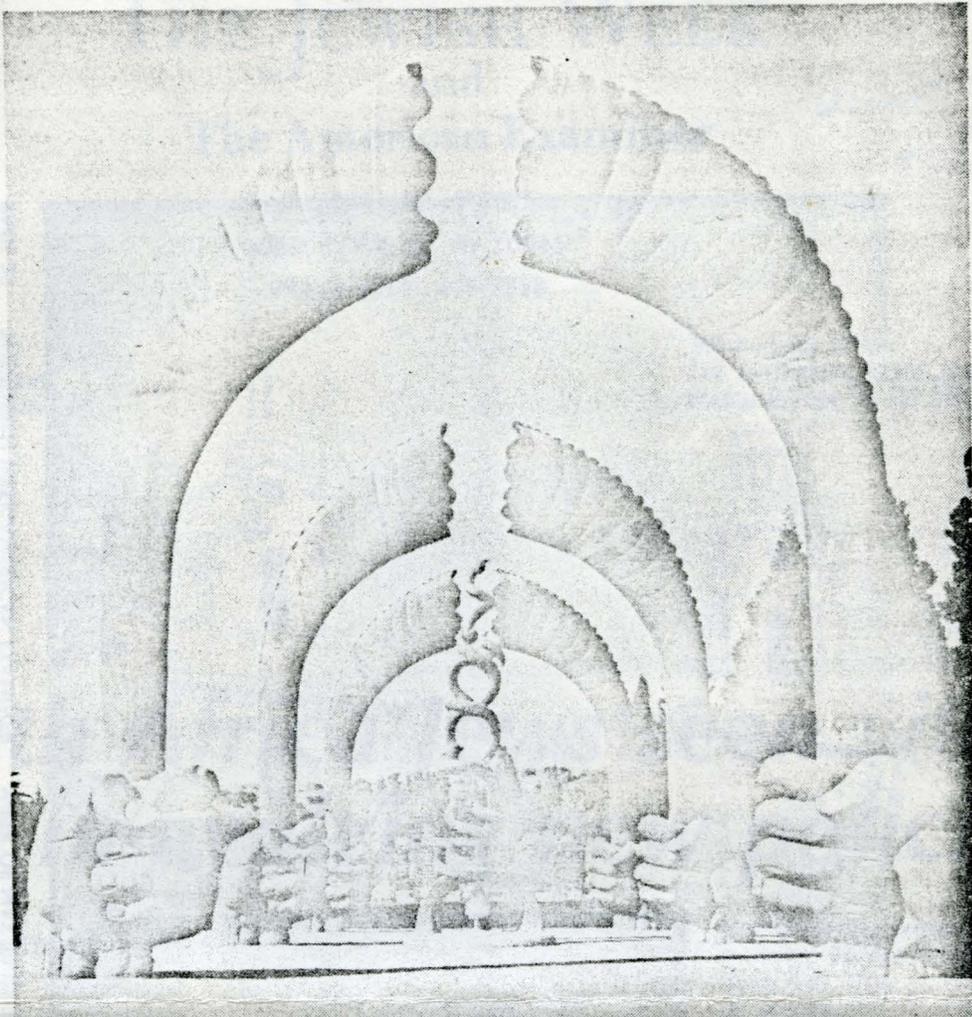
Thus, a rather radical campus personality both denounced Apartheid as totalitarian and com-

plained that the government was too gingerly in extending undoubted material benefits to the Black man. Thus, the censor arbitrarily banned the showing of a TV serial chapter dealing with the Holocaust, evidently in order to spare the sensibilities of the German ethnic population and then speedily reversed himself as Jewish spokesmen expressed outrage at his dictatorial action. Thus, the same government leaders that insist upon a new Security law permitting detention of citizens without charges, laud the radical-liberal Mrs. Helen Suzman for having the courage of her convictions in demanding immediate and full civil rights for the Black people.

South Africans of whatever political hue seem to believe that fate has imposed upon them a major and dangerous role in deciding the issue between East and West. All fear that Russia will manipulate the racial issues to destroy Western concepts of freedom the world over. They look upon history as an unguided missile aimed at them, which they must somehow contrive to manage. The National Party leaders believe the way to stop Russia is to maintain rigid control by a policy of separate development, while the liberals seem to think there may still be time to turn the Blacks into champions of democracy.

There is little disagreement on the importance of supporting Israel as a mainstay of Western resistance to Communism. Prime Minister Vorster, the leader of the National Party, the party that once excluded Jews from membership, supports a pro-Israel policy despite the fact that Israel has

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NO FORGETFULNESS THERE: South African Jews keep memory of Hitler's Holocaust alive with Yad Vashem memorial and teaching of children in extensive Jewish day school system. Photo shows six hands, each representing a million victims, holding a huge shofar with an eternal light in the center. It is situated at Westport Cemetery, Johannesburg and is the work of one of South Africa's best known artists, the late Herman Wald.

Golda Meir, leaders meet on eve of drive

Golda Meir will meet with 800 leading figures of the UJA-Federation Joint Campaign and of campaigns throughout the United States at a "Luncheon with Golda" on June 2 in the Hotel Pierre.

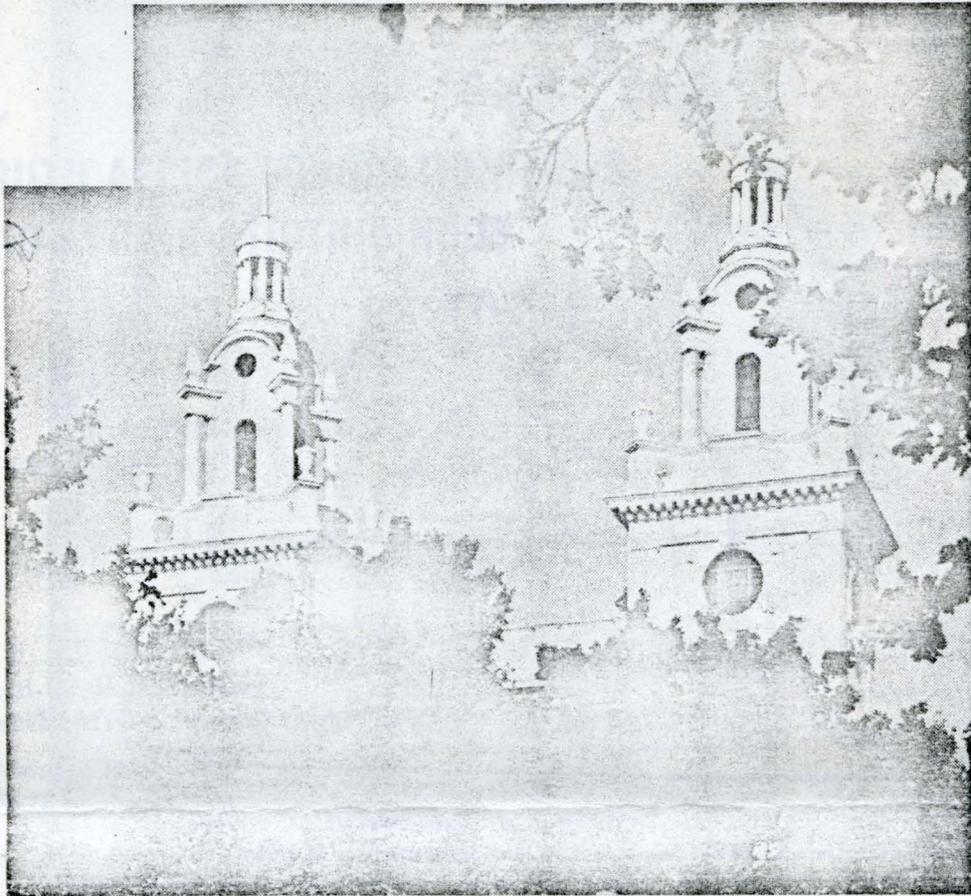


Golda Meir

Joint Campaign president William Rosenwald and National UJA general chairman Frank R. Lautenberg will welcome Mrs. Meir at the luncheon.

The American Jewish leaders will discuss with the former prime minister of Israel the results of special recent efforts to raise extra philanthropic funds to restore planned reductions in aid to immigrants in Israel.

For the Joint Campaign the luncheon is expected to provide added impetus to *Mobilization 76*, which begins with Mobilization Sunday on June 6.



PRIDE IN SYNAGOGUES: Although Jews are little more than three per cent of the white population, beautiful synagogue buildings are included among tourist-interest items for all visitors. Photo shows view of Gardens Synagogue on Hatfield Street, at top of Botanical Gardens near Government Avenue in Capetown. It is adjacent to Jewish Museum, in which is housed the first synagogue built in South Africa. (1863)

ment and even needy families. The community in Johannesburg is currently assisting some 500 families suffering need. The tradition here is for Jews to take care of their own and to assist people suffering hardship to get on their feet with loans and job retraining.

The same pride in identity was noted in Rio, although the social climate there is hardly comparable to South Africa's. There too there is concern among the 160,000 Jews that the 80 million or so depressed part of the hundred million population may be ignited into uprising, but Jews seem to bask in a general spirit of friendliness towards all of the many races that make up this Portuguese-speaking sub-continent nation.

Pride in Jewish identity here, as in South Africa derives as much from prestige as from inner values. Jews are looked upon as an important national asset. At the most elegant offices of the Bloch magazine complex. In Rio where we were entertained at a regal luncheon by Bloch's executives in his absence on a visit to Israel and by government notables, a mezzuzah commands the entrance to the spectacularly beautiful dining room. The Bloch firm is the leading magazine publishing complex of South America.

Essential facts of South Africa

Total population, 24 million
Black population, 17.3 million
White population, 4.2 million
Colored population, 2.4 million
Jewish population, 120,000
Israeli immigrants, 20,000

City populations

Johannesburg, 1,500,000
Capetown, 1,000,000

Economic facts

23% of all Africa's GNP
53% of energy consumption of continent