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EDITORIAL

Canadian Jewish history is a field no longer in its infancy. One might say that it has reached the stage of adolescence, with all of its attendant difficulties. Although serious scholarship in the area is no longer as sparse as it once was and academic institutions are coming to recognize it as a legitimate subject of research, Canada still has considerable distance to come before a steady flow of acceptable scholarship can be expected.

Like all adolescents, Canadian Jewish history struggles with identity crises, branching out first into one direction and then into another, subject to fads, peer pressure and anxiety about the future. It is sometimes idealistic and sometimes cynical. Nevertheless, it moves inexorably toward maturity, and progress over the past decade has been substantial.

This publication, under the dedicated and capable editorship of Dr. Jonathan Plaut, has contributed to that process in no small measure. The *Journal*, during the formative years of his tenure, developed into what it was founded to be: a vehicle for the dissemination of studies in Canadian Jewish history, appealing to the scholar and to the general reader alike.

Our editorial policy will not be substantially different. It is our hope to provide an opportunity for the publication of work by the trained historian and the gifted amateur, by the established scholar and by the novice seeking to publish for the first time. We will be selective in our choices, but we will not insist that each article be the definitive work. We see the *Journal* as a laboratory, where new ideas can be presented for the consideration of an interested public, respecting the effort as well as the finished product.

Our emphasis will continue to be history, for that, after all, is our *raison d'être*; but we will not ignore the work of scholars trained in other disciplines, who bring their special perspectives to bear upon historical studies. We will document with impartiality the triumphs and failures of Canadian Jewry, its struggles and its achievements, those events which generate pride and those which some would perhaps like to see forgotten, but which the historian is in duty bound to record.

Rabbi Plaut is the proverbial “tough act to follow” but we trust that our efforts will do justice to his pioneering work.

One final word: No publication can survive without contributors. Therefore, we encourage scholars in relevant fields to offer their articles to us for consideration and we urge our readers to be our ambassadors.

S.A.S.

The Christie Pits Riot: a Case Study in the Dynamics of Ethnic Violence — Toronto, August 16, 1933*

Cyril Levitt and William Shaffir

Les deux auteurs de ce document décrivent la dynamique de l'affaire de l'Émeute qui survint à Toronto en août 1933: l'Émeute Christie Pits où Juifs et Gentils se disputèrent avec une intensité jamais vue auparavant. Ce document volumineux se départage en quatre parties distinctes.

La première donne un aperçu des événements de l'émeute. La seconde met l'accent sur la création des Clubs de Croix Gammée. Ceci eut pour effet, du moins aux yeux de la communauté juive d'alors, d'intensifier l'antisémitisme contemporain.

Dans la troisième partie, les deux auteurs du document mettent l'accent sur la précipitation de la violence et outre la croix gammée, d'autres symboles antisémitiques y sont analysées à l'avant-veille de l'émeute.

Enfin la quatrième et dernière partie, est consacrée en partie à la mobilisation de certains des spectateurs pour entrer en action. Les auteurs concluent sur le fait que la violence collective des groupes ethniques représente la forme la plus grave de conflit entre groupes ethniques. Elle est (cette violence) peut être la forme la plus extrême d'arrangement par le biais duquel on peut régler des tensions inter-ethniques. Les auteurs espèrent toutefois que leur analyse et leurs travaux ne resteront pas vains et seront une première étape vers un avenir meilleur.

*We wish to acknowledge the generous financial assistance to our project by the LaMarsh Research Programme on Violence and Conflict Resolution (York University) and the Secretary of State — Multiculturalism Directorate.

Although the theme of inequality permeates studies of ethnic relations in this country, the dynamics of inter- and intra- ethnic violence in Canadian society have not yet been analysed. Rather, this dimension of ethnic relations has been discussed only as it relates to the treatment of a particular ethnic minority or else as a possible outcome of general ethnic tension and conflict.

In some measure, this lack of analysis may result from the myth that, in contrast to the United States, where ethnic violence has been a significant chapter of history, Canada has largely avoided this extreme of ethnic relationships. Sociologists studying Canada, so cherishing the idea of tranquility in ethnic relations, have not attempted to investigate systematically cases in which violence has erupted or to develop a set of generalizations concerning their development in this country.

The omission has not been complete. Although he has not focussed upon ethnic violence specifically, Kenneth McNaught has developed a thesis that collective violence in Canadian society has historically been less pervasive than in the United States but more effective politically:

The most important comparison between the roles of violence in American and Canadian history may be that in Canada public and private violence has been more, rather than less, closely related to the operations of the political system than has been the case in the United States''.*

Numerous examples in Canadian history suggest that:

non-government collective violence has also frequently resulted in changes in both domestic and external policies — whether the violence is actual or anticipated (apprehended).†

Although we are not qualified to judge the general validity of McNaught's thesis our research offers limited support for his position. In this paper, part of a larger study on ethnic violence in Canada, we describe the dynamics of the Christie Pits riot, involving Jews and Gentiles, that occurred in Toronto in August 1933. The first section of the paper sketches the events of the riot. The second focuses on the formation of Swastika Clubs, which, for the Toronto Jewish community, dramatized the intensity of contemporary anti-semitism. The presence of the Swastika Clubs strained the relations between Jews and Gentiles in the city and, more importantly, intensified a generalized belief

*K. M. McNaught. Violence in Canadian history, in J.S. Moir, editor: *Character and Circumstance* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1970) p. 84

†Ibid., Collective violence in Canadian history: some problems of definition and research, in *Report of the proceedings: Workshop on Violence in Canadian Society* (Toronto: Centre of Criminology, University of Toronto, 1975) p. 173

within the Jewish community that outsiders regarded them as different. And many of the younger generation of Jews felt the perpetrators of overt anti-semitic acts should be met with physical resistance.

In the third part of this paper, we focus on the precipitant of the violence — the use of the swastika and other anti-semitic symbols in the park two nights earlier — and in the fourth section we discuss the role of rumour in mobilizing some of the spectators for action.

To collect the data for this paper, we used simultaneously two principal means: (1) a review of the newspaper accounts of the riot and the events leading to it, and (2) informal interviews. We organized a thorough search of all the English and Yiddish newspapers in Toronto, for their accounts of the riot and its social context. This part of the data-gathering proved straightforward. Somewhat more complicated was our attempt to locate respondents who were either physically present at Christie Pits on the night of the riot or whose recall of the events (and of the times in general) could provide us with more details and help us put the incident in historical perspective. To this end, we relied on a ‘snowball approach’, expecting respondents to provide us with names of others we might contact. While this tactic was not entirely unsuccessful, the results proved more limited than we had anticipated. A typical comment from a respondent was: “It’s hard to say who’s around. After all, its been fifty years and, unfortunately, many of the guys are now deceased.” Our most productive venture in locating respondents was an advertisement in the *Canadian Jewish News* in which we briefly described our research objective and invited individuals who recalled the riot to telephone us collect. (An announcement broadcast over the CBC station in Toronto was somewhat less successful). In all, we interviewed sixty people, the vast majority of whom were Jewish males. Our efforts to find members of the Pit gang or others from the other side have, to this point, met with little success.¹

THE STORY OF THE RIOT

On Wednesday evening, 16 August, 1933 a riot occurred in Christie Pits immediately following the conclusion of the second game in a semi-final series for the Toronto Amateur Softball Association (T.A.S.A.) championship between Harbord Playground (whose members were mostly Jewish boys) and St. Peter’s (a Gentile team).

Christie Pits is officially called Willowvale Park, although few Torontonians know this name, and fewer still use it. Running north from Bloor Street to Barton Avenue, the 30 acre park is flanked by Christie Street on the east and Crawford Street on the west. Its shape approximates that of a soup bowl, the

rim of the bowl being on street level. Several paths lead down into the Pits from Bloor; moreover, the bottom of the “bowl” can be reached by walking down the grassy slopes from any point on the perimeter.

Christie Pits has long been a sports and recreation area, with hockey dominating in the winter months and baseball in the summer. In the 1930’s, as today, a hardball diamond was in the northwest corner. The clubhouse stood where it stands now, near the middle of the flat.²

Several thousand people were in the park when the riot broke out, most of them having been spectators at one or both of the baseball games which had been played there that evening,³ and more arrived during the several hours of violence, which apparently resulted in scores of injuries.

The seriousness of the riot, one of Toronto’s worst non-labour disturbances in the twentieth century, can be grasped by surveying the following day’s headlines from the city’s major newspapers and the Jewish press: “Scores Hurt as Swastika Mobs Riot at Willowvale / Mayor Promises Immediate Probe of Disturbance / Thousands Caught Up in Park Melee / Gangs Wielding Lead Pipes and Bats Sweep Streets, Bludgeoning Victims” (*The Mail and Empire*); “Swastika Feud Battles in Toronto Injure 5 / Fists, Boots, Piping Used in Bloor Street War / ‘Hail [sic] Hitler!’ Is Youth’s Cry; / City in Turmoil” (*The Globe*); “Draper Admits Receiving Riot Warning / Six Hours of Rioting Follow Hitler Shout / Scores Hurt, Two Held” (*Toronto Daily Star*); “Report Gunmen Here to Slay Swazis / Communists Incited Riot Police Authority State / Jewish Toughs Began Trouble Says Witness (*The Evening Telegram*); “Swastikas Attacks Call Forth Great Panic in the City; Mayor Stewart Agrees to Swift Steps Against Nazis, Draper is Called to Report” (*Der Yiddisher Zhurnal*).⁴

Prelude

The riot was precipitated by events during and after the first game in the T.A.S.A. series, a game played between the same teams two evenings earlier.⁵ During that earlier game a gang of local youths, loosely referred to as the “Pit Gang”, raised a black sweater with a huge white swastika sewn on its back and shouted “Heil Hitler” in the general direction of the Harbord team. (Displaying the swastika on clothing was a practice that the city had already seen a great deal of during the two previous weeks in a show of force by an organization called the Swastika Clubs. As we shall see, this phenomenon which occurred in the Beaches neighbourhood, was probably related to the Christie Pits riot.)

After the game, which Harbord won in overtime, the same members of the Pit Gang tried to intimidate the Jewish players and threatened them with

violence. Although the *Toronto Daily Star* reported that many members of the gang carried “clubs made of sawed-off broom handles” (15 August:2) no major confrontation ensued. But after the park attendants had left for the night, several gang members returned and painted a large swastika and the words “Hail [sic] Hitler” on the roof of the clubhouse in the middle of the park.

On Tuesday, when the *Star* reported the incident, it noted that members of the gang had earlier confided to one of its reporters that they “wished to get the Jews out of our park.” The *Star* also reported, ominously, that “[t]he Jewish boys promise that there will be trouble when they play there on Wednesday evening” (*ibid*). The *Mail and Empire* carried the same warning by the Jewish boys.

The media reports fanned the rumour mill set in motion by the incident after Monday’s game. On Wednesday, even before the Harbord — St. Peter’s game started, several hundred Jewish and Gentile boys between the ages of 15 and 21 were in the park ready (and some looking) for trouble.

Estimates of the size of the crowd in the Pits that evening range from 500 or 600 to 15,000.⁶ All of the interviewees who had been present agreed that the hills on the first- and third- base sides were packed with spectators. In addition, a sizeable number of onlookers moved over to the softball diamond at the conclusion of the hardball game played in the Pits that evening. Finally, the crowd was augmented after the outbreak of trouble: reinforcements called up by both sides and other people who rushed to the Pits out of sheer curiosity. All together, it seems likely that at least 2,000 to 3,000 people were in the park when the riot broke out. Of these, probably no more than several hundred actively participated in the physical violence, although many others undoubtedly shouted encouragement to one side or the other. More than one of our Jewish respondents reported many in the crowd were yelling “kill the Jews” and other threatening phrases.

During the course of the game, Jewish and Gentile youths clashed several times, but the police were able to restore order. Nevertheless, tension was high and the crowd expected bigger trouble. The spark that set off the riot occurred at the very end of the ballgame, which St. Peter’s won 5-4. A group of boys on the “Camel’s Hump”, a small hill in the south of the park, unfurled a large swastika banner. Immediately, 100 to 200 Jewish youths, amid cries of “the swastika, the swastika”, charged across the flat towards those displaying the banner. The swastika group fled up the slope towards Bloor Street with the Jewish boys in hot pursuit. When the two groups met on Bloor, serious fighting broke out and it continued as they moved south of Bloor, down Montrose Avenue. Broomhandles, clubs and sawed-off pipes were used as weapons and

many were injured on both sides. Ultimately, the Jewish boys captured the swastika banner and tore it to shreds, but the fighting continued long after this 'triumph'.

The riot had started between 7:30 and 7:45 p.m., but police reinforcements did not arrive until much later. For an hour or so, the fighting was all but unchecked, the few officers of regular duty at the park being overwhelmed by the extent of the violence.⁷ For the next several hours, the fighting ebbed and flowed. Both sides sent and received reinforcements. Boys on bicycles carried word of the fighting down the Jewish district centred on College Street and Spadina Avenue, alerting Jewish youths that their help was needed. Some Italian boys also came to the aid of their Jewish friends.⁸ Strengthening the appeal for help was a rumour that Joe Goldstein, a Jewish boy who had been knocked unconscious, had been killed.⁹ Trucks and cars were commandeered, and fresh troops made their way up Bathurst, Palmerston and Grace Streets, along Bloor to the Pits. When the police reinforcements (foot, horse and motorcycle) appeared, they tried to cordon off the area, but in spite of the police blockade, several vehicles managed to get through.

Skirmishes between bands of Jewish and Gentile youth were reported as late as 2:00 a.m., and tension remained high in the park area and the Spadina/College district for several days. Rumours spread like wildfire among both camps. On more than one occasion boys affiliated with the Pit Gang mobilized for a threatened attack by Jewish boys, whereas the Spadina group patrolled that area of the city for intruders from the Pits. As late as Tuesday, 22 August, the *Toronto Daily Star* could report: "Swastika Gang Drives Citizens from City Park / Hoodlums Roam Breathing Spaces Armed With Bars, Sticks and Bricks / Looking for Fight / East End Toughs Wear Nazis Emblem on Shirts — Pool Room Frequenters."

All the newspapers say that scores of people were injured, although fewer were treated at the nearby Toronto Western Hospital. The report in the *Telegram* suggests one reason for the discrepancy: few of the injured gave correct information to the hospital or to the press:

Upon investigation it was found that only one of those addresses was correct. When the *Telegram* inquired at the various addresses it was found that the men 'were not known there.' In some cases the addresses given were found to be vacant houses. (18 August: 1)

One of our respondents was knocked unconscious as he jumped from one of the trucks which arrived at the Pits at the outbreak of violence. He was taken to the Western Hospital. When asked why his name did not appear in the newspaper, he replied that he did not give his real name or address. Given this evidence of avoidance, we assume that many of those not seriously injured avoided medical

treatment at the hospital or sought it from neighborhood doctors.

The intensity of the passions involved in the riot is suggested by a respondent who, as a boy of 9, witnessed the following incident in a store owned by his parents:

One of the Nazis came into the store . . . bloodied . . . we had a telephone booth in the store. And he had an axle from a car cut off, about so big, 2 feet, 3 feet. This was his weapon . . . Anyway, he comes in, he gets into the telephone booth, and he's phoning, he's phoning to the Nazis. They want reinforcements, because they're getting the shit knocked out of them . . . Now you've got to visualize . . . the guy's back was to my dad. He had the phone up like this and this here car axle in his hand. And as I say my dad's a very placid man, but very strong. He went over and took the guy's hand and lifted it until his arm broke and the guy keeled over . . . He fainted. So dad just took him, dragged him to the door, pushed him out the door, closed the door, and went back and sat down.

Aftermath

The riot evoked two official responses, both of considerable interest. The first is that of Mayor Stewart, who proclaimed that the public display of the swastika emblem in Toronto would render the perpetrator liable to prosecution. The second is the treatment the courts gave those arrested during and after the riot.

Mayor Stewart's statement issued on the day following the riot, read in part:

From recent occurrences in our city it must be apparent that the display in any form of the swastika emblem is provocative and tends to incite riotous conduct and a disturbance of the peace which is not at all in keeping with the good name of our city or for the public good. I, therefore, wish to warn all citizens that such use of this swastika emblem will render the person so using the same liable to prosecution to the full extent of the law. I also wish to warn all persons against taking part in an unlawful assembly. Peace order and good government is our desire. I invite co-operation.¹⁰

The Mayor's stern warning worked; from that point on, swastika activity in Toronto declined rapidly. And on account of his swift action, many members of Toronto's Jewish community held Mayor Stewart in esteem. Yet, it is not clear that the Mayor and Chief Constable Draper backed up their bark with their bite. From the extant records it appears that Mayor Stewart and Chief Draper did little investigating and even less reporting of the riot than their public statements suggest.¹¹

Though the Mayor and Chief Constable treated the riot with seriousness in public, the courts took the attitude that it was the result of adolescent boisterousness. The evening of the riot had seen two arrests: Russell Harris, for carrying a hunting knife and Jack Roxborough, a member of the Pit Gang, for carrying a lead pipe. The charges against Harris were dismissed, since it appeared he had been helping the police during the riot.¹² Roxborough was

convicted — the only person to be found guilty of a charge resulting from the riot and sentenced (\$50 or two months), apparently because he was still on probation from a conviction for shopbreaking in May.

During the investigation after the riot, the *Globe* reported, the police questioned 22 members of the Pit Gang. On Friday, 18 August, they arrested three additional members — Jack Pippy, Charles Boustead and Earl Perrin. The *Toronto Daily Star* reported their alleged illegal activity:

The police say that the three men who are in custody were active in formenting the disturbance. An old blanket was obtained Wednesday afternoon and associates of the three men were directed to paint the large swastika emblem. They commenced to paint the emblem on a knoll near Bloor St., were disturbed and shifted down behind the Willowvale clubhouse, the police learned. The painters were again frightened so moved their work to a garage at the rear of Jack Pippy's home on Crawford St. The detectives, it is alleged, found white paint at the garage similar to that used in painting the design on the blanket.

Statements are said to have been made by the trio in which they admit they carried the blanket into the park and displayed the freshly painted swastika emblem. (19 August:2)

In Police Court the three plus Roxborough were found not guilty of unlawful assembly. The most complete description of the trial is found in an editorial entitled “‘Innocent’ Fun” in the Yiddish paper *Der Yiddisher Zhurnal*:

I think that the entire charge is nothing more than a joke.” With these words Magistrate Brown in Police Court freed the four young Christians who had been arrested on the charge of having caused the riot in Willovale Park on August 16, where Jews had their head split open.

Characteristically, the first of the accused did not deny the charge. He himself explained thus: “I was walking in Willovale Park because I heard that the Jews are preparing to fight the Christians. I helped paint the swastika on the blanket. And we decided among ourselves that if the Jews would start fighting we would unfurl the swastika. They started to fight in fact, and we spread out the blanket with the swastika on a hill. We considered it to be all in fun.” (27 August:3)

ANTI-SEMITISM: ITS ROLE IN THE RIOT

Anti-Semitism in Contemporary Toronto

We can arrive at an understanding of the Christie Pits riot only by placing the event within its relevant social context. For purposes of this paper, we focus on the phenomenon of contemporary anti-semitism and argue that from the perspective of the Jewish community, the events at Christie Pits were a climax to a series of anti-Jewish incidents and activities.

A strong consensus emerged from our Jewish respondents that life in Toronto was not easy for Jews in 1933. They were barred from certain occupations and were either refused admission or made to feel increasingly unwelcome in certain social and recreational circles. Even their physical safety

could not be assured, especially beyond the boundaries of the main Jewish settlement area. The Christie Pits riot, therefore, must be viewed in the context of underlying tensions between Gentiles and Jews:

But you've got to remember the times . . . Jews were nothing. They were second-class citizens. Now, if something was going to happen, the general attitude of the police was, "let the Nazis get their licks in, we'll come in afterwards and separate them" . . . The general attitude on the part of the police department wasn't in favour of Jews in general. Period. It wasn't uncommon for Jews to get beat up. I used to get beat up regularly. I lived in an area where if they wanted to have a little fun, they'd pick on the Jews. You go to the police and the police as much as ignored you or laughed at it.

Most significantly and in contrast to earlier anti-Jewish sentiment, which was typically expressed in actions against individuals, by 1933 a blanket condemnation had emerged. Jews felt anti-semitism was embedded in the very fabric of the society. Our respondents voluntarily offered numerous specific examples as irrefutable evidence of this phenomenon:

In those days . . . if I put in an application for a job, it was where you were born, and that was easy. What is your religion? And if you put down 'Hebrew' that was it. You couldn't be a teller in a bank. You wouldn't work at Simpson's [department store], Eaton's [department store] you couldn't be a salesman. . . . hate the Jews. No special reason. You didn't have to have any special cause. You were a Jew.

No dogs or Jews allowed at the Mineral Baths. Big sign out in the open, "No Jews." Nothing wrong with that. That was common, for the time. So if it's common for the time, the rest of the community would condone these things.

The atmosphere of the times was, no question, anti-semitic . . . Being in the minority, the Jew was shit. And I remember growing up in schools — you don't hear it today — you know, 'kike' and 'Jew' . . . and you'd always wonder what the hell did I do here? I must have killed somebody. They hate me and they get away with this. Now especially if you had a beard and you looked like the *rabbayim* [rabbis] . . . And they would drag them, three or four kids, 16 or 17 years old, like a pack of wolves. They'd jump on him and push him to the floor . . . pull his beard and yell 'Jew' and so forth. Now Nazism was rising, yes, but anti-semitism — you didn't have to be a Nazi to be an antisemite. All you had to be was a *gay*.

Young Jews, many of them second-generation Canadians, appear to have been more aware of the intensity and extensiveness of anti-semitism in Toronto than their parents. The older generation, living a cloistered life within the confines of the Jewish ghetto, had enjoyed and sought few opportunities to interact with Gentiles in the larger community. Quite naturally, the young people's activities brought them into greater contact with institutions in the larger society — public schools, social clubs, dance halls, etc. — precisely the points at which they would most realize the degree to which they were singled out for special consideration. More importantly, the younger generation was simply unfamiliar with the vicious anti-semitism that had impelled their parents

to leave Eastern Europe. By comparison, anti-Jewish sentiment in Toronto was a minor inconvenience. As one of our respondents aptly put it:

We lived in a ghetto. My father thought that this [Toronto] was paradise because he didn't speak English. Where he was in the Ukraine . . . he wasn't allowed to walk the streets and if they [the police] killed a Jew, then they didn't have to make out a report. They [my parents] came here and . . . they weren't beat up on the street. And [if] . . . a guy called them a f . . . g Jew, my father wouldn't know what the hell he was saying to start with.

The Swastika Clubs

Although discrimination was a routine feature of Toronto life for Jews, in early 1933 many of them perceived a horrifying change in its manifestation with the sudden appearance of Swastika Clubs in Toronto, organized allegedly for keeping the public beaches clear of “undesirables.” As far as the Jews were concerned, these groups were rooted in anti-semitism, intentionally established to single them out, and probably Nazi organized or inspired. The rhetoric and the behaviour of the Swastika spokesmen and sympathizers convinced the Jews of the accuracy of their perception. Tensions, especially among young Jews, rose.

The trouble began in the Beaches area of Toronto — specifically in Kew Gardens — in the southeastern part of the city, a section miles from the Jewish residential area. Toronto's eastern beaches and parks were a favourite picnic area for thousands of Jewish immigrants and their families who could not afford to buy or rent cottages and who didn't have the means to travel to summer resorts (many of which, in any event, did not welcome Jews). The customs, cuisine and language of these week-end visitors were different from the prevailing norm in that area of the city.

Residents of the Beaches were disturbed over the increasing presence of Jews on the beaches and their seeming disregard for 'proper' behaviour. An unsigned letter received by the Parks Department on 29 June 1933, indicates the concerns:

. . . Do you think it would be possible to place a few picnic tables under the trees in Kew Beach Park, this side of the Tennis Court . . . and also to place a sign up on the trees This area for Gentiles only. As at present it is quite impossible to get a table in the Park, at all on Sunday: for the Jewish people seem to get every table in the Park and even if there were room for others to sit at the same table, one would hardly like to share the same table with them as our ways are so entirely different. Last week while hunting for a table so that we could spread a cloth and have a nice cool out door lunch, we came across 2 or 3 tables but they were allready [sic] occupied by Jewish people sleeping on them, so we had to be contented with eating on the grass and then our pic-nic was spoiled with ants crawling on the food.

I have seen the Jewish people stand their children, (and rather big children at that) on the tables and strip them, then dry them after being in the lake and then dress them now who

could sit and eat at that table with them. I have heard a great many of gentile people say they wish that the Parks Commission would put tables under the trees this side of the tennis court and have it Restricted to Gentile People only, then we could all enjoy the Park, without interfering with each other. I wonder Sir if you could take my suggestion into consideration (Toronto City Archives)¹³

Some people took much stronger and more provocative action. They painted a sign with a swastika and the words “Hail Hitler” in front of the Balmy Beach Canoe Clubhouse and posted an open letter to residents of the Beaches on its bulletin board:

We are a group of beach residents interested in the proper maintenance of the Beaches area, Kew Gardens and adjacent territory for the children and taxpayers of Ward 8 . . .

Your territory is, as most Beach residents know, PRIVATE. You have had the courage to erect a Swastika. Will you have the courage to wear one openly and show your disfavour of the invasion?

Local No. 5 of the Swastika Clubs has been formed in Kew Beach and now has a membership of forty. Commencing Monday, July 31, our members will appear on the beaches, board walks and in Kew Gardens and adjacent parks wearing a nickel-plated badge with a scarlet swastika thereon.

They will simply wear the emblem. There will be no parades or demonstrations. No speeches will be made. We feel that the emblem will have the desired effect. (*The Globe*, 2 August:2)

On 2 August, the front pages of the Toronto daily newspapers reported that the previous evening the newly formed club had organized its first march up and down the boardwalk from the clubhouse to Woodbine Avenue. Adherents, some two hundred strong, sang to the tune of “Home, Home on the Range”:

“Oh, give me a home, where the Gentiles may roam,
Where the Jews are not rampant all day,
Where seldom is heard, a loud Yiddish word,
And the Gentiles are free all the day.”

Some 60 to 70 Jews and sympathizers — many coming in a large transport truck — arrived at the Beach en masse, and surrounded the clubhouse where the swastika had been posted. But by the time they got there, it had been removed, as had the letter quoted above, at the request of civil officials. According to the Police Inspector at the scene, the evening ended without trouble.

While Jews quickly charged that the Swastika Club was an anti-semitic organization, its spokesmen denied the charge, claiming it was directed against indecent conduct on the beaches. *The Globe* quoted a young member of the organization:

Residents of the lakefront area have substantial stakes in their homes. Every Saturday and Sunday the area is jammed with men and women in cars, dressing and undressing almost openly in cars without side curtains, in trucks, behind private flower beds, everywhere . . . This is an instance of what we wish to end. (2 August:3)

Membership in the club, spokesmen insisted, was open to everyone, including Jews. In a statement issued on 3 August, the group's Press Committee explained the use of the swastika and denied any connection with any Nazi or Hitlerite movement: The rest of the statement read, in part:

The Swastika emblem is chosen as befitting the organization, as it symbolizes fraternity and good luck, and it is also a modern symbol of thanks for services rendered. The Swastika Clubs will sing no songs, nor engage in parades objectionable to any nationality or creed. The Swastika Clubs have absolutely no political association of any kind. They are in no way connected with any Hitler, Fascist or Nazi movement. No parades, demonstrations, speeches or public nuisances of any kind will be enacted by the local of any Swastika Club. (*The Globe* 4 August:1)¹⁴

A few days later, B. Ganter, one of the signators of the press statement, had a slightly different explanation of the swastika symbol. The Balmy Beach area, he stated, had at one time been a camping ground for the Iroquois Indians to whom the swastika was a good luck sign: "The sign is well known in the east-end . . . We picked on it solely as an emblem of good luck" (*Toronto Daily Star*, 5 August: 3).

Yet in 1933, as *The Jewish Standard* commented:

The swastika has come to be considered a symbol of oppression and terror. Jews, liberals, artists have been persecuted, tortured, murdered in the name of this hooked cross. In the minds of all persons of intelligence, it is the synonym for bloodshed and a pagan violation of Christianity. That Canadians would adopt an emblem so horribly linked with religious and political persecution constitutes in itself an unpatriotic act contrary to the principles of Canadian and British democracy. (4 August:1)

Or, as Mr. Bennett, chairman of the publicity committee of the League for the Defense of Jewish Rights, put it:

The Swastika means suffering, death, and even torture to all our people. To the whole world it is an emblem of Hitlerism, anti-semitic Hitlerism. After Mr. Ganter's statement had appeared in the press, wherein he disavowed any connection with Hitlerism, I telephoned him, to try and arrange a meeting. He claimed the purpose of his club was merely to keep the beaches clean and orderly. We are all for that. It is to our interest, as well as to the interest of the Gentiles, that we have a beautiful city. We are ready to cooperate with him . . . I asked him why, in view of the natural resentment aroused in our people by the Swastika emblem, he didn't suggest to the club some other emblem. He replied that he was not prepared to make a statement on that. (*Toronto Daily Star*, 5 August:3).

Reactions within the Jewish community were unequivocal: the Swastika Club was linked directly with Hitlerite propaganda. The League for the Defense of Jewish Rights, the recognized representative of the Jewish community, began its official statement by downplaying the importance of the Swastika incidents by attributing their popularity to youngsters in search of excitement,¹⁵ but it also warned that Toronto was in danger of becoming a

centre of Nazi propaganda.

The *Jewish Standard*, the Canadian Jewish weekly, announced in bold print “Nazis Invade Canada” and it reported that it had uncovered plans for a country-wide anti-semitic propaganda campaign (4 August:1).

The Yiddish newspaper *Der Yiddisher Zhurnal* [The Daily Hebrew Journal] boldly proclaimed: “Nazi Organization is Established in Ward 8 to Expel Jewish Visitors from the Beaches Area” (2 August:1).

Mayor Stewart’s office issued a statement that appeared sympathetic to the Jews while attempting to assuage any legitimate concerns of residents of the Beaches:

Let it be understood with the utmost of clearness that we administer our laws through the police courts, and not through private groups, clubs or demonstrations. We have an abundance of British ideals which our people might emulate and follow; we need no inspiration from foreign sources and foreign isms, but simply a proper respect for law and order and British traditions.

If there is justified complaint at the Eastern Beaches, upon the score of decency and cleanliness, we have our police department and our parks department, and we have our police courts . . .

Demonstration such as have been reported, the singing of provocative songs and so forth is un-British and un-Canadian. Such actions do not bespeak the spirit of the fine population of the East End . . .

I am anxious not to prejudice. But in these times one cannot lightly contemplate the actions of those who set race against race, and raise disturbances and animosities of a racial character. As mayor and chairman of the Board of Police commissioners, I will not tolerate nor countenance any group or individuals taking the law into their own hands or seeking to effect their own ends, or adjust what they consider proper grievances, by becoming a law unto themselves . . .

We must follow the British tradition, the British ideal, in Toronto; the organizations or political organisms of foreign lands do not need to be adopted, used or aped in this country. (*The Jewish Standard*, 4 August:3)

Despite hopes and even rumours that the Swastika Club would disband, the opposite occurred. B. Ganter, one of the spokesmen, announced that the Swastika Club idea was spreading to resorts in the suburbs and that a chapter had recently been formed at Lake Wilcox (*Star*, 3 August: 2), and *The Globe* reported that six local branches of the Swastika Club had been formed in the East End (2 August). On 3 August, the *Star* reported an attack was expected “. . . by a gang allegedly composed of Hebrews” on a small confectionary store believed to serve as the headquarters of the Swastika Club — a charge that B. Ganter, one of the store’s proprietors, denied:

While Ganter was speaking, youths in threes and fours, lured by the report of trouble, drifted in and out of the store, and congregated in the room at the back. As they passed each other, the Hitler salute, palm upraised, was jocularly exchanged. (3 August:1)

On August, according to *The Globe*, about one hundred members of the

Swastika Club:

held a meeting on the boardwalk at the foot of Hammersmith Ave. at which leaders of the movement outlined their views and told of their plans for an orderly and strictly legal campaign to clean up the beaches (5 August:2).

But trouble was anticipated. The *Star* of 5 August reported that both sides appeared prepared for disorder over the weekend. Spokesmen claimed the Swastika Club membership was nearing one thousand and:

Swastika emblems will be flaunted on the east-end beaches over the holiday in greater numbers than ever before, despite the fact that over 3,000 Jews are scheduled to collect in various picnics at Kew Beach. (5 August:1)

Club members described to the *Star* their plans for the holiday, which involved “under-cover men in case somebody should start trouble” (5 August:1).

On the Jewish side, a group of boys had organized themselves to parade the beaches with the intention of preventing disorder. Instead of the swastika, they would wear the maple leaf emblazoned on their sweatshirts.

Mayor Stewart’s urging that citizens live up to the high ideals of the British race proved insufficient to prevent confrontation over the holiday weekend. On Sunday, 7 August, a series of clashes erupted in Kew Gardens. Reported the *Toronto Daily Star*:

Sullen clouds of tense racial feeling, brooding over the east end water front for days, burst during the weekend, and enveloped in a series of clashes and near riots, thousands of Torontonians who flocked to the beaches for pleasure, and for the “thrills” which they found abounded. Trouble was in the air, and it required only the appearance of the Swastika sign to make it all too actively tangible. Throughout the turmoil, the small swastika badge, emblem of the rapidly growing club, bobbed and eddied as gangs of non-Gentiles, incensed by the Hitlerism which they charged it symbolized, pounced on wearers. They tore sweat-shirts on which the sign was emblazoned from the backs of youths, and forced them to seek shelter in nearby houses. (8 August:1).

According to the newspaper accounts, appearances of the swastika emblem was the cue for trouble. And, as *The Globe* reported:

Badges were in evidence on every hand. Some wore the round nickel button with the enamelled emblem on it. Others displayed armbands, some had the emblem painted on their sweat shirts and sweaters, while still others had the emblem painted on their chests. In some instances, even young ladies had the emblem pinned on their bathing suits. (7 August:2).

Several of our respondents claimed to have participated in the violent clashes at Kew Beach that weekend. One reported:

So, now my brothers and a bunch of other guys, they got about two or three trucks and they loaded them up with guys, and they went out there right on to the beach. And there were slug fests there all the time.

Another interviewee described his involvement:

All of a sudden these little *shiksalach* [Gentile girls] started running around with swastikas on the front of their bathing suits and this was the big in-thing down there. And the boys went down and they put their trunks on and they wore swastikas. And if they didn't wear them on their trunks, they put them on their chests. And this became — one week, the second week, all week long. The papers started playing it up and so we did a similar thing. We drove out there and we ran up on the beach and we tore the bathing suits off these girls, stripped them completely, we did everything. We took bats, not real baseball bats, but we took little wooden paddles like. And we paddled their rear-ends for doing this and all that. They were screaming bloody murder. And we called them all Hitlerites. You know, anti-semites. And this caused a furor in the paper.

To prevent the outbreak of larger-scale violence, the police in attendance urged and, on occasion, insisted that club members remove the swastika badges from their clothing.

Yet the 9 August *Star* reported that the Swastika movement was spreading and that Mr. Ganter, spokesman for the organization, claimed “thousands of sympathizers have made out applications for membership” (9 August:7). Also on 9 August, Mayor Stewart called a conciliation conference of representatives of the Swastika Clubs and leaders of the League for the Defense of Jewish Rights. Reported the *Jewish Standard*:

Firm and vigorous in his endeavour to preserve “peace and good government in Toronto”, Mayor Stewart issued a strong ultimatum to the Swastika Club leaders, threatening them with court action if their demonstrations tending to provoke disturbances did not cease. His Worship brought the hearing to a head when at the behest of Rabbi S. Sachs, chairman of the Jewish League, he requested B.M. Ganter and H.W. MacKay, Swastika spokesmen, to ask their organization to give up the swastika emblem which symbolized intolerance and cruelty”. (5 August:15).

The club representatives refused to promise that the group would abandon the emblem. They did agree to report the request and promised it would be considered.

On Friday, 11 August, The *Toronto Daily Star*'s headline on page 1 announced: “Swastika Club will Give Up Emblem.” The announcement was made at a news conference in the Mayor's office attended by Ganter representing the Swastika Clubs. The *Globe* reported:

Ganter, it is said, informed the Mayor that prominent residents of the beaches had come forward with an offer of financial and moral support in the formation of an organization to carry on the work commenced by the Swastika Clubs, and also that the emblem and the name would be abandoned in favour of another which had not yet been chosen.(12 August:2)

By August, it appeared that the Jewish community would henceforth be spared the indignity of witnessing the swastika emblem at the beaches, and that

the daily press coverage of the Swastika Club's activities and Jewish communal leaders' reactions to them was over.

But more was yet to come. On Monday, 14 August, Toronto papers announced that a circular had been distributed throughout the province publicizing a Swastika rally planned for Kitchener that evening.¹⁶ The circulars were signed O. E. Becker, styled "commander" who declared that no Jews would be admitted to the meeting.

Addressed to the "Citizens of Kitchener and Waterloo County", the circular proclaimed a declaration of war "against Marxism, Communism and Bolshevism" whose adherents (immigrants all) were trying to reduce Canada to despair and chaos.¹⁷ In interviews with the press, Becker unhesitatingly extolled the virtues of Mussolini and Hitler.

Not much came of the Kitchener rally and Commander Becker was deported to Germany some two weeks, later thereby ending the short-lived existence of the Swastika Club in that city as well as in Toronto.

The Swastika Clubs as Precipitating Factors

Although the Swastika Clubs existed under that name in Toronto for a relatively short time — less than two weeks — their presence attracted enormous attention and had considerable influence. Whether they were Nazi-sponsored, Nazi-inspired, or simply the work of thoughtless prejudiced individuals would make a fascinating study. More to the point of this study, however, is the way in which they were perceived. Many Jewish communal leaders believed they represented an obvious attempt to assist Hitlerism in gaining a foothold in Canada.¹⁸

Moreover, the Jewish community at large, a people already battered by the prejudice of the surrounding society, generally agreed with this perception. The use of the swastika emblem clearly played an important role in this interpretation of reality. As Rabbi S. Sachs, chairman of the League for the Defense of Jewish Rights, explained at the Mayor's meeting on 9 August:

You know the power of an emblem. The swastika today is accepted throughout the civilized world as the emblem of Hitlerism. No longer does it mean good luck. It means bad luck. To Jewish people the swastika is the symbol of a wild beast crouching over 600,000 people, sucking their blood. Look what the swastika did. It brought "Hail Hitler" signs, brought the Fascist salute, and many things you didn't intend. (9 August: 1)

Given this perception of the Jewish community, Mayor Stewart was quite correct in believing that the presence and activities of the Swastika Club presented an unsettling situation. Noting the tensions and sporadic outbreaks of violence they had caused, he said "It would not take a very great spark to start

a conflagration in the city that you wouldn't put out in a day'' (*Toronto Daily Star*; 12 August:7). Unfortunately, the next few days would see his fears materialize.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXT OF THE RIOT

Although the appearance of swastikas in the Beaches provoked an active response from a number of young Jews from the Spadina/College area, the police managed to contain the threat of large-scale violence. In part, the very distance of Kew Beach from the Jewish areas militated against a large-scale outbreak of hostilities. The Jewish boys who went to the Beaches area to challenge the Swastika Clubs were far from home and had little chance of getting reinforcements should trouble in fact occur. Christie Pits, on the other hand, was very close to the edge of the Jewish ghetto. The neighbourhood around the park was mostly inhabited by lower-middle and working-class people of British extraction and of the Protestant faith. Many of them had been severely affected by the depression, and a large percentage, especially of the youths, had been unemployed for some time. At the time, the Jews were migrating northward and had nearly reached Bloor and Christie Streets; thus, the actions of the Pit Gang can be understood as a defensive response to a perceived threat to their territory by upwardly mobile "foreigners"

Furthermore, it is not surprising that the riot erupted on the occasion of a baseball game between a local team (St. Peter's) and a visiting team (Harbord Playground). Our respondents emphasized how important local sports, particularly baseball, were to the youth of Toronto during the depression years. S. Armstrong, head of the playgrounds for the City of Toronto, encouraged sports and athletics, in part as a way of keeping the boys out of trouble during this all-too-troubled period.

At least one of our respondents believes that inter-team rivalry had more to do with the riot than political anti-semitism:

But whether this gang was consciously anti-semitic; I don't think they had enough brains for it . . . Ya, I think the important thing of this whole thing really is that . . . I doubt very much if anybody in that group really, really had a hand on anti-semitism as we know it today. I doubt it. That there was resentment, ya. But I think it was based on local sport pride . . . The peculiar thing that impressed me about them [members of the Pit Gang] was, that I played hockey for Essex Playground and I played hockey for St. Peter's Church [and] this gang would turn out in support, you know, they were fans of local [teams] like Essex Playground . . . and St. Peter's. It's quite possible that somebody, somebody actually from a Fascist organization, painted the sign? Now, I don't think that without that sign, I have grave doubts if the Christie Pit Gang would have done anything.

He went on to say that the members of the Pit Gang were always interested in creating trouble. If the swastika could be employed to that end, he said, they

wouldn't hesitate to employ it. But this differs, our respondent believes, from a fervently-held political belief in anti-semitism. (He added, however, that many of Hitler's brownshirts may have been more interested in creating trouble than in acting from a consistent political anti-semitism).

A former resident of Clinton Street who observed the riot felt that anti-semitism was indeed the major issue. He explained:

Unless you lived in those times you wouldn't know, but there was an under . . . there was an atmosphere of hatred towards Jews, anti-semitism, in an area which was largely Waspish. And there used to be trouble in this same area between the Catholics and . . . There used to be Catholic troubles, you know, a lot of Orange people lived in that area.

For many young people, of course, ethnic rivalries compounded territorial rivalries that surfaced on playing fields. St. Peter's was a Catholic team, although by no means exclusively composed of Catholics. The majority of players on the Harbord side were Jewish. A number of them also played hardball for the Lizzies (Elizabeth Playground — coached by the legendary Bob Abate), one of the best amateur ball clubs in Toronto during the thirties. Both the Lizzies and Harbord Playground were generally thought of as "Jewish" teams, and the press often so identified them.¹⁹

As we have seen, Harbord and St. Peter's had played the first game in the series on the Monday of that week, and sporadic violence erupted among the spectators during the course of that game:

During a junior softball playoff, to which Harbord Playground, a Jewish team, met St. Peter's, a huge swastika emblem sewn in white cloth on a black sweater coat was hoisted by a gang, to the accompaniment of "Hail Hitler." The Jewish players were incensed . . .

After the game, won by Harbord, the gang held the emblem high and swarmed on the field. Many had clubs made of sawed-off broom handles. They gave their club yell again,²⁰ and gathered around the Jewish players. Spectators thought a fight would follow.

Later, the gang met and decided to paint a sign on the roof of the club house. A collection was taken up to provide paint. A member left and returned with a half pint tin. The youths waited until the attendants left the park, then two of them climbed the roof and painted the sign, amid cheers from the others on the ground.

Questioned, they admitted that no connection existed between the Beaches Swastikas and themselves. The club has no membership cards or fees, but is merely formed by the gang which frequents the park, they explained . . .

"We want to get the Jews out of our park," they said . . .

The Jewish boys promise that there will be trouble when they play there on Wednesday evening. (*Toronto Daily Star*, 15 August:1)

Despite the Pit Gang protestations, the Jewish community felt this was a continuation of the activities of the Beaches Swastika Clubs.

Whether an actual connection existed is impossible to tell in retrospect. The Pit Gang may simply have learned of these actions through the extensive reporting and discussion of them in the press,²¹ or through the rumours that were circulating through the city. Another possibility is that a few of the Beaches Swastikas had come to the Willowvale Park area and with or without the knowledge of certain members of the Pit Gang, acted as provocateurs. Several of the people we interviewed suggested this as a likely possibility. One respondent who had grown up in the area and knew the members of the Pit Gang doubted that they could have dreamed up the swastika sign on their own. In his words:

Jews were outsiders; they were good bait and that was it . . . The atmosphere of the city of this particular time was one of which this Pit Gang would be encouraged to, in my opinion sort of be anti-semitic . . . It was just young drop-outs with nothing better to do. And if you tell me that there was a swastika, that was enough to lead them that way.

(Question: I gather then that you feel that this swastika was really prepared by somebody else outside the Pit Gang?)

I would think so, I would really think so. I don't think that gang had enough brains to do it.

(Question: But they certainly would have been drawn into it?)

Absolutely, absolutely. It would be like Fascist Hitler's hoodlums, you know. It was fun to beat up people.

Another respondent, who was even closer to the Pit Gang, was even more suspicious of outside influence:

They blamed the Pit Gang for the thing (the riot), but there was a lot of other people that were around there the first night, the first game was started that I never saw there before. And I suspected that they were from the German Bund . . . But there was somebody in the park that night during the first game; there were strange people. And they had caused some trouble, yelling "Heil Hitler" . . . A lot of the Christie Pit Gang were in on it, you know. They were down there that night. And some of those guys were just looking for a fight. Been drinking rubbing alcohol, you know, things like that.

It is highly unlikely that the German Bund was responsible for inciting the Christie Pits riot.²² A more likely source of provocateurs, one a number of our respondents suggested, would have been the Swastika Club of Kew Beach, especially those members, such as H. MacKay, who proved actively anti-semitic.

There are several arguments for outside agitators having been involved in the initial stages of the riot. The "Heil Hitler" epithets shouted on the evening of the first game and repeated at the conclusion of the second game were not the usual fare for the lads who made up the Pit Gang. One would have expected them to use more homegrown slurs, such as "dirty Jew", "Sheenie", and

“Kike”. Further, the painting of the words “Hail Hitler” (note the spelling²³) and the swastika on the club house roof on Monday night were a close copy of the sign that appeared in front of the Balmy Beach Canoe Club two weeks before. The white swastika on the sweater also follows the Beaches Swastikas’ pattern of using the emblem on shirts and sweaters.

On the other hand, one can argue that the members of the Pit Gang would have been familiar with the Hitler phenomenon, which had been recent and constantly in the news. They would almost certainly have known about the goings-on at the Beaches, and they would have seen in the swastika emblem an easy way of provoking a reaction from the Jewish boys.

That local boys incited the riot is unquestionable. The newspapers reported that John Adams had himself sewn the swastika onto his sweater, and a respondent saw him waving it around during the game on Monday evening. All of the boys arrested were members of the Pit Gang. One of them was caught with paint still fresh on his hands from having made one of swastika emblems; the others readily admitted having been his accomplices. What we shall never know is the extent of the relationship between this provocative behaviour and that of the Beaches Swastikas or any other anti-semitic group.

THE IMPORTANCE OF RUMOUR

Clearly, rumour was vitally important in the genesis of the Christie Pits riot. This is not surprising since many analysts have repeatedly emphasized rumour as playing an integral role in the organization of riots.²⁴

Regardless of who introduced the anti-Jewish taunts into the Monday game at Christie Pits, members of the Pit Gang were not slow in picking up the message that this was an excellent way to cause trouble. From the point at which they painted the roof of the club house, rumour became the force that brought out large numbers of both Jewish and anti-Jewish supporters to the second game on Wednesday.

When asked why they went to the Pits that evening, many of our respondents answered that they had heard there would be trouble:

Jewish boys used to hang around that corner [Spadina/College]. And when there was talk of this, it had got to the point where there would be something like this happening, so it ran like wildfire. Just as fast as they were able to get their men, we heard about it. They come into the poolroom. ‘‘There’s going to be trouble at Christie Pits and this is lining up and that is lining up and they’re going to be there, the anti-semites.’’

As I remember within no time at all, almost by magic, because I don’t know how the message got to the Spadina and College district. At that time the restaurant at the corner of Spadina and College was called the Goblin Restaurant and trucks came to the front of the restaurant and boys from the district hopped onto these trucks.

There was a restaurant . . . it was called the Goblin on Spadina Ave., . . . west side of Spadina Ave., just south of College . . . Phone calls went in, and then the word spread and even old timers, the ones that the immigrants themselves that were, they already had grown children. These guys had trucks . . . We jumped in their trucks, they even sent over, a truck over to the "Ward" to gather . . . In the Ward we hung around a place . . . Rotenburg had a little store at the corner of Elizabeth and Gerard . . . He had a little grocery store and that was also a hangout . . . And even the Italians, I remember guys, there was Charlie Difalco, there was the Romano's, they jumped on the trucks and all out to Christie Pits. And we handled that so beautifully.

One day I'm having lunch and in walks Freddie Hamilton . . . So he comes over with a plate of sandwich and a drink and there was no waiters in those days in Shopsy's. He said "Can I sit down?" I said "Sure, sit down Fred, I'm lonesome as hell. Come on what's doing?" He says, "Well, I'll tell you something . . . Go up to Christie Pits. There's going to be one hell of a row there."

When questioned further about their sources of information, many respondents were quite vague, offering statements such as "well, word kind of just got around" or "somebody called the pool hall" or even "I don't know how I knew, but I knew."

That these rumours about what had happened on the Monday evening and what was going to happen on the Wednesday evening were widespread in the community is highlighted by the fact that on Tuesday the Secretary of the Toronto Amateur Softball Association, Jack Turner, appealed to the Toronto Police to take action to prevent a violent confrontation at the second game. An editorial in the *Toronto Daily Star* two days after the riot referred angrily to this forewarning:

Chief Draper had, owing to the rumours of the trouble that was brewing, been requested by letter to provide additional police protection for the occasion. This extra protection was not provided. No doubt if the request had been based on the fear that somebody was going to make a speech in Willowvale Park horse, foot and artillery would have been there to prevent the speech and drive everybody out of the valley. (18 August:6)²⁵

Within the Jewish community, it appears that two different groups responded to two different sets of rumours. The first set of rumours originated after the incidents at Monday night's game. As *Der Yiddisher Zhurnal* put it: "The rumour was spread that the same gang that upset the Jewish players with a swastika and yelled 'heil Hitler' would seek to make trouble this time as well." (17 August:1).

The people who responded to this rumour did so by organizing in advance for trouble and by making sure they got to the Pits before the beginning of the ballgame. To a large extent these were Jewish boys loosely referred to as the Spadina Avenue Gang. Frequenters of the pool halls and restaurants in the Spadina/College area, they were considered 'tough guys' both within and without the Jewish community. (In fact, their number included many amateur

boxers, several of whom went on to become professional fighters.) Scores of these boys, perhaps more, went to the park in cars and trucks before the beginning of the game on the strength of the rumour circulating since the Monday night game.

In addition, another group of boys, perhaps even larger than the first, went up to the Pits, but only *after* the trouble began Wednesday night. As soon as the fighting broke out, a number of Jewish youths, either on their own initiative or at the behest of others in the park, carried the word to the Spadina/College area. (The bicycle trip from the Pits to the corner of Spadina and College takes less than ten minutes.) As the news travelled that “Jews are being attacked”, the untrue rumour spread that at least one Jewish boy had been killed in the fighting.

The rumour of fighting and a death sent a second wave of Jewish youths rushing to the Pits. As reported on the front page of *Der Yiddisher Zhurnal* on the day following the riot:

In the city the attacks called forth many claims which could not be substantiated and which were exaggerated. The editorial office was bombarded with telephone calls all evening and into the night concerning those killed or those who died from their wounds.

Many Jews who telephoned the editorial office wanted not only information but advice as to what they should do. One could sense from some of the questions, that those people were living in a pogrom atmosphere. And it was necessary to go to some lengths to calm those people down.

Der Yiddisher Zhurnal reported: “From every street, cars and trucks with mostly Jewish youth began to speed their way there” [to the park]. (17 August: 1) Many of those who rode the crest of this second wave to the Pits arrived during a lull in the fighting. As a respondent told us:

It was the height of the depression. Very few people worked. I happened to be at work at the time — I worked at Spadina and Grange. When I got to the corner — I was walking home — I lived on Bathurst Street, they says come on. So we all got into trucks and when we got to Christie Pits all we saw . . . They had a refreshment stand. On top of the refreshment stand, on top of the roof there was a big, big, large swastika. But we had nobody to fight. It was a shadow. We went up there and we fought ghosts.²⁶

In considering the role of rumour in the Christie Pits riot, the contemporary press and our respondents naturally emphasized its importance to the Jewish participants. Yet it is clear that rumour also played an important part in the actions of the Pit Gang and their supporters. Since the core members of the gang planned the intimidation that triggered the riot, rumour was obviously not a direct influence upon them. Yet whether outside agitators were present or not, rumour from the earlier incidents in the Beaches probably played some part in the mindset of these boys. At the Pits, rumour was certainly responsible for

drawing into the web of violence the large number of local youths who had only peripheral contact with the core of the Pit Gang.

Nor did rumour stop with the riot. On the following night, rumours of renewed Jewish incursion into the area of Christie Pits ran freely among youths in the vicinity of the park. On Friday, 18 August, *The Globe* reported: "A couple of times during the night rumours spread that the Jews had arrived and considerable excitement prevailed until investigation proved that such was not the case".

Rumour affected not only the warring youths of both sides but also the police, who were certainly pressured from above to prevent any repetition of the incident. The same issue of *The Globe* reported the scene at Christie Pits the night after the riot:

About four thousand people were gathered in the park watching a lacrosse game, and after the contest was over a large number waited around anticipating excitement. Five constables were at the park about this time, and when it looked for a time as if something might develop a call was put in for reserves. Besides the twenty uniformed constables, several plainclothesmen were scattered among the crowd. By 10 o'clock the park and the streets within the vicinity were almost entirely cleared of thrill seekers, and police were able to breathe easier. (1)

Conclusion

The Christie Pits riot served as a violent culmination to a series of anti-semitic incidents in which the swastika symbol provided the focal point. Irrespective of the intended meaning of this symbol, Jews interpreted its flagrant use as a categorical assault on their person/psyche by virtue of their ethnic membership. As we saw, the Mayor of Toronto hoped that since the city was rooted in British values, traditions and ideals, the friction generated by the swastika symbol would dissipate on its own. He was proven wrong. The organizers of the Swastika Clubs in the Beaches backed down on their use of the symbol, but the leaders of the Pit Gang, perhaps urged by outside agitators, picked it up and employed it as an instrument in their running quarrel with the young Jews of Spadina Avenue. Warning sparks were evident, but the Chief of Police was either unable or unwilling to modify the existing institutional arrangements to accommodate the rumour that violence would erupt at the Wednesday evening baseball game.

In recent years, ethnic relations in Canada have attracted considerable attention, partly because of a growing realization that our society continues to single out members of visible minorities for unfavourable differential treatment. Analyses of ethnic relations must attend not only to the processes underlying diverse groups' harmonious relationships and successful

integration into the larger society, but also to sequences of events resulting in inter-ethnic tensions and strife. In their analysis of prejudice, Allport and Postman suggest that the culmination of violence is typically preceded by a sequence of steps — conditions that remove the brakes that normally exist between verbal aggression and overt violence.²⁷ Collective ethnic violence represents the most serious form of ethnic conflict and signifies, perhaps, the most extreme kind of accommodation by which inter-ethnic tensions are mediated. As such, the processes resulting in such action require thorough investigation. We hope to have made a beginning by our analysis of the Christie Pits riot.

NOTES

1. In a separate paper, we intend to write an account of the “natural history” of the project. It will describe not only the challenges we encountered in finding respondents, but also the difficulties we confronted in asking people to recall an event that occurred some fifty years ago, and how we attempted to overcome them.
2. The swimming pool which now occupies a considerable area in the northwest of the park was constructed in the 1950’s.
3. A hardball game between Vermont and Native Sons had been played in the northeast diamond. Upon its conclusion, a large number of spectators moved over to the northwest diamond to watch the final innings of the softball game between Harbord Playground and St. Peter’s.
4. One of the fascinating things about the reporting of the riot is the great difference among the four major Toronto papers in the presentations of the “facts” and between the big four and the Yiddish press. This topic will form the subject of a future paper.
5. On the same evening a senior playoff game was also played in Christie Pits. One of the largest crowds in the park’s history was on hand for it. (*Toronto Daily Star*, 15 August, 1933; *Mail and Empire*, 15 August, 1933).
6. The *Toronto Daily Star* reported that 10,000 people were in the park that evening. The *Mail and Empire* put the figure at “more than 8,000”. With no intention of diminishing the seriousness of the riot, we are deliberately providing estimates lower than those reported by the newspapers at that time. Our respondents indicated that the figures reported in the press were inflated.
7. In another paper we plan to investigate the role of the police in the Christie Pits riot in greater detail.
8. The relationship between the Jewish and Italian communities, in particular

the relationship between Jewish and Italian youths, was generally cordial and supportive. There were several reasons for this. They were both immigrant groups, sharing similar life circumstances in the same poor neighbourhoods. And both groups were outsiders, experiencing discrimination and bigotry at the hands of the WASP establishment and British majority. One of our respondents, an Italian-Canadian who went to the Pits with his friends to support the Jewish boys, described the anti-Italian sentiment in Toronto at that time:

The Italians the same thing. They'd call you wop, ya. As a matter of fact we even made up a song about the Italians . . . "When I first come to this country people called me dago man, long time ago they make me feel just like an empty banana. first they called me Tony Spagoni, then they'd say you're full of macaroni. now it's a big shame they gimme the nickname. why don't you tell them to stop. stop, stop. Why don't the Irish cop tell them to stop. First they called me Tony, you're full of macaroni, now they call me wop." Actually, this is how it was. You lousy wop.

9. Goldstein was initially not involved in the riot. He was at a lacrosse practice at the park that evening and became involved only after encountering a group of hostile Gentiles. In the course of arguing with them he was set upon by the group and knocked unconscious. He was rescued by Joe Cancelli and two other friends who carried him to a house on Christie St. (which, by coincidence, turned out to be the home of his sister-in-law). He was later taken to the Toronto Western Hospital.
10. From the *Toronto Daily Star* and *Evening Telegram*, 17 August, 1933. Slight and inconsequential differences appear in the two newspapers' versions of the Mayor's statement. The statement here is a composite of the two versions.
11. For example, in his statement the Mayor claimed that "the activities of the Swastika Club are being looked into by the city, provincial and Dominion police". We have been in touch with the Metropolitan Toronto Police, the Ontario Provincial Police, the Solicitor General of Ontario, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. From the first and latter two we have had full co-operation in our research. The Commissioner of the O.P.P. was unwilling to co-operate with our research in any way. However, Solicitor General George Taylor assured us that no records of the riot or of the Swastika Clubs exist in the files of the O.P.P. The R.C.M.P. turned up nothing in their records of the riot, the Swastika Clubs, the arrested, or anything related to the riot. The Metropolitan Toronto Police were able to furnish us with only one document from the Police Commission; it treats the riot in Christie Pits in a paragraph in the general context of trouble in Toronto's parks during that summer. A thorough search in the archives of

the City of Toronto turned up nothing.

12. Harris explained the hunting knife in his possession as a piece of professional equipment required by his job as a fishing guide in the Peterborough area.
13. On 7 July the Commissioner of Parks sent a memo to the Superintendent of Parks for the Eastern District:

We have been requested to place a limited number of picnic tables under the trees in Kew Gardens . . . Please report if, in your opinion, it would be advisable to make provision there for next year. (Toronto City Archives)

The response to this memo, dated 12 July, stated:

I beg to report that owing to the increased demand for accomodation I respectfully recommend that an additional 20 tables be constructed in 1934. (Toronto City Archives)

14. The rest of the statement read, in part:

. . . the people of Toronto, including several prominent Hebrew associations, have, through the source of anonymous phone calls, letters, etc., been given an entirely wrong impression as to the aim of our organization . . .

Conditions of membership: All members must be over the age of 18 years: members of either sex will be accepted, regardless of nationality or creed; members must be residents of the district in which their local is formed; members must pledge themselves to live up to all the aims of the organization.

Aims: It is the aim of the Swastika Club, by assisting the civic authorities, to exclude from their local district all obnoxious and undesirable elements who tend to destroy the natural beauty and the property value of the residential districts of Toronto . . .

The Swastika Club members may be identified by Swastika crosses stenciled on sweat shirts, bathing suits, beach pyjamas, or other wearing apparel. The official emblem of the Swastika Club is a scarlet Swastika cross engraved and enamelled on a nickel shield.

We hope by the displaying of our badge in considerable numbers to discourage any objectionable element which creeps into a district in spite of the strictest supervision of parks, beaches, ravines and other beauty spots of our city.

The Swastika Club will gladly arrange a committee for the purpose of discussing our organization, its aims, etc., with civic authorities or any private or representative body.

15. Many Jewish communal leaders believed that the most effective treatment of outbursts of anti-Semitism was to ignore them. For example, Edmund Scheuer, a prominent Jewish citizen stated:

I think that too much importance — at all events, too much publicity — has been given to these unfortunate Swastika incidents. My personal advice to the young Jewish people is to remain calm, to avoid any kind of provocation, and most important of all to refrain from taking the law into their own hands. Our Canadian laws — thank God! — are just, our police excellent and well able to protect any class of citizens from being molested by

hoodlums (*Toronto Daily Star*, 9 August: 1).

Samuel Resnick, a noted Jewish citizen of Toronto, remarked:

We are not afraid of the Nazi influence in Canada. . . . If these agitators were left alone, I am sure their activities would die a natural death in a few weeks. (*Ibid.*)

Added Dr. S. J. Woolfson:

A childish movement, it is based on exhibitionism rather than on fundamental principles. No matter what they say, it is indirectly an attack upon the Jews. The quickest way to overcome it is to totally ignore it. (*Ibid.*)

16. Whereas *The Globe* announces that “Swastika Rally Planned,” the *Toronto Daily Star* informed its readers on the first page that “German Emigrant Forms Kitchener Nazis.” Most dramatic was the headline in the Tuesday, August 15th edition of *Der Yiddisher Zhurnal*: “Hitlerite S.S. Troups Are Established in Toronto.”
17. Both Ganter and MacKay were listed on the Kitchener program, but Ganter disclaimed any familiarity with the scheduled meeting. MacKay initially stated that he had no intention of presiding at the Kitchener meeting as announced but later in the day declared that he would assume the chair. “I am not representing the Toronto Swastika,” he said “as they have no connection with the Kitchener affair, officially” (*Toronto Daily Star*, 14 August:3). Of course, the connection could not be official. After all, the Toronto Swastika Clubs were officially no more.

MacKay now switched his affiliation to a new organization that was established following the demise of the Swastika Clubs, built on Fascist lines and committed to the same principles as Hitler’s S.S. troops. He said Ganter had no right to declare the Swastika Clubs would cease using the club’s name; moreover, he accused Ganter of working for the police (*Der Yiddish Zhurnal*, 15 August:1).

18. This view was publicly endorsed by a number of Gentile communal leaders. For example, Rev. D. N. McLachlan, secretary of the board of evangelism and social service of the United Church, said:

It is very unfortunate that the influence of Hitler should have gained a foothold in Canada. There is no room in this country for such pernicious doctrines as the Nazis are preaching. Unless this Swastika Club, so-called, is nipped in the bud, I have grave fears that we may have a serious situation on our hands (*Toronto Daily Star*, 8 August:3).

19. Interestingly after the riot, the press attempted to stress the mixed composition of these and other teams: Under the heading “Jews, Gentiles Play Together”, the *Toronto Daily Star* reported:

Amateur sport puts up no racial barriers if the personnel of many of Toronto’s most

successful baseball and basketball teams — with Jews, Gentiles, Italians and other central Europeans playing together — is any criterion. Irish boys in minority groups play on predominantly Jewish teams. Jews, singly and in groups, team with Gentiles, and throughout all there is no friction of racial character, according to sporting authorities, closely in touch with the teams . . .

Most striking examples of this inter-racial teamwork is seen in the Lizzie's basketball team, 1932 champions, the University of Toronto basketball team, Big Five champions last year, and the Arlington baseball team, leaders of the Greenwood Park Senior League, all of which have several races represented in their line-ups.

Playing on the Arlington team, which is predominantly Jewish, and managed by Harold "Skin" Gallander (a Jewish athlete who plays for the Lizzies' basketball team) are Jack O'Connor, Joe Hill (who plays softball for St. Peter's, one of the teams playing at Willowvale Park where the fracas occurred last night) Johnny Decker, and Herman Bush, an Italian who is rated one of the best pitchers in the city. There are nine Jewish boys on the team.

A sole Jewish member of the Native Sons' team, playing in the Western City League at Willowvale Park, is Myer Miller, while another similar example is that of Al Samuelson, pitcher for the Bain's Coal softball team in the Davisville Park senior league. Another is Sammy Rubin, who is the only Jewish member of an east end softball team in the Beaches League. (17 August:3)

20. One of our respondents who can recall experiencing trouble with the Pit Gang as far back as 1931 remembers the club yell as being "Nicky Oyup". He had no idea what the significance of this yell might have been.
21. Two weeks prior the *Mail and Empire* had published a picture of the Balmy Beach Canoe Club; a sign posted in front had painted on it a swastika and the words "Hail Hitler".
22. First, it was not officially formed until January 1934 (Wagner, 1981). Second, throughout its existence, it was careful not to get involved in activities that would alienate the majority of the German Canadian population and bring the full weight of the authorities down upon it (as had happened to the German American Bund). Moreover, all studies confirm that the Nazi government was still in the process of consolidating its power in Germany and that any agitprop in foreign countries was only in the planning stages.
23. The writing of the German word "Heil" as the English word "Hail" makes it unlikely that any native German speakers were directly involved in the incident — another argument against participation by members of the Bund or similar groups.
24. The theoretical formulation of rumour rests heavily on the work of Allport and Postman (1947). For empirical examples of the role of rumour in inciting riots, see Lieberman and Silverman (1965).
25. This last sarcastic point made in the editorial refers to the fact that police

reinforcements always seemed to be on hand to break up leftist gatherings in other parks. In fact, on the night of the riot the police had been much in evidence at an open-air rally of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation. In the same editorial, the *Star* asserted:

On Tuesday evening at Allan Gardens, where somebody proposed to make a speech — we do not know who, nor does it matter — there were present, before the hour at which the meeting was about to take place, two policemen, eight motorcycle policemen, a dozen policemen in uniform and a number of plainclothesmen.

On Wednesday evening at Willowvale Park where, according to rumours which had spread all over the northwest part of the city, serious racial trouble was likely to occur at a baseball game only three policemen were present — the same number which is there on all occasions to keep an eye on the crowds attending amusements which occur simultaneously.

The lead story in *Der Yiddisher Zhurnal* echoed these sentiments:

The Mayor, the Parks Commission and Athletic Club and others warned the police that they could expect trouble in Willowvale Park. And the police did nothing. This accusation is heard on all sides.

Chief of Police Draper had received an early warning from the Parks Department that special police surveillance should be present at the game between Harbord Playground and St. Peter's teams in Willowvale Park. The Chief of Police admitted this at last night's meeting of the Police Commission, but he did not take it seriously. (17 August: 1)

In response, the *Toronto Daily Star* (18 August: 1) reported, the Spadina C.C.F. Club called for the resignation of the Chief of Police.

26. Cf. *Der Yiddisher Zhurnal*, which reported: "When they [the Jewish boys] arrived there [Christie Pits], everything was already over" (17 August: 1).
27. G. W. Allport and L. J. Postman, *The Psychology of Rumor*. (New York: Henry Holt, 1947)

“You Are in Canada Now:” Zvi Hirsch Masliansky on Montreal Jews — 1898

Gary P. Zola

L’auteur fait une présentation de ce document en deux volets. D’une part une vue d’ensemble concernant l’étude qu’il a fait sur M. Zvi Hirsch Masliansky et d’autre part, l’insertion du chapitre 48, traduction des Mémoires de Masliansky, Mémoires rédigés en Hébreu.

M. Masliansky (1856-1943) est l’un des plus grands orateurs qu’ait connu le XX^e siècle. Il erra à Berlin, Londres, Paris et Anvers avant de s’établir à New-York.

Masliansky a continuellement plaidé en faveur du Sionisme.

En termes de l’impact qu’il exerça sur les immigrants Juifs d’Europe Orientale on peut dire de M. Masliansky qu’il en eut un puissant.

Par la suite, l’auteur établit une comparaison entre des écrivains tel Harkavy et Masliansky pour pouvoir dégager des parallèles et des ressemblances ou différences entre deux grands auteurs qui ont couché sur papier leurs impressions relativement à Montréal, la ville, sa communauté juive, l’incidence de cette communauté sur la société et les leaders véritables. L’étude de l’auteur de ce document nous permet enfin de nous familiariser avec Masliansky lorsqu’il joint à son étude le chapitre 48 des Mémoires de Masliansky nous donnant un aperçu complet tant de ses sentiments que de ses pensées et réflexions qui demeurent encore et de loin d’actualité.

Zvi Hirsch Masliansky (1856-1943),¹ one of the greatest Yiddish orators of the twentieth century, was born in Slutsk (a city in Minsk), Russia. As a young man, in the early 1880s, he became a devoted member of the fledging Hibbat Zion (lovers of Zion) movement.² Like many well-known intellectuals of his day, profoundly affected by the virulent anti-Jewish pogroms that followed the assassination of Tsar Alexander II, he passionately endorsed the philosophy of

Jewish national rebirth as the key to Jewish survival.³ The newly born Zionist movement, following the traditional model of the “maggid” (a preacher of homilies),⁴ employed a “matif,” an orator, to stir the masses to their cause. As a “matif,” Masliansky created a sensation — so much so that the Tsarist government banished him in 1894 because of the vast audiences he attracted throughout Belorussia. Involuntarily exiled from his native land, Masliansky joined a generation of Jewish immigrants who sought new homes and opportunities. He wandered in search of a new life stopping in Berlin, London, Paris, and Antwerp before settling in New York City in 1895.

Upon his arrival in New York, Masliansky immediately embarked on the Hibbat Zion movement’s speaking circuit. His reputation as a captivating, fire-breathing orator preceded his arrival in the United States, especially among the immigrant population. These people longed for the Yiddish oratory of the old country (a scarce commodity in the New World particularly outside of New York). During the years 1895-1898, Masliansky spoke in Baltimore, Chicago, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, Boston, Philadelphia, and Montreal.⁵

Having grown weary from the rigors of travel (he was nearly 40 years old when he immigrated to the United States), Masliansky ultimately accepted an offer to serve as speaker for the Friday Night Lecture Series at the Educational Alliance in New York. His 27 year engagement at the Educational Alliance, which began as an experiment, became one of the most important features of immigrant life on the Lower East Side.⁶

Through the years, Masliansky continually advocated Zionism. In 1898, he was elected vice-president of the newly formed Federation of American Zionists (FAZ). In 1901, he purchased (with financial assistance from Louis Marshall) the publishing house of the socialist Yiddish paper *Abendblatt* and published *Di Yidishe Velt* (The Jewish World), a pro-Zionist paper of noteworthy literary quality.⁷ Masliansky remained a prominent Zionist activist even after the formation of the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA), becoming a distinguished spokesman under the presidency of Louis Lipsky.⁸

In America, Masliansky the “matif” became known as “Ha-matif Ha-Leumi,” literally the “National Preacher.” A more appropriate translation would be “the People’s Preacher” for, in the final analysis, it was his role as an orator for the Yiddish speaking immigrant masses which remains his supreme legacy. As an advocate of the national ideal, Masliansky transcended the role of the old-world “maggid” to become an advocate for the immigrant generation. His words made them laugh and cry, offering them a sense of hopeful continuity in a strange, new environment. In terms of the impact he had upon Eastern European Jewish immigrants arriving between 1900-1925, his influ-

ence was great indeed. In eulogizing the orator, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise aptly asserted that no estimate could convey the love which a whole generation of American Jewry felt for Masliansky.⁹

The article translated below, chapter 48 of Masliansky's Hebrew memoirs. *Kitvei Masliansky* (New York: Hebrew Publishing Company, 1929), contains his description of the Montreal Jewish community in the year 1898. It is fascinating to compare Masliansky's words to those of a fellow Jewish intellectual, Alexander Harkavy, (1863-1939).¹⁰ Harkavy lived in Montreal from 1886 to 1888, and during that time he wrote several articles characterizing Canadian Jewry for the columns of the European Hebrew daily *Hazefirah*. Jonathan D. Sarna (cf note 10, *infra*) noted how lonely Harkavy must have felt removed as he was from the centers of Jewish intellectual life and culture. Indeed, Harkavy's characterization of Montreal's Jewry is not entirely complimentary; he bemoans their startling lack of Jewish learning saying "if these people would only concern themselves with Judaica, then it might succeed. As it now stands, we cannot expect much to come from it."¹¹

Writing more than a decade after Harkavy, Masliansky endorsed his depiction of Montreal Jewry as a kindly but assimilating folk. Like Harkavy, he lamented what he considered to be a faltering loyalty to Jewish life and learning among the Jews of Canada: "The masses of the Jews were simple folk; the type of people who had no concept of ideology, social concern, or concern for the (Jewish) people." (see *infra* p. 11). His memoirs, frequently critical of the Canadian Jewish community in the final decade of the 19th century, are a noteworthy historical resource for students of Canadian Jewish History.

Although Masliansky's Hebrew writings concern themselves primarily with Jewish life in the 1890s, they actually were published nearly thirty years later.¹² He chides Canadian Jewry for their ambivalence toward Zionism and their ostentatious British patriotism, for example, only to remind readers that the British themselves would eventually come to endorse Zionism (cf. *infra*, p. 11-12). Consequently, Masliansky's memoirs, while based on his journal entries from this period, possess all of the foibles common to nostalgic reminiscences; his writings are primarily anecdotal and the recollections have undoubtedly been shaped by the passage of time.

Masliansky's brief historical overview contains some inaccuracies and a few blatant errors. They appear to have been based entirely on secondary sources and even heresay (see *infra*, note 2). On the other hand, Masliansky's description of Zionist pioneers in Montreal (including A. M. Ashinsky, Lazarus Cohen, Adam Rosenberg, and Clarence de Sola) is colorful and historically significant. Also, his comments on the religious life of Montreal Jewry are fas-

cinating. His characterization of Jewish social situation contributes to our understanding of what Sarna described as the “. . . conditions that were transforming traditional Judaism in Canada and leading to growth of Reform Judaism; such things as status and image consciousness, Jewish ignorance, intra-Jewish competition, and of course, secular influences.”¹³ As such, this document adds to our knowledge about Jewish life in Canada during this era of transformations just as it preserves information about the nascency of the Zionist movement in Canada.

This chapter also bears witness to Masliansky’s superb use of language. Traces of the preacher’s unique oratorical talent surface even in the confines of the written page. The natural beauty and distinct character of Montreal fueled his emotive fire; his words captured the impression that the city made upon the multitudes of Jewish immigrants coming there to settle. The penchant for illustrating assertions with a simple yet powerful anecdote is common to his writings. He was a consummate storyteller, recounting the immigrant experience with a grand iradescence. Certainly, it is also possible to discern, even through the medium of the written word, the tremendous homiletical talent by which “Ha-matif Ha-leumi” — the “People’s Preacher” helped a generation of Jewish immigrants span the chasm separating the Old World and the New.

Kitvei Masliansky: Chapter 48¹⁴

Canada is a little sister to the United States. Like them, Canada stretches from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean. Although Canada is still subject to England as one of the British colonies, she has a certain independent authority with its own government, and its own Parliament. At one time, part of Canada belonged to France. There was a long war between France and England over Canada, and in the end, England emerged victorious. Within the English army which waged war on Montreal in the year 1724 [sic], there were several Sephardic Jews: Emanuel de Cordova, Hananiel Garcia, and Isaac de Mirand. After England’s victory, Jews began to settle in Montreal. Among the earliest settlers we find names such as: Lazarus, Davis, Uriel, Orisko, Samuel Jacobs, Simon Levy, Abraham Franks, Fernandez de Fonseca, Joseph Bindona, Levi Solomons, and many others,¹⁵

In the year 1768, the first synagogue was formed in Montreal, named “Shearith Israel”. Since the first settlers in Montreal were emigrants from Spain and Portugal, they followed the traditional rite of Sephardic Jewry.¹⁶

Until the year 1832, the Canadian Jews were deprived of their political rights. In that year, on March 5, the King of England signed the resolution of Parliament to grant equality to the Jews and gurantee equal rights to all peoples

living in Canada.

After the terrible oppressions in Russia began in 1882, many Jewish refugees came to Canada and settled in the large cities: Montreal, Toronto, Hamilton, and Winnipeg. These Jews brought to these cities Jewish culture as it had begun in Russia. A few hundred Jews tried their hand at agriculture with the help of the Baron de Hirsch Fund.¹⁷

When I visited Montreal in the year 1898, I found six thousand Jews living there. These Jews belonged to different congregations according to their country of origin. There was the Spanish Jewish community which belonged to "Shearith Israel", which was established, as I have mentioned, in the year 1768. The German Jewish community belonged to "Shaar Shamayim", which was established in the year 1858.¹⁸ The Russian Jewish community belonged to "B'nai Israel," which was established in the year 1886.¹⁹ The Roumanian Jewish community belonged to "Beth David", which was established in the year 1888.²⁰ The Galician Jewish community belonged to "Shaarey Tefillah", which was established in the year 1892.²¹ "Chevra Kadisha" was established in the year 1895.²² The Bet Midrash Ha-Gadol which had a Talmud study group, a fraternity, and a Psalm study group was also founded in 1895.²³ Temple Emanuel was in existence from the year 1882.²⁴ And so I found that these six thousand immigrants were divided into ten communities with ten congregations!

"Montreal" is a French word. In German it would be "Konigsberg", and in Hebrew it is the name of our ancient city "Tur Malka" (King's Mountain).²⁵ Just like the city itself, Montreal's roads also have French names. Every road is named after one of the Catholic saints. There is even a "Notre Dame" in Montreal. The ring of the French language is heard every where: in meetings, on the streetcars, in the Post Office, and in every government institution. A large proportion of the population is French; descendants of the French pioneers who settled in Canada prior to the British. The French which is spoken in Canada is old French, which is different from the new French spoken today in France.

Since the time I visited France and Belgium, I had not felt the spirit of the Catholic religion as I did in Montreal. Catholic priests could be seen dressed in their religious garb throughout the streets. There were religious processions with holy pictures, and bareheaded and barefooted Jesuits walking with smoking incense. Bells were ringing, and there was singing and chanting. The French are not assimilating with the English, neither in language, religion, nor dress. Two peoples live within one country. In the United States there is no difference between Protestants and Catholics. They attend different churches,

but outwardly they are all Americans.

Montreal is a magnificent place with her beautiful streets, buildings, and parks. A special majesty is added to Montreal by the beautiful mountain which rises in the center of the city. Like a king in all his glory, the mountain gazes majestically down on the city below in which lovely homes are built. There are beautiful wide paved streets and large parks full of lush greenery of stately trees. These lofty and proud trees have flowers which give off a wonderful smell, and they can drink their fill of streams of water flowing from fountains and turning silver in the rays of the sun. This is the picture which the eye beholds when one stands on the mountain top, and it explains the city's name: "Montreal" — that is, "King's Mountain".

Although I had been living in America for only two and a half years at that time, I was amazed at how strongly I felt the "bonds of love" between me and America, as though I were a native-born American. A native American does not sense the joy of freedom, for he has never experienced slavery and oppression. He has never had to bear the yoke of a malevolent rule, nor the oppression of a wicked government such as that in dark Russia. Such is not the case with me. I have tasted the bitter flavor of absolute exile. When I was driven from my "step-mother Matushka-Russia" (Mother Russia), I was drawn by the strings of my sorrowful soul to the young United States of America — powerful and free!

I began to long for the United States almost as soon as I crossed the Canadian border. On the surface it was a free country, a country in which there were no passport restrictions. Nonetheless, when I saw the first Canadian flag waving from atop one of the government buildings, a surge of homesickness came over me for no logical reason, and I longed to see the flag with the Stars and Stripes. Of course, I realized that this feeling was just excessive sentimentality without any logic to it whatsoever. After all, what should it matter to me whether I was in Canada or the United States? Yet, these feelings are a matter for one's heart, and not for one's brain or logic.

I became extremely angry when I was in a Canadian Post Office in order to purchase some stamps, and the clerk refused to accept American money. Not only would he not accept American money, but he spoke to me harshly:

"Do you not know, sir, that we do not belong to the United States: You are in Canada now!"

This incident upset me. Afterwards, I laughed to myself, for I remembered that the same sort of incident occurred while I was in Königsberg, Germany. The clerk in the Post Office did not want to accept my Russian currency. Yet, I was not angry or upset. On the contrary, I was glad!

In regards to my nationalist efforts in that year of 1898, I discovered Montreal to be “rocky ground” which was unfit for ploughing or sowing. The masses of the Jews were simple folk: the type of people who had no concept of ideology, social concern, or concern for the (Jewish) people. Their philosophy on life was: “A man must live it up” — and that was the extent of it. Citizens of status, whether they were from the Sephardic synagogue “Shearith Israel” or whether they were from the Ashkenazic synagogue “Shaar Shamayim”, were all 100% British patriots. They shied away from the notion of Jewish nationhood so as not to violate (God forbid!) their British patriotism! Poor souls! Little did they realize that within several decades Britain herself would become a partner in Zionism, and that the Balfour Declaration would become one of the main tenets of the British Empire.

There were a few exceptional people in Montreal who understood and appreciated the rays of lights which emanated from that great star, Dr. Herzl. One of these people was a young rabbi named A. M. Ashinsky.²⁶ Even at that time I found him to be a true and faithful Zionist. He was filled with a holy-love for his people, his land, his religion, and his language. He spoke superbly in Yiddish, Hebrew, and English. He was a diligent communal worker who cared for all the people’s needs. He was beloved by both young and old. The older generation respected him for his vast knowledge of English literature and for his tolerance. He has served both generations faithfully: Before the elders who are in the Talmud study group he reads like one of the great rabbis from the old country; Before the young people he preaches in English on nationalism and Jewish history.

Second to Ashinsky was the prominent Jew, Mr. Lazarus Cohen,²⁷ president of congregation “Shaar Shamayim”. Cohen was a wealthy merchant from Russia and a man of spirit. He was one of the first to lend his support to the Zionist movement. He and the well-known community leader, Adam Rosenberg,²⁸ were involved in the “Shavei Zion Society” in New York.²⁹

Rabbi A. M. Ashinsky and Mr. Cohen were able to attract a significant and powerful ally to the nationalist movement — one of the leading Sephardic Jews who later would serve as president of the Zionist Federation of Canada³⁰ for many consecutive years — Mr. C. de Sola.³¹ These three men laid the foundation of the Zionist movement not only in Montreal, but in Toronto, Winnipeg, and Hamilton as well.

NOTES

1. Masliansky wrote about his early years in his Yiddish memoirs, *Zichronos* (New York: Zerubabel Press, 1924). He later published a three volume Hebrew translation of these writings, *Kitvei Masliansky* (New York: Hebrew Publishing Company 1929). Some of

- Masliansky's Yiddish sermons appeared in a small collection edited by Pinchas Turberg, *Masliansky's Drashos* (New York: Zerubabel Press, 1908). Some of his sermons were translated into English, *Sermons of Zvi Hirsch Masliansky* (New York: Hebrew Publishing Company, 1924). See also, Gary P. Zola, *The People's Preacher* (unpublished rabbinic theses, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion) for a biographical sketch and English translation of Masliansky's impressions of numerous Jewish communities in America during the years 1895-1898. Other biographical sketches included Marnin Feinstein, "Harris Zvi Masliansky," *Bitzaron*, Vol. 7, No. 6, March 1943, pp. 451-453; Arthur Hertzberg, "Zvi Hirsch Masliansky," *The Dictionary of American Biography* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, Supplement 3, 1941-1945, pp. 512-514); Jack Luria, "The Last Maggid: Z. H. Masliansky," *The Jewish Horizon*, April 1959, pp. 7-8); Avshalom Magidovitch, "The Life and Activity of Tzevi Hirsch Masliansky as Reflected in his Autobiography." (Term paper on file in American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio); Jacob Mindin, "Zvi Hirsch Masliansky," *Brooklyn Jewish Center Review*, February 1943, pp. 5-7; Zebvlan Ravid, "Zvi Hirsch Masliansky, Preacher of Destiny." (Hebrew) *Ha-Doar*, Vol. 52, No. 36, September 7, 1973, pp. 595-596; Isidor Singer, "Hirsch Masliansky: The Tribune of the Russian-American Jews." *The Menorah*, August 1901, pp. 115-122; Leon Spitz, "A Great Maggid Remembered." *Brooklyn Jewish Center Review*, 1955, pp. 13-14; Moses Zablotski and Joseph Massel, *Ha-Yitzhari* (Hebrew), Manchester, England: Massel Press, 1895.
2. See Walter Laqueur, *A History of Zionism* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972) pp. 75-83.
 3. See testimonies of Peretz Smolenskin (1842-1885), Moshe Leib Lilienblum (1843-1910) and Leo Pinsker (1821-1891) in Arthur Hertzberg, *The Zionist Idea*, (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1966, pp. 141-154, 166-198.
 4. Israel Bettan, *Studies in Jewish Preaching*, (Cincinnati: HUC Press, 1939, pp. 3-48; Simon J. H. Glikberg, *Ha-Drashna B'Yisrael* (Tel Aviv: Rav Kook Press, 1930, pp. 471-477; see also Hayim R. Rabinowitz, *Portraits of Jewish Preachers* (Hebrew), Jerusalem: Rubin Mass Publishers, 1967.
 5. See Zvi Hirsch Masliansky, *Kitvei Masliansky*, pp. 161-221.
 6. S. P. Rudin, "A Half-Century of Community Service: The Story of the New York Educational Alliance." *American Jewish Yearbook*, XLVI (1944-45), p. 73ff.
 7. Lucy S. Davidowicz, "Louis Marshall's Yiddish Newspaper, The Jewish World: A Study in Contrasts." *Jewish Social Studies*, April 1963, pp. 102-132.
 8. Louis Lipsky, *Memoirs in Profile*. (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1975).
 9. Stephen S. Wise, "Dr. Wise on Masliansky." *Free Synagogue Weekly Bulletin*, January 20, 1943, p. 4.
 10. Jonathan D. Sarna, "Our Distant Brethren: Alexander Harkavy on Montreal Jews — 1888." *Canadian Jewish Historical Society Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 2, Fall 1983, p.59ff. See also Note 1 in Sarna's article (supra) for a thorough bibliography on Harkavy.
 11. Jonathan D. Sarna, *Op. Cit.*, p. 65.
 12. Masliansky's Yiddish memoirs were published in 1924.
 13. Jonathan D. Sarna, *Op. Cit.*, p. 61.
 14. For more information on the beginnings of Canadian Jewry see B. G. Sack, *History of the Jews in Canada* (Montreal: 1926), often helpful in identifying individuals and institutions during this era. Other rich resources for additional study include David Rome, Judith Nefsky and Paule Obermeir, *Les Juifs Du Quebec: bibliographic retrospective annotee* (Quebec: 1981) and Jacob R. Marcus, *An Index to Scientific Articles on American Jewish History* (New York: 1971).
 15. Masliansky's unfamiliarity with early Canadian Jewry is all too obvious. In the first place he breaks up names which refer to one individual, indicating he believes them to be the family names of two different individuals (i.e., Lazarus and Davis is actually one name: Lazarus

David). Second, he cited names incorrectly (viz., Uriel and Orisko must refer to one individual known as Uriel Moresco). Finally, he considers as fact information that only comes from late nineteenth or twentieth century sources, and cannot at present be documented by any known eighteenth century source (cf., J. R. Marcus, p. 1447, note 22). The following is a capsule summary identifying, to the best of our ability, the names Masliansky mentions:

- a) Joseph Bindona was a shopkeeper in Montreal in 1769. He married a certain Ann Wagins in Church.
- b) Emanuel de Cordova was a fur trader in Montreal in 1768. He served the British during the French and Indian War.
- c) Lazarus David (1734-1776) was a prominent Montreal merchant (cf., Malcolm H. Stern, *First American Jewish Families*, 1978. pp. 276-277).
- d) Fernandez de Fonseca came to Montreal in the 1760's upon invitation of the British.
- e) Abraham Franks (1721-1797) lived in Quebec until 1771, and after that date in Montreal where he was a prominent Canadian merchant (cf., M. H. Stern, p. 75).
- f) Hananiel Garcia was an army supply officer during the French and Indian War. He worked in Montreal in 1760.
- g) Samuel Jacobs (d. 1786) was a shopowner who first came to British Canada. He moved to Quebec after the war. His family became Catholic (cf., J. R. Marcus, p. 1448, note 30); also, *Canadian Jewish Historical Society Journal*, No. 8, Fall 1984, pp. 85 ff.)
- h) Simon Levy was a Canadian merchant who apparently worked in Montreal as late as 1778.
- i) Isaac de Miranda fought for the English in the French and Indian War. He worked in Montreal around 1770.
- j) Uriel Moresco lived in Montreal in the early 1770's.
- k) Levi Solomons (1730?-1792) came to North America as a merchant about the year 1760. He eventually became a large dealer of furs in Montreal. During the American Revolution, Solomons was a supplier to the American forces (cf., M. H. Stern, pp. 276-7).

For further information on all of the above, see also: Joseph R. Rosenbloom, *A Biographical Dictionary of Early American Jews*, Lexington, Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press, 1960 and also J. R. Marcus, *Op. cit.*, and Hart *The Jew in Canada*. Many of these names are also cited in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*. University of Toronto Press, 1966 —

16. Hart, *The Jew in Canada*, p. 81ff; see also, Rome, Nefsky, and Obermeir, pp. 18-19, 55.
17. The Baron de Hirsch Fund was first established in 1891 with the goal of assisting Jewish immigrants to settle in the United States and Canada. The fund was especially interested in settling Jews on the soil. For information on the work of the Baron de Hirsch Fund in Canada and the Baron de Hirsch Institute, see Hart, *The Jew in Canada*, pp. 220-233 and Rome, Nefsky and Obermeir, *Op. cit.*
18. Hart, *The Jew in Canada*, pp. 93-95 and Sack *History of the Jews in Canada*, passim.
19. Possibly, Masliansky is speaking of a congregation called "B'nai Jacob" not "B'nai Israel." This is an understandable slip since the names of Jacob and Israel are interchangeable. See Sack, *History of the Jews in Canada*, p. 213.
20. *Ibid.* See also, *The Beth David Congregation, its Origin and History 1888-1938* (Montreal: 1939).
21. Sack, *History of the Jews in Canada*, p. 213. See also, Hart, *The Jew in Canada*, p. 166.
22. Although it is possible that Masliansky is referring to a Jewish burial society, he is probably referring to a small congregation established in the early 1890s. See Rome, Nefsky, and Obermeir *Les Juifs du Quebec*, p. 73.
23. Hart, *The Jew in Canada*, p. 166.
24. *Ibid.* pp. 121-122.
25. T.B., Gittin 55b (cf., Pseudo-Jonathan of Judges IV:5).
26. Aaron Mordecai Ashinsky (1866-1954) was an early leader in the religious Zionist movement. After receiving ordination in Poland, he immigrated to the United States in 1895.

He spent some months in Detroit and Syracuse, but left for Montreal to serve as rabbi of a congregation there. While in Montreal, Ashinsky organized Canada's first Zionist society, and he was extensively involved in the Zionist movement. He was a founding member of Agudath Harabbonim. After the turn of the century, Ashinsky left Canada to head the Beth Ha-Midrash Ha-Gadol in Pittsburgh. Cf. Hart, *The Jews in Canada*, pp. 291ff. See also, *American-Jewish Yearbook*, Vol. 5, 1903-1904, p. 43. For details concerning his later years see Judah David Einstein, *Otzar Zichronotai* (New York, 1929).

27. Lazarus Cohen (1844-1914) was a chairman of the Colonization Committee of the Baron de Hirsch Fund (see supra, note 4). Cf. Sack, *History of the Jews in Canada* pp. 229, 247. See also, Bernard Figler, *Rabbi Dr. Herman Abramowitz, Lazarus Cohen, Lyon Cohen* (Montreal: 1973).
28. Adam Rosenberg (1858-1928) was a pioneer in the Hibbat Zion movement. Rosenberg was among the first to join a Hovevei Zion group, doing so in New York in 1886. Rosenberg actually established an organization to help Jews return to Palestine, the Shavei Zion Society (1891). A tireless worker, Rosenberg struggled to unify the Hibbat Zion groups, and he called an international conference of the Hibbat Zion in 1891 and in 1894. Rosenberg was asked to address the First Zionist Congress of 1897 on the attitude of American Jewry toward Palestine. See J. Klausner, *Adam Rosenberg* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: 1948).
29. The Shavei Zion Society (founded by Adam Rosenberg; cf., supra, note 15), sought to raise funds to aid in the actual settlement of Jews in Palestine. The society did have several locales (including Montreal), but its inability to raise monies greatly handicapped its effectiveness.
30. The Federation of Zionist Societies of Canada was organized by representatives of all the Hovevei Zion chapters who had gathered in Montreal, November, 1899. The name was officially changed to the Zionist Organization of Canada in 1923. See Hart, *The Jew in Canada*.
31. Clarence de Sola (1858-1920) was elected the first general secretary of the Federation of Zionist Societies of Canada in 1899 (cf., supra, note 30). He later became that organization's president. See Hart, *The Jew in Canada*, p. 314.

The Defence of Identity: Ida Siegel and the Jews of Toronto versus the Assimilation Attempts of the Public School and its Allies, 1900-1920

Luigi G. Pennacchio

L'auteur de ce document met l'accent sur un problème précis des années 1900 à 1920. Le lieu de l'action est la ville de TORONTO. Or, en cette époque, il y eut un conflit qui naquit d'une part de la politique du Ministère de l'Éducation de la ville et d'autre part du désir et de la volonté de Madame Ida Siegel de contourner les activités missionnaires de Toronto pour conserver l'identité juive de la communauté.

A force d'exemples et de citations, à force d'exposés de situations vécues, les lecteurs pourront constater à quel point les activités missionnaires ont failli mettre en péril tant l'identité des Juifs de Toronto que leur culture propre. Une certaine forme d'antisémitisme s'est même reflété alors que l'auteur de ce document fait par exemple allusion au chant concernant les drapeaux. La Communauté juive qui de 1900 à 1940 constitua le plus vaste groupe d'étrangers à Toronto, oeuvra contre les machinations et pressions assimilationnistes qui couvrirent cette période (1900 à 1920).

Au coeur de ces pressions et machinations une femme: Madame Ida Siegel.

Elle sut anticiper les activités néfastes à la préservation de l'identité juive et, de concert avec les leaders de la communauté, elle sut prendre les mesures nécessaires pour contrer d'une part ces activités missionnaires et d'autre part certaines activités prises par les professeurs et autres membres de la société torontoise d'alors pour que les Juifs s'insèrent et s'imbriquent dans la société qu'il connaissaient depuis toujours. Seul l'avènement du Multiculturalisme donnera politiquement raison à l'idée de Madame I. Siegel.

Ida Siegel was a woman who was ahead of her time. In the Toronto of the early 1900s Mrs. Siegel, a Jew herself, helped the Jews of the city keep alive their culture, which was being assaulted from almost all aspects of Torontonians society. The widespread belief in Toronto at the time was that the Jews, along with the other segments of the non-British population, had to be assimilated into a British way of life because Torontonians wanted their city to be British. For the Jews, assimilation meant that they would have to discard all aspects of their culture: in particular, they would have to give up Judaism for Protestantism. The public school and Presbyterian missionaries located within the Jewish neighbourhood worked most diligently towards that end. But Mrs. Siegel worked just as diligently toward stopping them; in fact, she worked the hardest when the school and missionaries went after Jewish girls and women. Mrs. Siegel wanted all the people of Toronto to be tolerant of the many different cultures in the city. In essence, she was advocating a policy of multiculturalism. Such a policy, however, was not fashionable at that time: indeed, the school and missionaries conspired to promote assimilation and to stop anyone who stood in their way. Eventually, they even stopped Mrs. Siegel — but only temporarily because she never gave up her belief in the idea of cultural tolerance. Years later, in the 1970s, Torontonians accepted Mrs. Siegel's idea, and multiculturalism became an official policy of governments and, thus, the school. Mrs. Siegel was there to see it.

In terms of the geographic origin of its population, the Toronto of the early 1900s was very much a homogenous city. A great many of the City's citizens owed their direct or indirect ancestral geographic allegiance to England in particular, and the the British Isles in general. Demographic statistics from Canadian censuses for the period bear this finding out. The *1901 Census of Canada*, for example, reported that 141,403¹ Torontonians were of British origin (the *Census* classified all peoples originating from the British Isles as British); with only 4,554² listed as having roots in Continental Europe. Twenty years later, the British Isles-Continental European composition of Toronto had not changed much as the following statistics from the *Census of 1921* indicate: 445,230³ people were categorized as British, and 62,482⁴ were listed as being of Continental European descent.

The low numbers of Torontonians who were of Continental European descent coupled with the high numbers of those who were descended from the British Isles helped to instill throughout Toronto a strong sense of affinity with the British Isles. Many Torontonians believed that they shared with the British Islanders not only a common geographic ancestry, but also a common lan-

guage, social pattern, and imperial loyalty.⁵ The imperial tie was especially important to Torontonians. Through their membership in the British Empire, Torontonians were able to associate themselves with a great race and culture which was extending itself from the British Isles to encompass its world-wide colonial holdings. Torontonians, therefore, felt that their Canadian nationalism was based upon imperialism — to be a Canadian citizen, one also had to be a British subject.⁷ Consequently, Toronto was to be a British city populated by a British-Canadian citizenry which lived within a British cultural milieu.⁸

Yet a British cultural milieu, it was felt, could not endure in Toronto if segments of the population refused to practice a British way of life. Numerous Torontonians who were of British origin were content to live such a lifestyle, but others found it difficult to put aside their native culture. Some such Torontonians belonged to the small heterogeneous groups of Continental Europeans who resided in the St. John's Ward; an area of the City which came to be known simply as the "Ward". The Ward was a geographically compact neighbourhood that was heavily populated by peoples of Continental European — as well as Asian — origin whom British Torontonians referred to as "foreigners." Since, as the census figures illustrated, the foreign population was small, and because it was concentrated in an easily accessible area, Torontonians who were intent on maintaining the Britishness of their city were confident that they could Canadianize the foreigners, thereby transforming them into British subjects. The idea that the foreigners could be so transformed, so assimilated, was not confined solely to Toronto; it was prevalent throughout English-speaking Canada.¹⁰

Another idea prevalent throughout English Canada was that the classroom should be used not only as a tool of cultural assimilation, but indeed as the instigator of that learning process.¹¹ In Toronto, as the following statement from a local newspaper made clear, the classroom of the public school was believed to have been crucial to the development of a sense of citizenship among its students: "The first great aim of every classroom — (if there should be such a thing as a classroom) — from Kindergarten to the University should be citizen-building."¹² The citizenship which the newspaper wanted built with the aid of the classroom was a homogenous one based upon British and Protestant values.¹³

Specific targets of the classroom's citizen-building attempts were the foreigners who encountered in their day or night school classrooms a method of instruction that stressed imperial patriotism, Protestantism, the English language, and cleanliness.¹⁴ Much of the literature devoted to the study of the educational system as an instrument of assimilation presented a common thesis: that as-

similative efforts were concentrated on foreign children because it was argued that they, rather than their adult counterparts, could be more easily persuaded into adopting a new culture. Such a thesis was enunciated in a 1970s Toronto Board of Education publication entitled *We Are All Immigrants To This Place* which informed readers that, "Adult foreigners too set in their ways were seen as a lost cause, but the children were regarded as capable of salvation and assimilation."¹⁵

But the use of night school classes as the medium through which adult foreigners of both sexes were to be assimilated contradicted the child-centered assimilation thesis. In 1900 the principal of the Ward's Elizabeth Street School, Hester How, requested and received approval for the establishment of night school cooking classes, which were to be taught in English, from the Management Committee of the Toronto Board of Education.¹⁶ That same year, the Management Committee granted a group of thirty Rumanians permission to hold night school classes at the Elizabeth Street School.¹⁷ Whether the classes were initiated by educational officials or by the foreigners themselves, Torontonians hoped that in the classes the foreigners would be taught not only the three R's, but also how to become British subjects.¹⁸ Consequently, of particular importance in the classes was the teaching of the English language without which, ". . . British ideals are [were] bound to remain a closed book to foreigners."¹⁹

Another assimilative value of night school classes was that they served as a means by which Protestantism was introduced to adult foreigners. Several Protestant denominations were involved in missionary work among the foreigners who inhabited the Ward, and they made use of the school system. For instance, in 1912 the Reverend Mr. Winchester was given authorization by the Management Committee to place in the night school classes religious volunteers who would assist the teachers and encourage protestantism.²⁰

Efforts at bringing about a change in the religious beliefs of the foreigners was also extended into the day classes. Those classes were attended by children who, separated from their parents, could be made susceptible to the British and Protestant milieu of their classroom.²¹ The Protestant milieu of the classroom was extolled by educational authorities from Board of Education members to teachers. Since students could best be influenced by their teachers, the Board of Education was very selective as to whom it hired to fill teaching positions. Jews and Catholics, for example, had a difficult time being hired because all prospective teachers had to endorse in writing that they were members of the Anglican Church; moreover, teaching candidates who were the sons or daughters of ministers were preferred above all others.²² The prominence given

to protestantism when teachers were hired was — as planned — reflected in the curriculum of the classroom which included morning prayers and Bible study.²³ Students were required to supply their own Bibles or face corporal punishment; a development which placed an added strain on the lives of Jewish children who were already dealing with a supposedly public school system that was determined to Christianize them.²⁴ Board of Education members also joined in attempts to Christianize the Jews. In 1902 the Chairman of the Board, Marmaduke Rawlinson, supplied the vans needed to take one hundred Jewish children from the Elizabeth Street School to a Christmas Eve church service and dinner where the children received toys and old clothes.²⁵

Imperial patriotism also played a vital role in the assimilation of the foreign students. At the Elizabeth Street School a ceremony evolved around the daily homage paid to flag and Empire. Every morning the Canadian flag (then the Union Jack) was raised on the school's outdoor flagpole while students, peering out from open doors, sang "God Save the King".²⁶ Next, the students would pledge allegiance to the flag and Empire and then sing:

There are many flags of many lands,
There are flags of every hue,
But the dear, dear flag we love the best,
Is the red, the white, the blue.²⁷

The classroom, however, could only have been an effective agent of the assimilation process if its students attended school regularly. In fact, one of the reasons that a free and compulsory school system was created in Toronto in 1871 was to ensure the separation of children from their parents so that assimilation efforts could be maximized.²⁸ But from the very beginning of the free school the Board of Education had to contend with the attendance problems which hindered the classroom's assimilation duties. The diary of one of the Board's first truant officers, W. C. Wilkinson, who worked within an Irish-Catholic school district supported unquestionably the conclusion that students were kept home by their parents because that was where they were most needed. A typical entry in the diary was as follows: "I found *Mr. Alwand* [student] 72 Seaton of George St. School. His mother told me she kept him home to mind the smaller children but would send him [to school] in the afternoon."²⁹ So severe did the attendance problems become that the responsibility for the control of truants was placed in the hands of the police department.³⁰

A good number of the attendance problems, as the Alwand case demonstrated, were caused by the family's real need of child labour. Still, there were occasions when children were kept out of the public schools so that they could avoid the assimilationist pressures directed at them through the classroom. The Irish

Catholics could send their children to the separate Catholic schools in an effort to avoid the protestantism of the public school; indeed, as early as 1852 Bishop Charbonnel of Toronto worked to offset the protestantization of Catholic students who attended the mixed schools by strengthening Catholic schools through the placement of priests as trustees and superintendents.³¹ The Jews, who from 1900 to 1940 were the largest foreign group in Toronto,³² also worked against the assimilationist pressures directed at them. One of the ways the Jews fought off the assimilation attempts was to deliberately cluster themselves in the Ward where they came to create what one historian of the Jewish experience in Toronto has called a “voluntary ghetto.”³³ In the ghetto the Jews developed an economic and cultural infrastructure which helped maintain their Jewish identity: some elements of that infrastructure were theaters, newspapers, mutual aid and fraternal societies, ritual baths, stores which stocked kosher foods, synagogues, and schools.³⁴ Like the Irish Catholics, the Jews had their own separate religious schools. Two such schools were the Hebrew Free School and the Hebrew Religion School of East Toronto. The two schools must have been disliked by the Board of Education for it refused to render them any voluntary assistance. In 1917 the Hebrew School asked for old desks from the Board’s Property Committee and in 1919 the Free School asked to borrow desks — the Committee refused to lend desks, but did agree to sell them at seventy-five cents each.³⁵

Thus, in Toronto, the efforts made through the classroom either in the retention or rejection of one’s religion and overall culture brought about a segregated educational structure. Within the Jewish community the endeavors made to use the classroom both formally and informally in the struggle to keep alive a Jewish identity also led to segregation — only the segregation was based upon one’s sex. In the community, males and females had a separate educational system which they used to maintain their Jewishness.

The development of such an educational system may have had its roots in the sexist thesis that women did not need the same degree of formal education as men did. There does exist evidence which indicated that some Jewish males supported such a point of view. For instance, Mrs. Ida Siegel — who was prominent in organizing clubs in which Jewish girls, young women, and mothers were taught languages, history, and home sciences — remembered that she could not get rooms in synagogues to hold her club meetings because the education of females was not felt to be important.³⁶ On the other hand, some women also adhered to the thesis by distinguishing between male and female subjects. School trustee Miss. Boulton received approval from the Toronto Board of Education in 1918 for the creation of “Little Mothers Classes” which

were to be taught by nurses and held at least once a week during the winter and early spring.³⁷

If not already done so, the separate educational system which serviced females, in this case Jewish females, should be studied in depth because it extended well into adulthood. The formal educational system which the males attended did not. That is a very significant point when discussing the foreign population because the chances of males going beyond an educational level which emphasized more than the three R's was slim. True, the chances of females going beyond such a level or reaching that level were equally slim, if not slimmer. But the females had a separate system to fall back on which operated through the clubs they belonged to. Therefore, foreign females might have been just as, or better, educated than the male members of their families.

A woman who was instrumental in the founding of such clubs was Mrs. Ida Siegel (maiden name Lewis). Although Mrs. Siegel's family had roots in Lithuania, she was an American, having been born in Pittsburgh.³⁸ In 1893, when Mrs. Siegel was nine years old, her family migrated from Pittsburgh to Toronto.³⁹ The school she attended in Toronto was Phoebe Street School (later renamed Odgen School) which was located in the exclusive Spadina section of the city.⁴⁰ Phoebe Street School had a significant impact on Mrs. Siegel's life: it left her with a good feeling for the usefulness of education, for at that school she was taught not only the three R's, but also an appreciation of nature.⁴¹ Consequently, Mrs. Siegel was quite aware of the immense influence education could have in the shaping of a student's life. Unfortunately, Mrs. Siegel had to leave school when she was thirteen years of age because her mother had become ill and she had to assume more family responsibility; furthermore, her family moved to a less exclusive part of Toronto, the Ward.⁴²

Mrs. Siegel's club organizing activities stemmed from her family's involvement in the organizational life of Toronto's Jewish community. Her mother, for example, who had knowledge of the organizational structure of Pittsburgh's Jewish community helped to establish a relief organization called the Toronto Hebrew Ladies' Aid Society.⁴³ The Society's work was done by women, but the president was a man because the women members did not have the courage to elect a woman to the position.⁴⁴ Following her mother's example, in 1903, when she was eighteen years of age, Mrs. Siegel formed a Jewish girls' sewing club.⁴⁵ The club held its meetings at Mrs. Siegel's house because she could not find outside facilities; for instance, because the education of Jewish girls was not deemed important, synagogues refused to be of assistance.⁴⁶ Finally, in 1904 a Zionist mutual aid society offered the club the use of a store-front meeting hall at the southern end of Elizabeth Street.⁴⁷ Using that location as a base,

Mrs. Siegel started a Zionist Sunday School in which the girls were taught Jewish history and religion, and were inspired to present plays on Jewish subjects.⁴⁸ But Mrs. Siegel's primary purpose in creating the Sunday school—which came to be called the Zionist Free School — was to keep strong the religious faith of the girls which was being challenged by Presbyterian missionary activities centered in and around the Elizabeth Street School.⁴⁹

Despite the fact that the Elizabeth Street School was a part of the public educational system, it was being used to protestantize the Jewish and other foreign children who comprised its population. That was done with the full consent of Board of Education officials, and with the full cooperation of the school's principal and teachers. After all, Torontonians endorsed the philosophy of the total assimilation of the foreign population so that their city would have one homogeneous culture which included one religion — the Protestant one. Consequently, the principal and teachers at Elizabeth Street took their protestantization duties quite seriously, going so far as to permit a chapel in the school: it was removed in 1903 when the Jews complained to municipal authorities.⁵⁰ A few years later, when the Presbyterians founded a mission building in the Ward, they received support from the teachers, who took their students to parties and revival meetings held there.⁵¹ School principal Hester How encouraged her teachers to aid the missionaries, and she was hostile towards people such as Mrs. Siegel who worked against the missionaries.⁵²

Presbyterian missionary activity was very intense in the Ward because conversion to protestantism was believed to be vital if Canada and, therefore, Toronto were to remain British.⁵³ Accordingly, in 1907 the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church authorized its Foreign Mission Committee to undertake a mission of conversion to the Jews of Toronto.⁵⁴ The mission in the Ward was begun in 1908, with the missionaries working out of a rented mission building located on Terauley Street.⁵⁵ Jews who had been converted to Presbyterianism were the key missionaries because officials felt that they could best attract Jews.⁵⁶ Officials of the Church were so enthused over the mission to the Jews that they decided they needed a permanent mission building in the Ward.⁵⁷ Working towards that end, in 1910 a lot was purchased at the corner of Elm and Elizabeth Streets, and by 1913 a structure known as the Christian Synagogue was erected there.⁵⁸ In the 1920s, however, the composition of the Ward had become so diverse that the name of the Synagogue was changed to All People's Mission.⁵⁹

Nevertheless, during the period in which the Presbyterian missionaries were directing their efforts of conversion substantially at the Jews, it was concluded that success could be had if every aspect of Jewish family life was reached.⁶⁰ To

this end, the missionaries offered the following services through the Christian Synagogue: (a) reading rooms which furnished newspapers in English, Hebrew, Yiddish, and German, and which were segregated along male-female lines; (b) night classes for men and women which were taught by voluntary teachers who used the Bible as a text, and Bible prophecy as subject matter; (c) Bible classes and Gospel services; (d) Sunday school for children; (e) open air classes through which the Gospel was preached on the streets; (f) the distribution of Bibles in Hebrew and Yiddish; (g) answering questions about conversion; (h) Mother's Meetings; (i) sewing classes for women and girls; (j) Boys' and Girls' Clubs; (k) Boys' and Girls' Choir Clubs; (l) Boy Scouts; (m) general recreation activities such as summer picnics and camps for mothers and children; (n) fresh air homes; (o) nursery services; (p) visitations to homes, stores, hospitals, and prisons; (q) free dispensary; (r) poor relief; and (s) finding jobs for the unemployed.⁶¹ Of all those services, the medical and social ones were most appreciated by the Jews.⁶² In 1911 alone, 3,300 patients were treated at the free dispensary as six doctors and nurses donated their services; furthermore, the doctors made 365 house calls.⁶³ Poor relief and job searches for the unemployed were also popular.⁶⁴

All of those services were, of course, offered so that the Jews would be more hospitable towards the idea of conversion. But conversion attempts were not too successful: in 1911 just 28 Jews were converted, in 1913 the conversions fell to 17, and in 1915 they rose to 40.⁶⁵ During the years of World War One, missionary activity fell off as attention was locked on the war effort, and in the 1920s the population of the Ward was so diversified that missionary activity was no longer directed primarily at the Jews.⁶⁶ But prior to the War the missionaries, despite the figures which showed otherwise, were reporting to their superiors that conversion rates were high because there were many "secret" converts who feared to openly profess their new faith.⁶⁷ Such statements were probably made to convince church officials to continue funding the mission; it must have been quite expensive to maintain missionaries, a building, and all of those services.

What the conversion figures did show was that the Jews were succeeding in their efforts to fight the missionaries and maintain their Jewish identity. Moreover, the missionary reports made constant references to the obstacles that some Jews placed in their way. For example, they reported that pamphlets were circulated advising Jews to stay away from missionaries, but they went on to report that such opposition only served to advertise their presence in the Ward.⁶⁸ Jewish parents and religious leaders were warning children to stay away from the missionaries and the Christian Synagogue, and the missionaries interpreted

such action as a manifestation of ‘‘prejudice.’’⁶⁹ Such a manifestation extended itself to the non-missionary community organizations in the Ward. Officials at one such organization, the Central Neighbourhood House, indicated that Jewish and Italian children refused to participate in any of the House’s programmes until they were sure that it was not a mission, and until they had their parents’ approval to do so.⁷⁰

Each school day, however, the children still had to face the missionaries and their teacher helpers in and around the Elizabeth Street School. The missionaries used the playground which was adjacent to the school as an influence pedalling area. As far as the missionaries and teachers were concerned, one of the great evils among the children which needed correcting was their ‘‘uncleanliness’’ as the following sentence from *We Are All Immigrants To This Place* makes clear: ‘‘The schools placed a heavy emphasis on patriotism, Christianity, and cleanliness — the Queen, the Bible, and clean fingernails were the three great symbols of the time.’’⁷¹ The missionaries would meet the children at the playground and walk them to school where they would proceed to wash the children and their clothes in the school’s drinking fountain.⁷² At times the teachers also undertook such measures.⁷³ There can be no doubt that the teachers and missionaries were strong believers in the philosophy that cleanliness is next to Godliness.

But there can also be no doubt that Mrs. Siegel believed that the actions of the teachers and missionaries were wrong. Thus, she continued her fight against the assimilation process through the Jewish Girls sewing club. She had already developed the Zionist Free School from the club. Yet, she was not content, and in 1912 she expanded the club calling it the Jewish Endeavour Sewing School.⁷⁴ The School too was located at the Elizabeth Street store-front just north of Queen Street. One of the services the school offered was a library which was to attract girls away from the reading room at the Christian Synagogue.⁷⁵ Another project was classes in religion, history, and Zionism which were held after regular school hours, and which were taught by volunteer teachers of East European origin.⁷⁶ Jewish mothers also participated in the anti-assimilation efforts. After all, the girls’ sewing club had been guided by the Hebrew Ladies’ Sewing Circle. At first the Circle’s activities as far as children were concerned was directed at teaching the girls how to sew; the finished sewing projects were distributed to the poor.⁷⁷ Later, as the missionaries moved into the Ward, the Circle organized programmes such as picnics to Centre Island, which the missionaries had used to attract children.⁷⁸

The important influence which mothers could exert on their daughters and families was not lost to the anti-and pro-assimilation forces. In reports to their

superiors the missionaries expressed confidence in their ability to convert the Jewish family through the mother because Judaism had little to offer her.⁷⁹ Mrs. Siegel was no stranger to the influence which a mother could have, but she also realized that she too would have to make use of the Elizabeth Street School as the missionaries did. Therefore, she combined both objectives when she helped convince school authorities that a Mothers' Club where teachers and parents would meet to discuss the welfare of the children was needed at the school.⁸⁰ School authorities agreed to the Club because they saw it as an opportunity through which both parents and children could be assimilated.⁸¹ Children, for example, would deliver to their mothers invitations to attend Club meetings which they had written as part of their English lesson, and then they would accompany their mothers to the meetings where they would act as translators.⁸² At the Club the mothers were introduced to the Canadian way of life through English language talks on such topics as the court system, child care, and hygiene which were to be given by special guests and the school's teachers and nurse.⁸³ Mrs. Siegel was not opposed to activities which helped the mothers deal with the new society they lived in; but she did use the Club to suit her own anti-missionary goals by transforming the language of the Club from English to Yiddish, by bringing in guests who spoke Yiddish, and by using certain talks such as those on hygiene as competition for similar discussions held at the Christian Synagogue.⁸⁴

Before the establishment of the Mothers' Club at the Elizabeth Street School, Mrs. Siegel already had in place on Saturday afternoons a reading hour and Jewish Girls' Club. Apparently, she had convinced school officials that such a Club would keep girls who had nothing to do from going into department stores and shoplifting.⁸⁵ In reality, however, Mrs. Siegel was using the reading hour and Club as a means of keeping the girls out of the Christian Synagogue.⁸⁶

Board of Education members and school authorities were supportive of the uses of the school to which Mrs. Siegel had professed. The principal of the school, Mrs. Hodgins (in 1913 Hester How had retired, just one year after the school was renamed in her honour), was the honorary president of the Mothers' Club; Mrs. Siegel was the acting president.⁸⁷ Members of the Board of Education knew about both the Saturday afternoon activities and Mothers' Club, for the school could not be used for such programmes without the consent of the Property Committee. In fact, in 1918 the Committee ordered that the Club meetings be held in the afternoons rather than evenings so that the coal used to heat the school — which was in short supply because of the War — could be conserved.⁸⁸

In December of 1918 the Board of Education was informed by Chief Inspec-

tor R. H. Cowley that he had received a lengthy letter of protest from the teachers and nurse who were members of the Mothers' Club at Hester How School.⁸⁹ What Mrs. Siegel had professed to do and what she was actually doing had come to light. The Inspector reported that the teachers and nurse had resigned from the Club because they had been relegated from a leadership role to one as mothers' helpers.⁹⁰ Such a demotion had occurred because the language of the Club had changed from English to Yiddish; a process spurred on by the non-Ward residents (at the time Mrs. Siegel was residing in the Beaches area of the City) who had taken control of the Club.⁹¹ Held up as an example of the predominance of Yiddish was the Club invitations which had gone from being written in English to being written in Yiddish.⁹² The Inspector went on to state that the teachers and nurse considered such behavior to be unpatriotic (World War One had recently ended), and he concluded by recommending that English be the only language used in auxiliary school programmes.⁹³

On 8 January 1919 Inspector Cowley reiterated the information he had on the Mothers' Club dispute to the Management Committee which had jurisdiction over the issue.⁹⁴ After hearing the information, Trustee Dr. Noble proposed the following motion: "That one language only — and that the English language — be used in our public schools."⁹⁵ Another motion introduced at the meeting read: "That one flag — and that the British flag — be hung in our schools or flown from our school poles."⁹⁶ The Jews of Toronto were also responsible for the flag motion — only it was the boys who were causing problems in the school system.

Over twenty boys from the King Edward School had gone on an academic strike on 18 December 1918 because their teacher, Miss Hagarty, had refused to display in their classroom the flag of Zion ("Star of David") alongside the flags of the Empire and allied nations which had fought together in the War.⁹⁷ The Jewish boys felt that since Jewish Canadians had also fought in the War, they too deserved to be honoured through a display of their flag.⁹⁸ Believing that their cause was just, the boys took their case to Inspector Cowley who called them truants and ordered them back to school; undaunted, the boys appealed to Toronto Mayor Mr. Church only to meet with the same response.⁹⁹ The issue was brought to a head on 20 December, the last day of December classes, when Trustees Dr. Caroline Brown and Miss. Constance Boulton met with the boys and — as the *Evening Telegram* described them — a group of "irate parents."¹⁰⁰ Trustees Brown and Boulton were able to diffuse the controversy by offering to place the flag of Zion in the group which housed the flags of Scotland, Ireland, New Zealand, and Australia — the Empire collection.¹⁰¹ But the solution had a patronizing tone to it; moreover, it was designed

to uphold the authority of the teacher as Dr. Brown's address to the boys and parents illustrates:

Why we teachers never think of our pupils as Jews or Gentiles. Now I didn't even know you had a flag, and maybe lots of other people didn't either. You bring a nice clean flag and present it to Miss Hagarty and apologize to her and your principal. Then Miss Boulton and I would like to honor your flag, too, so if you send us each one we will put it up in our homes.¹⁰²

The request for a flag was a shrewd political move by Dr. Brown because an election was upcoming and she and Miss Boulton needed the Jewish vote for reelection.

On 8 January 1919 Jewish boys from Miss Cooper's class at the Victoria Street School also went on strike over the flag question.¹⁰³ They also took their case to the Mayor and Chief Inspector, and to the Chairman or the Board of Education.¹⁰⁴ None of the men were in their offices, but spokesmen for all three advised the boys that they were truants.¹⁰⁵

That evening the Management Committee met and the two motions were introduced. The motion allowing only the British flag in Toronto's public schools was passed unanimously with Brown and Boulton — the election over — voting to suspend the solution they had reached with the boys and parents; apparently, all the Committee's members had asked themselves the same question the *Evening Telegram* had asked, "Is the Union Jack not good enough for the Jewish schoolboys of Toronto?"¹⁰⁶ But before the vote on the motion was taken, Trustees Brown and Boulton received a dressing down from Trustee Dr. Hunter who accused the two of playing politics with the national flag.¹⁰⁷ To that accusation Miss. Boulton replied that she and Doctor Brown had acted as "patriotic citizens" who sought to restore the authority of the teacher "above all things."¹⁰⁸ Mr. Hambly, Chairman of the Board of Education, went to the aid of the two trustees arguing that he was proud of the Jewish Canadians — two of whom were former employees — who fought in the war, therefore, there was no wrong in trying to meet the needs of the Jews; but, he went on to argue, children had to be taught to love only one flag — the Union Jack.¹⁰⁹

The *Evening Telegram*, the only newspaper of Toronto's four English dailies to report on both the Mothers' Club and flag dispute, agreed with the action taken by the Management Committee on the flag question. In one editorial the *Telegram* argued that the flag of Zion was a religious emblem and as such there was no room for it in the public classroom.¹¹⁰ Another editorial asserted that the flag of Zion was not a pro-ally flag because, as the flag of all the World's Jews, it was also the flag of the Austro-German Jews who had fought against the Empire in the War — in essence, it was an enemy flag.¹¹¹

During that Management Committee meeting of 8 January Trustee Dr. Noble launched an attack on Mrs. Siegel and her Mothers' Club through an accusation that the use of Yiddish was fostering Bolshevism in the classroom. Dr. Noble urged Committee members to vote in favour of the English only motion because the use of Yiddish was, ". . . just the beginning of Bolshevism in our schools, and we are condoning it by our inaction."¹¹² School inspector D. D. Moshier supported Dr. Noble's accusation by recounting an investigation he had undertaken at Hester How School during his non-working hours. He had asked several children to count in Yiddish, and he had concluded that they were actually counting in German.¹¹³ Furthermore, Mr. Moshier stated that Mrs. Siegel had told him that Yiddish was seventy percent German.¹¹⁴

World War One had just come to an end, and in Toronto anything German and anything which disrupted the social status quo such as Bolshevism were regarded as evil. The City was in the grip of the "Red Scare" which was nurtured by the English daily newspapers' constant reports of a Bolshevik Russia full of murder and starvation.¹¹⁵ Anyone or anything that was new or advocated new ideas was mistrusted. Accordingly, the wide spread paranoia concerning Bolshevism was complemented by a strong sense of xenophobia. That sense of xenophobia was especially powerful when affixed to the Jews whose counterparts in Europe had been calling for social change before the War.¹¹⁶

In such an atmosphere Mrs. Siegel had the great misfortune of being seen as an activist Jew who was associated with the two major evils of the day, things German and things Bolshevik. Nevertheless, Mrs. Siegel did have friends at the Board of Education who were on the Management Committee. One such friend was Trustee Mr. C. A. B. Brown, a former Chairman of the Board, who while not condoning the use of Yiddish, explained that it was needed because there were some members of the Mothers' Club who did not understand English.¹¹⁸ Miss. Boulton defended Mrs. Siegel's character by describing her as a patriotic, intelligent, and reasonable woman.¹¹⁹ The two trustees, however, were also defending Mrs. Siegel because they believed — and stated at the Committee meeting — that the foreigners could never be assimilated if they were dealt with an "iron heel."¹²⁰ Trustee Mr. Brown then proposed an amendment to the English only motion calling for a delay on its voting until a meeting was held at Hester How between the trustees, teachers and nurse, and Club members; the amendment carried.¹²¹

The meeting, which Mrs. Siegel had suggested to Mr. Brown and later was spoken of as a trial, took place on 13 January 1919.¹²² Restated were the teachers and nurse's grievances with an emphasis placed on the claim that Mrs. Siegel was responsible for replacing English with Yiddish.¹²³ So upset was the

nurse with Mrs. Siegel's actions at the Mothers' Club that she called for total assimilation of the Jews, "The Jews came to Canada and should be English in every way as soon as they could, and recognize that teachers are superior."¹²⁴ Trustee Mr. Brown praised Mrs. Siegel's work, and Mrs. Siegel responded by inviting the teachers and nurse to rejoin the Club.¹²⁵ Finally, maintaining that she had been vindicated of the Bolshevik charge by having been given the opportunity to respond to it, Mrs. Siegel resigned her membership in the Club, and was joined by the Club's executive and other members.¹²⁶ The Mothers' Club had ceased to exist.

Trustee Dr. Caroline Brown attempted to save the Club by suggesting that a new club, in which English was to be the language used, be established under the auspices of the Home and School Council (a parent-teacher association like organization).¹²⁷ The Council had Mothers' Clubs of its own which were based on Mrs. Siegel's Club because she had introduced such clubs to the Council when she joined the Council in 1916.¹²⁸ The Council's clubs, however, differed from Mrs. Siegel's Club because they were to be used to help the schools assimilate both the mothers and their children. Consequently, Mrs. Siegel rejected Dr. Brown's suggestion.

In January the Board of Education met to discuss the Mothers' Club dispute, Trustee Dr. Laxton proposed the following motion: "That no language other than the English language be used at any meeting held in our school buildings."¹³⁰ Trustee Mrs. Courtice, founder of the Home and School Council and Chairwoman of the Management Committee, cautioned that only a moderate policy toward the foreigners would bring about their assimilation: "I am sorry to hear so many people say 'We got to put our heel down on those foreigners.' That is not the way to assimilate them as Canadians,"¹³¹ Mrs. Courtice and Dr. Brown then introduced a motion — which was passed — allowing Mrs. Siegel to address the Board. Mrs. Siegel stated that Yiddish had only been used at Club meetings for translation purposes; that she did not know that the Board disapproved of outside speakers who spoke Yiddish, even though she translated those speeches into English; and that she was sorry for any harm to the City's Jews her actions may have caused.¹³² Then Trustees Mrs. Courtice and Mr. McClelland introduced an amendment to the English only motion calling for the dispute to be again sent to the Management Committee, but it failed and the English only motion was passed by a vote of nine to four.¹³³ Both the dispute and the Mothers' Club had been brought to an end. On 29 January the minutes of the Management Committee simply read: "The question of the meeting of the Mothers' Club at Hester How School, was dropped."¹³⁴

Mrs. Siegel has maintained that she was persecuted over her activities at

Hester How School because the teachers, nurse, and missionaries were frightened of her success at fighting assimilation and keeping alive a Jewish identity among the females of the Ward's Jewish community.¹³⁵ She was probably correct, but she brought such persecution on herself when she challenged the firmly held belief of many Torontonians that "patriotism, Christianity, and cleanliness" were the ideals which all of the City's citizens had to adhere to. Such adherence was vital because it ensured a British way of life which was deemed to be so essential not only to the survival of Toronto, but also to the survival of the Canadian nation. For as an editorial in *The Globe* newspaper argued: foreigners could not be allowed to use the school system to propagate their own culture, since by so doing Canada would no longer be a nation, it would, instead, become a "polyglot boarding-house."¹³⁶

On the other hand, Mrs. Siegel was advocating a policy of multiculturalism a full forty to fifty years before it was fashionable to do so. Indeed, in the 1930s Mrs. Siegel held office as a school trustee, and she continued to push for policies she knew were not wanted by a society that was intent on assimilating its small foreign population.¹³⁷ Mrs. Siegel's policies came into vogue in the 1970s when governments officially recognized multiculturalism as the new human management policy. The post-World War Two era with its large influx of immigrants and the decline of the British Empire brought about a redefinition of what the character of Canada and, therefore, Toronto should be. The Toronto Board of Education was forced into a position of finding someone who had supported multiculturalist policies in the past — it rediscovered Mrs. Siegel. As a result, Mrs. Siegel was invited to attend Board meetings as an honoured guest, and lecture school children on the importance of retaining their native culture.¹³⁸ Finally, the times had caught up with Mrs. Siegel.

NOTES

1. Cumulative figure derived from following: Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics. *Fourth Census of Canada, 1901, Vol. I: Population*, "Table XI. Origins of the People," p. 344.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 345.
3. Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *Sixth Census of Canada, 1921, Vol. I: Population*, "Table 28. Population of Cities and Towns of 2,5000 and over, classified according to racial origin," p. 542.
4. Cumulative figure derived from the following: *Sixth Census of Canada, Vol. I.*, p. 542.
5. Carl Berger, *The Sense of Power: Studies In The Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), pp. 134, 152.
6. Harold Troper, "An Uncertain Past: Reflections on the History of Multiculturalism," *TESL [Teachers of English as a Second Language] talk* 10:3 (Summer 1979): 10.
7. Maurice Careless, "Metropolitanism and Nationalism," in *Nationalism In Canada*, ed. Peter Russell (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Company of Canada Ltd., 1966), p. 280; and Berger, *The Sense of Power*, p. 9.
8. Troper, "An Uncertain Past: Reflections on the History of Multiculturalism," p. 10; Berger, *The Sense of Power*, p. 52; and Careless, "Metropolitanism and Nationalism," p. 280.
9. During the researching of this paper the majority of primary source material found made reference to Toronto's non-British origin population by the use of words such as "foreign" and "foreigners."
10. Berger, *The Sense of Power*, p. 149.
11. W.L. Morton, "The Historical Phenomenon of Minorities: The Canadian Experience," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 13:3 (1981): 21.
12. Toronto Board of Education, Archives, Newspaper Clippings Scrapbook, 1920, p. 15.
13. *Ibid.*
14. Toronto Board of Education, *We Are All Immigrants To This Place*, (October 1976), p. 7; and Morton, "The Historical Phenomenon of Minorities: The Canadian Experience," p. 21.
15. *We Are All Immigrants To This Place*, p. 8.
16. Toronto Board of Education, Night School Committee Minutes, 1180-1903, Thursday, 11 October 1900.
17. Toronto Board of Education, Night School Committee Minutes, 1880-1903, Wednesday, 28 November 1900; and Wednesday, 12 December 1900.
18. Toronto Board of Education, Archives, Curriculum-New Canadians File, "1,200 Foreigners In Night Schools," *Toronto Mail and Empire*, 7 November 1929.
19. Toronto Board of Education, Archives, Curriculum — New Canadians File, "Melting Pot Operating in City Schools," *Toronto Telegram*, 17 December 1929.
20. Toronto Board of Education, Management Committee Minutes, 1912, Thursday, 12 September 1912 (typewritten).
21. *We Are All Immigrants To This Place*, p. 26.
22. Ida Siegel, Reminiscences, recorded 31 May 1976, Recorder: Don Nethery, Toronto Board of Education, Archives (cassette tape).
23. *Ibid.*
24. *Ibid.*
25. Stephen A. Speisman, "The Jews of Toronto: A History to 1937," 2 Vols., (Ph.D. Thesis: University of Toronto, 1975) 1: 207.
26. Toronto Board of Education, Archives, Hester How School File, "Hester How Carries On Program Laid Down By The Fine Woman Whose Name It Bears," *Toronto Star Weekly*, 9 June 1917.
27. *Ibid.*
28. *We Are All Immigrants To This Place*, p. 21.
29. W. C. Wilkinson Diaries, Vol. I., 2 Mays 1872-12 September 1872, Toronto, Board of

Education, Archives.

30. Recorded Siegel reminiscences.
31. Murray W. Nicolson, "Ecclesiastical Metropolitanism and the Evolution of the Archdiocese of Toronto," *Histoire Sociale-Social History* 15:29 (May 1979): 145.
32. Cumulative census statistics indicate that the Jews were the largest foreign group in Toronto because they were grouped on the basis of religion rather than nationality. See, *Fourth Census of Canada, 1901, Vol. I.*, p. 345; the *Sixth Census of Canada, 1921, Vol. I.*, p. 542; and Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *Eighth Census of Canada, 1941, Vol. IV: Birth Place, Blind and Deaf Mute*, "Table 22. Population By Birthplace, racial origin, and sex for cities 30,000 and over," p. 623.
33. Speisman, "The Jews of Toronto: A History to 1937," Vol. I., pp. 121-122.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 122.
35. Toronto Board of Education, Property Committee Meeting Minutes, Thursday, 27 December 1917, col., 341; Thursday, 10 January 1918, col., 14; and Thursday, 31 January 1919, col, 32 (Typewritten).
36. Speisman, "The Jews of Toronto: A History to 1937," Vol. I., p. 280.
37. Toronto Board of Education, Minutes of the Board of Education, Thursday, 19 December 1918, p. 249.
38. Speisman, "The Jews of Toronto: A History to 1937," Vol. I., pp. 224-226; and *We Are All Immigrants To This Place*, p. 7.
39. Recorded Siegel reminiscences.
40. *Ibid.*
41. *Ibid.*
42. *Ibid.*
43. Speisman, "The Jews of Toronto: A History to 1937," Vol. I., pp. 224-226.
44. *Ibid.*
45. *Ibid.*, p. 280.
46. *Ibid.*
47. *Ibid.*
48. *Ibid.*
49. *Ibid.*, pp. 280-281.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 204.
51. *Ibid.*
52. Recorded Siegel reminiscences; and Speisman, "The Jews of Toronto: A History to 1937," Vol. I., p. 204.

In her recorded reminiscences, Mrs. Siegel called Hester How, the principal of the Elizabeth Street School, the "worst" kind of missionary who worked diligently towards the assimilation of the children of the Ward. Such a statement contradicts the saint-like status that has been accorded Miss How by the Toronto Board of Education over the years. Indeed, in appreciation of Miss How's work among the children of the ward, the school was renamed in her honour in 1913. Thus, Hester How School was only the third school in the entire British Empire to be named after a woman — the other two were named after British monarchs.
53. Speisman, "The Jews of Toronto: A History to 1937," Vol. I., p. 201.
54. "Jewish Mission Work in Canada, 1907-1925," The Presbyterian Church in Canada, United Church of Canada Archives, Toronto, p. 1.
55. *Ibid.*
56. Speisman, "The Jews of Toronto: A History to 1937," Vol. I., p. 201.
57. "Jewish Mission Work In Canada, 1907-1925," p. 1.
58. *Ibid.*, pp. 1, 3.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

60. Rev. S. B. Rohold, "Mission To The Jews," The Presbyterian Church in Canada, United Church of Canada Archives. Toronto, p. 10.
61. "Jewish Mission Work in Canada, 1907-1925," p. 1; "Mission To The Jews," pp. 10-11; and "Mission To The Jews," First Annual Report, May 1909, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, United Church of Canada Archives, Toronto, pp. 2-8 passim.
62. "Jewish Mission Work in Canada, 1907-1925," p. 2.
63. Ibid.
64. Ibid., p. 3.
65. Ibid., pp. 2-3.
66. Ibid., p. 3.
67. "Mission To The Jews," First Annual Report, p. 4.
68. Ibid., p. 6.
69. Ibid., p. 4.
70. Central Neighbourhood House, Newspaper clipping 1911, Notes From Clippings and Early Minutes, SC 5 Box 2, envelope 5, City Hall Archives, Toronto.
71. *We Are All Immigrants To This Place*, p. 7.
72. Speisman, "The Jews of Toronto: A History to 1937," Vol. I., p. 202.
73. Recorded Siegel reminiscences.
74. Speisman, "The Jews of Toronto: A History to 1937," Vol. I., p. 238.
75. Ibid.
76. Ibid.
77. Ibid., p. 232.
78. Ibid., p. 233.
79. "Mission To The Jews," First Annual Report, p. 4.
80. Speisman, "The Jews of Toronto: A History to 1937," Vol. I., p. 236.
81. "Pot Still Seething," *The Evening Telegram*, 14 January 1919, p. 11.
82. Ibid.
83. Speisman, "The Jews of Toronto: A History to 1937," Vol. I., p. 237; and "Pot Still Seething," p. 11.
84. Speisman, "The Jews of Toronto: A History to 1937," Vol. I., p. 237; and "Bolshevism In Schools? Idea Riles Trustess," *The Evening Telegram*, 9 January 1919.
85. Speisman, "The Jews of Toronto: A History to 1937," Vol. I., p. 236.
86. Speisman, "The Jews of Toronto: A History to 1937," Vol. I., p. 236; and *We Are All Immigrants To This Place*, p. 8.
87. Recorded Siegel reminiscences.
88. Toronto Board of Education, Property Committee Meeting Minutes, Thursday, 10 January 1918, col. 1 (Typewritten).
89. Toronto Board of Education, Minutes of the Board of Education, Thursday, 19 December 1918, p. 246.
90. "Must Use English Tongue," *The Evening Telegram*, 21 December 1918, p. 24.
91. "Must Use English Tongue," p. 24; and Recorded Siegel reminiscences.
92. "Must Use English Tongue," p. 24.
93. Ibid.
94. Toronto Board of Education, Management Committee Meeting Minutes, 1919, Wednesday, 8 January 1919, col., 11 (Typewritten).
95. Management Committee Minutes, 8 January 1919, co., 11; and "Bolshevism In Schools? Idea Riles Trustees," p. 20.
96. "Bolshevism In Schools? Idea Riles Trustee," p. 20
97. "School Boys' Strike Ended," *The Evening Telegram*, 21 December 1918, p. 26.
98. Ibid.
99. "School Boys' Strike Ended," p. 26; and "Jewish Flag of Zion," *The Evening Telegram*.

- 23 December 1918, p. 13.
100. "School Boys' Strike Ended," p. 26.
 101. "Jewish Flag of Zion," p. 13.
 102. "School Boys' Strike Ended," p. 26.
 103. "Is Jewish Flag To Rule," *The Evening Telegram*, 8 January 1919, p. 22.
 104. *Ibid.*
 105. *Ibid.*
 106. *Ibid.*
 107. "Bolshevism In Schools? Idea Riles Trustees," p. 20.
 108. *Ibid.*
 109. *Ibid.*
 110. "Public School Is No Place For Religious Emblems, editorial, *The Evening Telegram*, 18 January 1919, p. 12.
 111. "The Flag of Zion." editorial, *The Evening Telegram*, 16 January 1919, p. 10.
 112. "Bolshevism In Schools? Idea Riles Trustees," p. 20.
 113. *Ibid.*
 114. "Socialism Is a Worse Curse Than Czarism To Russia," editorial, *The Evening Telegram*, 2 December 1918, p. 8.
 115. Speisman. "The Jews of Toronto: A History to 1937," Vol. II. p. 549.
 116. *Ibid.*
 117. Recorded Siegel reminiscences.
 118. "Bolshevism In Schools? Idea Riles Trustees," p. 20.
 119. *Ibid.*
 120. *Ibid.*
 121. Management Committee Meeting Minutes, 8 January 1919, col., 11.
 122. Recorded Siegel reminiscences.
 123. "Pot Is Still Seething," p. 11.
 124. *Ibid.*
 125. *Ibid.*
 126. "Pot Is Still Seething," p. 11; and Recorded Siegel Reminiscences.
 127. "Pot Is Still Seething," p. 11.
 128. Speisman. "The Jews of Toronto: A History to 1937," Vol. I., p. 237.
 129. The Toronto Home and School Council Yearbook, June 1930, "Canadian Citizenship Committee, 1928-1930," Toronto Board of Education Archives, Box R 22-5.
 130. "'English Only' Is Rule For Students," *The Toronto Daily Star*, 17 January 1919, p. 21.
 131. *Ibid.*
 132. "'English Only' Is Rule For Students," p. 21; and Toronto Board of Education. Minutes of the Board of Education. Thursday, 16 January 1919. pp. 16-17.
 133. Minutes of the Board of Education, Thursday, 16 January 1919, pp. 16-17.
 134. Toronto Board of Education, Management Committee Meeting Minute, 1919, Wednesday, 29 January 1919. col. 72 (Typewritten).
 135. Recorded Siegel reminiscences.
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Book Review

The Jews of Kingston: A Microcosm of Canadian Jewry? Marion Meyer, Kingston, Ont.: Limestone Press, 1983. Pp. 142

Marion Meyer's study is a welcome addition to the still sparse literature on Canadian Jewry. It draws our attention to the fact that although the large majority of Canadian Jews live in the large cities, not all do. While small cities have lost their population to the metropolises, others have a stable Jewish population and still others, like Kingston, and like the Kitchener-Waterloo region in Ontario, have a growing, albeit currently small population. Although there are memoirs of the small town Jewish experience in Canada — Morley Torgov's *A Good Place to Come From* is an outstanding example — we have little literature on the contemporary scene. In this study, we have a sketch of the community's history over its several generations and an analysis of systematic research on Kingston's Jewish population in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Kingston, we are told early, is unlike other cities of the same size. The presence of Queen's University, the military college, its hospital and its prisons give it attributes like those of larger cities. Perhaps, Meyer reasons, what is characteristic of its Jewish population may indicate what is characteristic of Jews in more typical Canadian settings.

Despite its small size — the 1981 census counted only 655 Jews (by religious self-identification) — Kingston does show many characteristics of larger Jewish communities. Like larger Jewish communities in North America, the Kingston Jewish community has become organizationally more segmented over the past generation. While this segmentation in part reflects broad structural trends in Jewish life in North America, it also reflects the fact that the Jewish population in Kingston was stable over the thirty year period from 1921 to 1951 and then doubled over the next twenty year period. Until the 1950s almost all the Jewish families in Kingston were affiliated with Beth Israel, Kingston's Orthodox congregation. Since the late 1970s, a small Reform congregation, Ir-Ha-Melech, has been present and many newcomers remain completely unaffiliated. As in other places, the occupational base of the community is shifting, from business to the professions, with the community now balanced between the two. Trends in denominational self-identification in Kingston also

parallel the broader pattern, showing a shift away from Orthodoxy towards Conservative and Reform Judaism. Kingston may differ from the larger pattern in this shift there being true *especially* of members of the Orthodox congregation, of whom over half describe themselves as “Conservative”, a quarter describe themselves as “Reform” and more describe themselves as “agnostic” than “Orthodox.” As in many other synagogues, the issue of the role of women appeared on the Beth Israel agenda in a variety of ways during the period of the study.

As elsewhere, the affiliated Jews of Kingston have become less concerned with the issue of “integration” and more concerned with the issue of “survival.” There is a statistically noticeable tendency for the Beth Israel members under sixty to be less tolerant of intermarriage, have a higher proportion of Jewish friends and to prefer to live in a mainly Jewish society. Educational standards have improved. The feeling of a special relationship with Israel is widespread, even among the unaffiliated — there is, however, a gradation in support, with the Beth Israel sample highest and the unaffiliated sample lowest.

There are significant methodological and theoretical strengths in this study. Meyer adapted to a situation that was evolving around her. She began research around the same time that Ir-Ha-Melech was organized. What had begun in 1976 as a profile of Beth Israel was extended to include Ir-Ha-Melech in 1979 and a sample of unaffiliated Jews in 1981. Meyer is also clear about the methodology used to gather comparable data about these three different populations. The total membership of Beth Israel and Ir-Ha-Melech were sent questionnaires, with a response rate of 56% and 94% respectively. Interviews were held with 26 households of Beth Israel and 16 of Ir-Ha-Melech. Questionnaires were sent to 39 unaffiliated households, with a response rate of 87% and interviews were held in 39 households. To secure comparable data, the questionnaire sent to the unaffiliated sample in 1981 was also sent to the affiliated population.

In reporting her findings, Meyer chose to use real names rather than pseudonyms, as is sometimes done in sociological community studies. Because the city is identified and the specifics of its development discussed, it is easier for the reader to place the broader issues in context. The study also includes numerous photographs and a map, all of which add to the reader’s interest in and understanding of current issues in community life.

The rooting of the study in local history and the comparable data on three populations allow an important theoretical issue about the religious implications of occupational identity to emerge. Occupationally, the community is divided between businessmen and professionals, mainly academics. Various

findings indicate the significance of this division. The business families are, with a very few exceptions, in their second generation of residence in Kingston. The professionals, with very few exceptions, came as adults. The business families all remained members of Beth Israel; the few business families who relocated in Kingston also all joined Beth Israel. In contrast, and despite the presence of many professional families in Beth Israel, all the members of Ir-Ha-Melech and all the unaffiliated studied were professionals. These and other findings indicate that the business families and the professional families experience the synagogue in different ways.

Several hypotheses may be advanced. The business families have more loyalty to the established synagogue because it is the synagogue established by their parents; because in a city like Kingston most of the members of Jewish business families have known each other since childhood, and because a congregation of businessmen is also a congregation of men who do business with each other. Common membership in Beth Israel maintains an economically important social network. In contrast, the professionals are less tied to a local community network than successful retailers and small manufacturers who have tangible and intangible local assets which are not easily reproduced elsewhere. The professionals have come from other places and could move on and do the same work elsewhere. Academics in particular are schooled to be critical of received wisdom and are less tolerant of dissonance between the standards taught in the Orthodox synagogue and the home. One might hypothesize that an established local community may receive with reservations critical outsiders who make difficult demands and may then move away and that these newcomers will feel welcomed on conditions that are acceptable to only some of them.

These hypotheses about the role of synagogue affiliation in the business and professional families which emerge from the study are consistent with the more general findings reported by Cohen (1983:89-92). They suggest a direction that sociological research into the changes taking place in synagogue life in North America might follow.

The study also has some limitations. Meyer discusses briefly one other Jewish organization in Kingston — the local chapter of Haddasah-WIZO. Its members are overwhelmingly from Beth Israel, but not exclusively so. Some women members of Ir-Ha-Melech and some otherwise unaffiliated women also belong. Meyer mentions that the annual bazaar is a high profile event in the entire community. It would have been interesting to explore its symbolic importance as an event whose many hours of preparation involve a broadly based range of persons in the community and not just in one section of it. The “Kingston Jewish Community Council” is also mentioned but its role is not explained.

The population figures leave some unanswered questions. Synagogue affiliation statistics are given only for adults. While the centrality of the Hebrew school to Beth Israel members is stressed and a Sunday school associated with Ir-Ha-Melech is mentioned, the numbers of school age children in the two congregations and among the unaffiliated are not given. The unexpected growth in Beth Israel's membership between 1976 and 1982 is mentioned but not at all explained. During this period Kingston was experiencing, like some other places — especially Ottawa and Toronto — a migration from Montreal.

The usage of “intermarried” is also unclear. “Intermarriage” may describe several situations — a couple who are married but are not members of the same faith, a couple who were of different faiths at the time of the marriage, and a couple who are of the same faith at the time of the marriage but were not born into the same faith. Meyer appears to be using it to describe the second situation, writing, for example, that approximately 10% of the members of Beth Israel “were intermarried. The majority of the non-Jewish partners had converted to Judaism.” (98) Later, it is simply stated that half of the families of Ir-Ha-Melech are “intermarried” and most of the unaffiliated families interviewed are “intermarried.” The questions of whether these “intermarried” families think of themselves as “Jewish families” or “intermarried families” and whether the “non-Jewish” spouse has converted or thinks of her/himself as part of the “Jewish community” or as “a non-Jew married to a Jew” are not raised.

Despite these limitations, the study is a significant, worthwhile addition to the literature on Canadian Jews. Meyer gives the scholarly audience the details about her methodology necessary to understand how and why she arrived at her conclusions, but she also writes clearly and without jargon to make her book accessible to a broader audience. Best of all, the sympathies of this study are also broad. The points of view of all the Jews studied — from the local businessmen proud of their history of economic and organizational success in Kingston to the unaffiliated newcomers — are presented in a way which stimulates thought rather than allowing the reader to become easily judgemental.

Meyer puts a question mark into her title. Kingston may or may not be a microcosm of Canadian Jewry, but it is clear that this careful, readable and thought-provoking study helps clarify issues of more than local concern.

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Turgov. Morley, *A Good Place to Come From*. (Toronto: Lester and Orpen. 1974)

Letters

I am researching for the publication of a number of volumes "Jews in War-time 1939-1945, as described below.

These volumes will include data and photographs relevant to Jews who served in the Forces or who gave distinguished service in other ways, as well as refugees, partisans and Holocaust survivors.

On the British scene alone 62,000 Jewish men and women served in the Forces, of whom 1,400 gave their lives and 990 gained Awards, in addition to thousands who served in other walks of life. Other Jews who served included 600,000 Americans and 1,500,000 from the USSR.

**REQUIRED URGENTLY
DATA ON ALL THOSE WHO SERVED.**

If in the Armed Forces state Rank, Number (if available) and Unit.
Refugees, Partisan, and Holocaust Survivors, state experiences
and wartime activity.

Photographs 1939-1945: Personal and others required urgently.
(All photographs will be returned after use.)

Brief Data. Extended Stories.

In meeting Major Edmund L. de Rothschild TD., Major-General Sir James d'Avigdor-Goldsm Bart., and others, I have been able to record many fascinating stories, in particular one from Mr. Julius M. Green of Glasgow who was in Colditz. "How the hell would a flat-footed, short-sighted dentist with a tendency to overweight get involved in a treason trial?"

I appeal to all those who receive this letter to treat it as personal and to publicise the contents and provide whatever information they can from their own records, also make the organisation with which they are associated aware of this project.

Yours sincerely,
Jack Lennard.

Outline of Book

Roll of Honour "Jews in Wartime 1939-1945".

Vols. 1 & 2: Dedicated to Major-General O.C. Wingate, D.S.O.

Index: 100,000 names of British and others in the Allied Forces and those who served in other ways, data and photographs.

Vol. 3: Dedicated to Raoul Wallenberg, dealing with Refugees, the part they played. Partisans and the Holocaust.

Vol. 4: Autobiographies-Refugees, Partisans, and the Holocaust.

Vol. 5: "Jews in Wartime USSR".

This letter is to inform you and the society of the formation of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Toronto. We are a very new group, having just started up this past spring.

To date, our membership is 25 avid genealogists, so avid in fact, that one of our group has had the results of his work put into "book form".

We have monthly meetings and I, being the secretary, am in the midst of corresponding with other genealogical societies in the United States and the other society here in Canada.

You may contact me as we do not have a post-office box yet.

Mrs. Selma Sacrob
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