

# B'NAI B'RITH IN SCANDINAVIA

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## **B'nai B'rith Expands to Scandinavia**

In 1912, B'nai B'rith expanded to the North of Europe. At that time, B'nai B'rith<sup>1</sup> was an *Order* for Jewish men, organized in local *Lodges*. The difference between the membership in an association and the work for an Order can be expressed by paraphrasing John F. Kennedy's famous words »do not ask what the Order can do for you, ask what you can do for the Order«.

In a more informal way, women often participated in the work of the European B'nai B'rith lodges, and in the neighbouring District 8 Germany they were organized in Sister Circles.

The lodges followed strict ceremonials. Much of their image reflected the social life of the bourgeoisie of those days, cultivating, within firm rules of conduct, cultural refinement in letters, music and arts. Charity - the lodges called it »benevolence« remembering the Jewish commandment of »zedaka« - was the face of the lodges towards the outside world.

The German lodges showed the letters *U.O.B.B.* in their weapon which means *Unberuhender Orden Bnei Briss*, corresponding to the American *I.O.B.B. Independent Order of B'nai B'rith*. The same letters were used in Denmark - *U.O.B.B. (Uafhaengig Orden)* - and later all Scandinavian lodges showed *U.O.B.B.* in their escutcheons, although the right spelling in Swedish - *Oberoende Orden* - should begin with an *O* instead of *U*. In 1974 B'nai B'rith abandoned the old concepts of an Order and became *B'nai B'rith International*.

The *Danmark Loge* was founded in Copenhagen on January 23, 1912, and the *Supreme Lodge* in Chicago<sup>2</sup> had charged *Siegmund Bergel*, of *Deutsche Reichsloge* in Berlin, and *Alfred Lisser*, of the neighbouring *Henry Jones Loge* in Hamburg, with the task of installing the *Danmark Loge*. On that occasion 58 brethren joined the Order and a year later the membership had increased to 136. From then on, the number did not change very much in the following decades.

*Siegmund Bergel* was Grand Treasurer of District 8 Germany and had, in 1910, taken the initiative of forming the *First Lodge of England*. He then founded the 2nd and 3rd lodge in Egypt, re-animated the *Jerusalem Lodge*, founded lodges in Jaffa, Safed, *Zichron Yakob* and *Beyruth*, and 10 lodges in Bulgaria, Serbia and on the Turkish mainland. Seven of those lodges constituted, in May 1911, *District 11 Orient*. Before *Bergel* left the area,

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<sup>1</sup> Biblical Hebrew - The Children of the Covenant. See Vol.10 No.2 and Vol.13 No. 2 of this journal.

<sup>2</sup> The Supreme Lodge was domiciled 1843-1905 in New York, from 1905 in Chicago, from 1925 in Cincinnati, and moved 1938 to Washington D.C. In 1974 the Supreme Lodge was reorganized and became B'nai B'rith International.

and prior to his arrival in Copenhagen, he had just accepted to be the Honorary President of the new District that now consisted of all these 18 lodges around the eastern Mediterranean.



Fig. 1 The European and Mediterranean areas of B'nai B'rith in 1912

Germany	Distrikt 8 Germany
Romania	Distrikt 9 Romania
The Habsburg Empire	District 10 Austria-Hungaria
Switzerland	(2 lodges)
Great Britain	(1 lodge)
Bulgaria, Serbia, Turkey and Middle East	District 11 Orient
Denmark	(1 lodge)
French Algeria (no lodge in European France)	

## Danmark Loge No. 712 founded on 23rd January 1912

In 1911 a German friend, who was a member of B'nai B'rith, had called upon the Chief Rabbi of Denmark, dr. Max Schornstein, to establish a Lodge in Copenhagen. The rabbi discussed the question with Carl Melchior, the president of the Jewish Community of Copenhagen. Melchior was about to travel to the United States and promised to take up the question with the *President of the Order Adolf Kraus*. On the day of their meeting, Kraus had just returned from a visit to the President of the United States, William Taft. As a result of this visit, the United States denounced its trade treaty with Russia and declared that a new treaty would not be signed before American Jews travelling to Russia could cross the border with the same kind of passport as any other American citizen. This information made a great impression on Carl Melchior and, immediately after his return to Denmark, he went together with dr. Schornstein and C. B. Henriques, to Hamburg in order to study how a lodge works. There they became members of the *Henry Jones Lodge*.

The Jewish Community of Copenhagen - only 1 per cent of the Danish Jews were living in other places - had three major problems. One was the necessity to absorb the Russian Jews who, after the Kishinev programs in 1903, had found their way to Copenhagen. Another problem was the rising number of marriages with non-Jews, that had reduced the number of Jewish descendants of the old Jewish families. And finally there was a split in the community that had come to the surface when the administration appointed a new rabbi. The founders of the Lodge hoped, that the motto of B'nai B'rith, »benevolence, brotherly love and harmony«, would prove to be a remedy.

The founding board of *Danmark Loge* consisted of men who were deeply involved in the work of the Jewish Community: *Just Cohen* and *Chief Rabbi Max Schornstein* became President and Vice President, assisted by the Board members *William Heckscher*, *Carl Melchior* and *Louis Fraenkel*. One of the first undertakings of the lodge was to facilitate the cultural accomodation of the immigrants by creating a cultural center, a Toynbee-Hall. This was an educational activity after the ideas of a British sociologist, which the German lodges especially had accepted.

In 1914 the lodge published »Mindesskrift i Anledning av Hundreårsdagen for Anordningen af 29. Marts 1814«<sup>3</sup> and, between 1917 and 1925, the lodge edited »Tidsskrift for jødisk Historie og Litteratur«<sup>4</sup>. The former *Chief Rabbi David Simonsen* was the first brother of the lodge to be awarded the title »Honorary Brother« when he donated his library to the Royal Library. This »Biblioteca Simonseniana« became the nucleus of the foremost library of Judaica in present-day Europe.

After World War 1, the lodge ran holiday camps for children from the war-ravaged Continent, and when the persecution of Jews began in Germany in 1933, summer camps for Jewish children were established from the next year on. The President of the lodge *Kaj S. Oppenheim* and his wife Inger took the lead after the Jewish Congregation had been asked for help and had forwarded this request to the lodge. This activity ended in a tragic way in 1939. One week after the beginning of the war, the parents of the children who were in the Danish camp, demanded that the children be sent home and the Danish leader-

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<sup>3</sup> Memorial Publication on the Occasion of the »Centenary of the Decree of 29 March 1814« - the decree that established equal rights for the Jewish citizens.

<sup>4</sup> »Journal for Jewish History and Literature«.

ship tried in vain to persuade them to abstain from this request. After the war, the lodge did not succeed in finding any trace of these children.

During World War 1, *David Simonsen's* home became the centre of an international organization to help needy Jews around the globe and especially in Palestine. During those years, the Zionist movement had its European headquarter in neutral Copenhagen and only three weeks before the British government published the Balfour Declaration, on November 2, 1917, *Simonsen* chaired a meeting with delegates from Stockholm, Vienna, Warsaw and Moscow in order to prepare plans of how to safeguard the interests of the Jewish people in future peace negotiations.

The *Danmark Loge* stood directly under the guidance of the Supreme Lodge and did not join *District 8 Germany*. This was a model, which had already been used for the two lodges in Switzerland and for the British lodges. At that time, the public opinion accentuated the »national cause« and the lodges of the Western European countries did not wish to join or to establish districts comprising more than one country.

During World War 2, the Germans occupied Denmark on April 9, 1940. Up to April 1943, the lodge continued to arrange lodge meetings with discourses and lectures although on a lesser scale. As late as in 1942, the lodge also participated in an action to send food parcels to the needy Jews of Poland. Members began to prepare a manuscript for a book to be printed after the war, in celebration of the centenary of B'nai B'rith in 1943. It is not certain how much - if any - material had been collected, when the Gestapo in September 1943 raided the community center in Ny Kongensgade.

On *Erev Rosh Hashanah* the 1st October 1943, some hours before the fateful night of the persecution, Denmark's Jews went into hiding. During the next 3 weeks, about 7.200 Jews and 700 non-Jewish relatives escaped to Sweden. 490 Jews, among them 8 members of the lodge, were seized by the Germans and sent to Theresienstadt, where about 450 survived until the gas chambers in the extermination camps no longer functioned. The survivors, among them all lodge members but one, were rescued at the end of the war, by the »white busses«, to Sweden.

Before the end of October 1943, President *Oscar Fraenckel*, Expresident *Sofus Oppenheim* and the Secretary of protocol *Torben Meyer* contacted the Supreme Lodge in Washington, which immediately sent 5.000 dollars in order to help the refugees in Sweden.

# Danmark Loge, No. 712.

## Kopenhagen

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### Die Vorgeschichte der Danmark Loge

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Nachdem ich die Verhältnisse der hiesigen Gemeinde näher kennen gelernt hatte, war es mir klar, dass es notwendig sei, auf einem andern als auf dem bisher betretenen Wege für die Erhaltung der Gemeinde zu wirken: dass ein Zusammenschluss Not tue sowohl aller derer, welche an den verschiedenen Seiten des religiösen Lebens teilnehmen, wie auch derer, welche sich vollauf als Juden fühlen, ohne jedoch in derselben Weise an dem religiösen Leben der Gemeinde Teil zu nehmen. — Es musste ein Modus gefunden werden, welcher ein Zusammenarbeiten auf einer allgemeinjüdischen, humanitären und socialen Basis ermöglichte.

Während mich die Frage beschäftigte, wie sich ein solcher Zusammenschluss am besten bewerkstelligen liesse, erhielt ich von einem alten Freunde, Justizrath Eugen Beer in München, einen Brief, worin er u. a. anfragte, ob nicht der bekannte jüdische Orden U. O. B. B. in Dänemark eingeführt werden könnte; ich war mir sofort darüber klar, dass dies die Lösung der Frage sei, welche mich beschäftigte.

Durch Justizrath B. kam ich mit der deutschen Grossloge in Berlin in Verbindung, welche mir am 4. Juli 1910 Bücher und Brochuren sandte und mich später mit der Henry Jones Loge in Hamburg in Verbindung brachte.

Ende October 1911, also ungefähr 1½ Jahre später, erachtete ich den Zeitpunkt für gekommen, um die Gründung der Loge zu versuchen.

Fig.2 Extract from the introduction, signed Max Schornstein,  
to the report of the board of the Danmark Loge,  
dated March 1913



Fig.3 The European and Mediterranean areas of B'nai B'rith in 1955

Israel	District 14
Great Britain and Ireland	District 15
Continental Europe	District 19

The old District 10 Austria-Hungaria had been splitted into Districts 10 Czechoslovakia, 12 Austria and 13 Poland after World War 1. From District 11 Orient had District 14 Palestine, 16 Egypt, 17 Bulgaria and 18 Yugoslavia emanated between 1919 and 1935. The Districts 8 Germany, 9 Romania, 10 Czechoslovakia, 12 Austria, 13 Poland, 16 Egypt, 17 Bulgaria, 18 Yugoslavia were annihilated during World War 2. The numbers of these Districts will never be used again.

During 1943 and 1944 groups of brethren from Danmark Loge met in Malmö and in Stockholm. After the end of the war, in 1945, the Danish refugees went back to Denmark from Sweden. Soon the lodge was able to find Jews among the many »displaced persons« who now came flocking over the Danish border and to help them. Later, in the same year, the lodge took care of Jewish children from Holland, who after their deliverance from the

concentration camps needed humanitarian help. Three years later, a similar request came from France and a group of French children arrived. Under totally changed circumstances, the lodge arranged ten years later, in 1958, a summer camp for children of the members of the Scandinavian lodges.

## Increase in Scandinavia

Between the two World Wars, brethren of the *Danmark Loge* tried in vain to found a lodge in the neighbouring Swedish town of Malmö. During the exile in Sweden, which is mentioned above, futile attempts were made to found a lodge in Stockholm.

However, as a remarkable historic parallel to the events in 1843, when German immigrants in New York founded the B'nai B'rith in their new country, the foundation of the Swedish lodges was laid when German brethren who had managed to escape to Sweden gathered in their new country, exactly one century later.

The plan to form a lodge circle seems to have been discussed for the first time at a meeting in the home of *Rabbi Albert Kahlberg* in Göteborg during Chanucka 1943, and the circle had its first meeting in March 1944 in the home of *Edmund Scharlinski* in the same town. In this session *Eduard Krause* and *Fritz Lissauer* also participated, and at the next meeting in April, at the same place, *Walter Frank* and *Ernst Heymanson* were also present.

On May 1, 1944 the brethren met again and this was the first meeting where formal records were kept. A decision was taken to try to bring together all brethren from the *annihilated District 8 Germany* who had found refuge in Sweden and to contact the Supreme Lodge, following the example set by the *Danmark Loge* which had temporarily installed itself in Sweden. *Walter Frank*, who planned to visit Malmö, was asked to convene a meeting there similar to the one in Göteborg. At this conference on May 12, 1944 at Hotel Savoy, five of the six brethren who lived in Malmö, participated. There was also *Hermann Salomon*, from Stockholm, who happened to be in town. The brother who had not been able to come, met later with *Walter Frank*. The meeting decided »der Idee einen Namen zu geben« and named the association *Zusammenschluss der in Schweden lebenden Brüder ehemaliger deutscher U.O.B.B.Logen (VIII Distrikt)*.

*Rabbi Albert Kahlberg* in Göteborg, former lodge president in Halle, *Julius Herbst* in Malmö, former lodge president in Görlitz, and in Stockholm *Hermann Salomon*, later *Siegfried Pawel* together with *David Goldschmidt*, former Grand Vice President of Distrikt 8, now organized the endeavours to revive the work of B'nai B'rith in their new country. In November 1944, *Siegfried Pawel* circulated a list, showing the names of 52 brethren and widows of brethren. In the next list, that was circulated after the end of the war (fig.4), there were still the same names in Göteborg and Malmö, but six names were added in Stockholm, among them three brethren who had just arrived.

The three groups tried to maintain the formal attributes of their old lodges. For example the summons to the meetings were always given by written notice. And the ideal of »benevolence, brotherly love and harmony« was cultivated in all seriousness.

When the »white busses« arrived and the catastrophe that had befallen the Jewish people became evident in its entirety, the members of the three groups, each in their own town, joined the efforts of the Swedish people to ease the burden of the survivors.

Verzeichnis  
der in Schweden lebenden Brüder und Schwestern  
ehemaliger U.O.B.B. - Logen (VIII-Distrikt)

J.O.B.P.

Blatt 2.

Göteborg

Frank Walter, Göteborg-Erik Dahlbergsgatan 34. Tel. 13 93 17.  
geb. 11/9/95. Lessing Loge, Breslau.  
Gabbe Isidor, Göteborg - Utlandsgatan 4. Tel. 18 28 76.  
geb. 21/4/1872. Deutsche Reichsloge, Berlin.  
Heymannson Ernst, Göteborg - Cederburgsgatan 5. Tel. 16 58 63.  
geb. 26/6/1895. Nobel Loge, Hamburg.  
Hirsch Siegfried, Lerum Torgillsgård. Telefon Lerum: 658.  
geb. 2/4/1875. Timmendorfer Jubiläum Loge, Berlin.  
Dr. Kahlberg Albert, Göteborg - Olivendagsgatan 20. Tel. 12 59 33.  
geb. 8/2/1883. Germania Loge, Halle/Saale.  
Krause Eduard, Göteborg - Linnegatan 39. Tel. 14 06 62.  
geb. 16/3/1874. Viktoria Loge, Görlitz.  
Lissauer Fritz, Göteborg - Ornehuvdsgatan 4. Tel. 18 16 40.  
geb. 27/8/1891. Esra Loge, Umeå.  
Mühlfelder Melchior, Alingsås - Flanagan 28.  
geb. 3/9/1875. Herrmann Cohen Loge, Frankfurt/Main.  
Scharlinsky Eduard, Göteborg - Vittskogsgatan 13. Tel. 16 48 57.  
geb. 15/11/1896. Montefiore Loge, Berlin.  
Haas (Hilseen) Gertrud, Lerum-Vilohem Trygggestad. Tel. Lerum: 123.  
Ehemann: Borussia Loge, Danzig.  
Heymannson Elise, Göteborg - Göteborgsgatan 24.  
Ehemann: Henry Johns Loge, Hamburg.  
Jakoby Elise, Alingsås - Hotel Centrum. Tel. Alingsås: 977.  
Ehemann: Deutsche Reichsloge, Berlin.

Malmö

Dr. Grossmann Hans, Malmö - Pildammsvägen 7. Tel. 25 675.  
geb. 16/1/87. Germania Loge, Halle/Saale.  
Herbst Julius, Malmö - S. Förstadsgatan 79 e. Tel. 76 366.  
geb. 19/1/86. Viktoria Loge, Görlitz.  
Kaminski Arthur, Malmö - St. Pauli Kyrkogatan 17 a. Tel. 26 615  
geb. 8/10/74. Berthold Auerbach Loge, Berlin.  
Mannheimer Willy, Malmö - Döbelngatan 8. Tel. 77 955.  
geb. 2/12/95. Zähringer Loge, Pforzheim.  
Matzdorf Georg, Malmö - Kastellgatan 11. Tel. 16 708.  
geb. 19/8/72. Berthold Auerbach Loge, Berlin.  
Rosenberg Markus, Malmö - Kallian Zollgatan 7. Tel. 75 541.  
geb. 12/3/90. Rheinland Loge, Köln.

Stockholm

Abramczyk Wolff, Stockholm - Döbelngatan 35. Tel. 30 81 83.  
geb. 7/5/1872. Deutsche Reichsloge, Berlin.  
Dr. Alsborg Georg, Stockholm - Bergsundsstrand 23. Tel. 41 68 56.  
geb. 16/7/1873. Sinai Loge, Kassel.  
Benzian John, Stockholm - Rigsgatan 6. Tel. 61 75 51.  
geb. 12/4/1890. Steintal Loge, Hamburg.  
Böhm Hans, Stockholm, Alströmergatan 32.  
geb. 10/5/1888. Emanuel Joel Loge, Breslau.  
Cassel Georg, Stockholm-Riksby, Väststolsvägen 5. Tel. 26 38 85.  
geb. 17/9/1879. Akiba Eger Loge, Berlin.  
Erlanger Siegbert, Stockholm - Artillerigatan 20. Tel. 60 85 42.  
geb. 19/1/1875. Jakob Herz Loge, Nürnberg.  
Ettlinger Leo, Stockholm - Gumshornsgatan 5. Tel. 60 94 70.  
geb. 18/6/1886. Marcus Horowitz Loge, Frankfurt/Main.  
Fischler Hermann, Stockholm - Sveavägen 139. Tel. 33 31 03.  
geb. 8/10/1874. Henry Jones Loge, Hamburg.  
Fürth Salomon, Stockholm - Jungfrugatan 62. Tel. 61 29 44.  
geb. Steintal Loge, Hamburg.

Dr. Goldschmidt David, Stockholm - Sveavägen 132. Tel. 32 56 77.  
geb. 8/8/1883. Sinai Loge, Kassel.  
Gottschalt Eugen, Stockholm/Stockund - Pension Solhäll. Tel. 55 07 83  
geb. 7/1/1877. Rheinland Loge, Köln.  
Issenstein Rudolf Albert, Transeberg- Transebergsvägen 96. Tel. 25 82 43.  
geb. 7/7/1879. Rheinland Loge, Köln.  
Josephs Ferdinand, Stockholm - Snecksbacksgatan 4 n.b. Tel. 61 85 46.  
geb. 19/7/1879. Sinai Loge, Kassel.  
Dr. Kaplan-Löwen Viad., Stockholm - Stureplan 2. Tel. 61 94 68.  
geb. 3/3/1888. Heinrich Grütz Loge, Breslau.  
Katzmann Hermann, Stockholm - Furusundsgatan 15.  
geb. 5/9/1879. Westfalia Loge, Bielefeld.  
Kaufmann Edwin, Stockholm - Wittstocksgatan 30. Tel. 61 57 17.  
geb. 29/8/1891. Jakob Herz Loge, Nürnberg.  
Knutson Walter, Stockholm - Stureplan 2. Tel. 61 87 08  
geb. 22/9/1882. Alemania Loge, Stettin.  
Lehmann Hans, Stockholm - Karlavägen 26. Tel. 20 86 38.  
geb. 21/7/1885. Henry Jones Loge, Hamburg.  
Leiser Philipp, Stockholm Kungsholmsstrand 159. Tel. 51 96 90.  
geb. 28/7/1877. Henry Jones Loge, Hamburg.  
Loefer Paul, Stockholm - Rindögatan 23. Tel. 50 03 36.  
geb. 19/3/1898. Zähringer Loge, Pforzheim.  
Dr. Loewen, Rikunda - Östervägen 12. Tel. 27 00 88.  
geb. 6/9/1895. Abraham Geiger Loge, Berlin.  
Magnus Adolf, Stockholm - Ynglingagatan 15. Tel. 33 12 19.  
geb. 7/4/1878. Alemania Loge, Stettin.  
Dr. Meisel Julius, Stockholm - Hägerstensvägen 185. Tel. 45 15 68.  
geb. 15/11/1875. Gabriel Meiser Loge, Thorm.  
Meyer Richard, Stockholm - Furusundsgatan 3. Tel. 60 19 27.  
geb. 29/7/1893. Henry Jones Loge, Hamburg.  
Pawel Siegfried, Stockholm - Fregagatan 47 - Tel. 31 84 55.  
geb. 30/9/1878. Alemania Loge, Stettin.  
Salomon Felix, Stockholm-Riksby - Salonvägen 9. Tel. 26 31 58.  
geb. 18/6/1887. Steintal Loge, Hamburg.  
Salomon Hermann, Stockholm - Erik Dahlbergsgatan 40. Tel. 62 65 99.  
geb. 30/7/1885. Frankfurt Loge, Frankfurt/Main.  
Dr. Jäger Siegfried, Galesby.  
geb. Salomon Lunk Loge, Glogau/Schlesien.  
Dr. Warburg Fritz, Stockholm, Strandvägen 41. Tel. 61 67 46.  
geb. 12/3/1879. Steintal Loge, Hamburg.  
Eucharach Bertha, Stockholm - Jacob Westingsgatan 4 o/o Dr. Bloch  
Ehemann: Frankfurt Loge, Frankfurt/Main. Tel. 53 00 40.  
Benzian Sylvia, Stockholm - Snecksbacksgatan 10. Tel. 62 37 35.  
Ehemann: Steintal Loge, Hamburg.  
Benzian Elise, Stockholm - Askrikegatan 15. Tel. 61 55 66.  
Ehemann: Humanitas Loge, Gleiwitz.  
Gottlieb Lina, Stockholm - Snecksbacksgatan 9.  
Ehemann: Jakob Herz Loge, Nürnberg.  
Gut Flora, Stockholm - Säkravägen 8. Tel. 55 09 94.  
Ehemann: Frankfurt Loge, Frankfurt/Main.  
Nichtenstein Olga, Stockholm - Snecksbacksgatan 9. Tel. 67 12 22.  
Ehemann: Deutsche Reichsloge, Berlin.  
Wald Petra, Stockholm - Artillerigatan 20 o/o Rosenthal. Tel. 62 97 69  
Ehemann: Loge Lasterburg.  
Tittkowsky Herta, Furusundsgatan 18 - Stockholm.  
Ehemann: Montefiore Loge, Breslau.

Vor kurzer nach Schweden gekommene Brüder, deren Adressen noch  
nicht feststehen:  
Dr. Martin Caspary, Alenanda Loge, Stettin.  
geb. Klaus Martin, Zionloge, Hannover  
geb. 29/1/1899  
Yosson Hermann, Anosloge, Gelsenkirchen.  
geb. 27/6/1901

Fig.4

## Fredslagen No. 1063 - The Lodge of Peace

In autumn 1945 the Stockholm group held a meeting at Hotel Carlton and charged *John Benzian* and *Hans Lehmann*, who were about to travel to the United States, to ask the Supreme Lodge for permission to found a lodge in Stockholm. During his stay, after a conference with the *Council on European Affairs* of B'nai B'rith, and because of *Hans Lehmann's* failing health, *John Benzian* continued the work alone.

*John Benzian* carried an application, signed by 55 brethren from the annihilated District 8, who were domiciled in Sweden. *Arthur Cohen*, President of the big *Leo-Baeck Lodge* in New York and also member of the *Advisory Council of B'nai B'rith*, submitted *John Benzian's* request to the leadership of the Order. At the same time the last *Grand President of District 8 Rabbi Leo Baeck*, who by a miracle had survived Theresienstadt, arrived in New York. He supported wholeheartedly the Swedish application. After having given a



lecture in the *Leo-Baeck Lodge* about »Schwedens und Dänemarks Verhalten gegenüber hilfesusuchenden Juden« *John Benzian* continued to Washington. After consultations with *Hans Lehmann* and an exchange of cables with Stockholm, he proposed that the name of the lodge be *Fredslogen* - the Lodge of Peace - because the charter of the lodge was the first charter after the end of the War and the name was so free from any ideological association, that it could be accepted by all denominations of Swedish Jewry.

*John Benzian* brought home the charter of the *Fredslogen*, signed by the *President of the Order Henry Monsky*.

However, it proved difficult to get the brittle plant to root itself in Sweden, one of the few countries in Europe that had not been stricken by the War. Many other new lodges had already been installed on the Continent of Europe, when 15 delegates from Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö - brethren from the annihilated District 8 - met afresh on May 6, 1948 at the Hotel Carlton in Stockholm for a decision.

Many of the delegates emphasized that a lodge in Sweden should not be an association only of former German brethren, but an institution established firmly within Swedish Jewry. Chief Rabbi Prof. Marcus Ehrenpreis, who had been a member of the lodge in his former homeland, had been asked for his co-operation but refused. A proposition had been put forward to acquire lodge members among the Jewish members of the Freemasons, because these persons were already acquainted with the rules of an Order, so they could possibly accept the idea of a lodge still before the details were worked out. This, however, did not seem to be the right way to establish a Jewish lodge.

A working committee was appointed - *Walter Frank*, *Julius Herbst*, and *Erwin Löwe* - and they soon convinced Rabbi Emil Kronheim that a lodge would be very helpful for the life of the Jewish community of Stockholm. Although he had not yet become a member of B'nai B'rith, he headed from then on the activities of the working committee and, thanks to his reputation, it became easy to enlist applicants among the members of the Jewish community. Almost exactly a year later, an invitation was mailed for the »Installation of the first Swedish Lodge of the international B'nai B'rith Order Fredslogen No.1603 Stockholm... on Thursday May 26, 1949«.

The officers of *Danmark Loge*, headed by President *Leo Fischer* and the ex-presidents *Harald Melchior* and Chief Rabbi *Marcus Melchior* performed the installation and *Saul E. Joftes* participated in his capacity as head of the new European office of the Order in Paris. *Rabbi Emil Kronheim* was elected President and continued in this office during the next three years.

The first roll of members of the *Fredslogen* consisted of 58 brethren, including 8 from Göteborg and 6 from Malmö. Among the brethren from Göteborg, we find *Julius Hüttner* who was to become the central name in Göteborg in the same way as *Emil Kronheim* in Stockholm.

### **Malmölogen No. 1909**

In a letter, dated October 11, 1949, the *Fredslogen* charged *Walter Frank* in Göteborg and *Julius Herbst* in Malmö with the task of gathering the brethren of the *Fredslogen* in their respective towns in order to »appoint a suitable brother to convene and set up a committee for the founding of new lodges in Göteborg and Malmö.«

But this was no easy task. In September two years later, the delegate of the Supreme Lodge *Saul E. Joftes* visited Malmö and had a conference with Mentor *Leo Fischer*, Danmark Loge, and *John Benzian* and Vice President *Arne Levin*, Fredslogen. The brethren who were domiciled in Malmö eagerly wished to found a local lodge, but the committee held the opinion that it was still too early to act. Two months later, however, they received advice from Stockholm to give in.

On March 16, 1952, the *Malmölogen No.1909* was installed with some fifty brethren. *Julius Herbst*, who had been the most ardent advocate of the idea to found a lodge in Malmö, was elected president and stayed in this office during the next three years.

### **Norgeslosjen No. 1928**

After the war, the group in Malmö had temporarily refrained from their endeavours to promote the idea of forming Swedish B'nai B'rith lodges. *Markus Rosenberg* moved to Oslo and, prior to the founding of Malmölogen, the five remaining brethren continued their local work, gathered and participated in the work of helping refugees and also in the general activities of the Jewish community.

The Shoa had reduced the small Jewish community of Norway to about half its size - only twenty-five had returned from the Nazi camps and a few hundred had been able to escape to Sweden. In Oslo, there was a certain interest in forming a lodge. Mendel Bernstein had been invited by ex-President *Louis Altermann* to an annual festival of the *Danmark Loge* and on this occasion incidentally promised to be at B'nai B'rith's disposal in case there would be future endeavours in creating a lodge in Norway.

*Saul E. Joftes*, from the Supreme Lodge, visited Oslo in January 1952 and a meeting was arranged with Mendel Bernstein and Harry Koritzinsky and two more persons, who, however, did not participate in the continued work that resulted in the creation of a Board ad interim, consisting of Mendel Bernstein, Leopold Bermann, M.L. Milner, Julius M. Selikowitz and Sam Steinmann.

The Board invited all members of the community who might be interested in founding a lodge to an introductory meeting at the home for the aged in Holmbergsgate 21. After having listened to information about the demands and the objectives of the Order, 20 of the 27 participants declared they were ready to form a lodge. A committee was nominated that after a short time could send an application for a charter to the Supreme Lodge. 30 prospective brethren had signed the application. The name of the lodge was to be *Norgeslosjen* - the lodge of Norway.

When *Norgeslosjen No.1928* was festively installed on August 24, 1952 many of the international leaders of B'nai B'rith participated. The date of the installation had been chosen to coincide with an important conference of the Board of the European Cooperative<sup>5</sup> that was to meet in Copenhagen a few days later. So the installation was attended by the Secretary of the Order *Maurice Bisgyer*, the President of the Cooperative *Edwin Guggenheim* and its Treasurer *Albert Brandenburger*, the Presidents of the lodges in Paris *Gaston Kahn*, in Antwerp *Philip Vecht*, in Mulhouse *Paul Jacob*, in Amsterdam *A. de Vries*, and the three

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<sup>5</sup> Arbeitsgemeinschaft der europäischen B'nai B'rith Logen/ Union des Loges Européennes B'nai B'rith. See Vol.13, No.2, page 101 of this journal.

Vries, and the three Scandinavian Presidents *Chief Rabbi Marcus Melchior*, Copenhagen, *Arne Levin*, Stockholm, and *Julius Herbst*, Malmö.

*Chief Rabbi Marcus Melchior* installed the first Board of the lodge that was headed by Vice President *Mendel Bernstein*, because the elected President *Rabbi Zalman Aronzon* was in Israel. *Julius M. Selikowitz* officiated as Mentor.

### Logen Gothia No.1929. But failure in Finland

The brethren of *Fredslogen* who were domiciled in Göteborg, had invited a great number of the members of the Jewish community of the town to Grand Hotel for an informatory meeting on January 20, 1952. The President of *Fredslogen*, *Rabbi Emil Kronheim*, chaired the meeting and *Arne Levin*, who was soon to succeed him, kept the minutes. After the meeting, all who wanted to be admitted to the future lodge, signed a list and an application for the charter of *Logen Gothia* - Gothia is a latin »translation« of Göteborg - was mailed to the Supreme Lodge.



## Shanghai Lodge No. 1102 B'nai B'rith

Bro. M. Brown . . . . . President  
„ M. E. Bangoor . . . . . Vice-President  
„ S. Schiffmann . . . . . Treasurer

Shanghai, Nov. 11th, 1940.

DEAR BROTHER,

You are requested to attend the Regular Meeting of our Lodge to be held at the Auditorium of the Shanghai Jewish School, 544 Seymour Road, on Thursday, Nov. 28th, 1940, at 7.15 p.m. precisely. The meeting will be followed by a dinner at \$3.50 per head, collectible on the spot.

By Order of the President,

R. J. MOALEM,  
*Recording Secretary.*

Dress:—Officers: Full  
Members: Dinner Jacket

Treasurer's Address:  
203/1 Seymour Road,  
Telephone 36372.

Secretary's Address:  
500 Seymour Road,  
Telephone 35947.

N.B.—Brethren wishing to partake of Dinner after the meeting are kindly requested to notify Bro. S. Ifland C/o Oriental Lloyd, 13 Ezra Road on or before 25th November.

Fig.5 In the Scandinavian lodges, there are members from many countries. Brother Löwenstein, now deceased, a refugee from Germany, survived the Second World War in Shanghai and after his return to Europe he joined *Logen Gothia* of Göteborg.

During the continued preparations for the new lodge, *Julius Hüttner* was appointed chairman. He called the Göteborg brethren of *Fredslogen* to a nominating meeting on June 10 and to a preparatory lodge meeting in the Jewish community center on July 30. There a Board ad interim was elected, following the propositions from the nominating meeting. This Board was later to function from the installation of the lodge until 1956. The President was *Julius Hüttner*, Vice President *Rabbi Hermann Löb* and Mentor *Rabbi Albert Kahlberg*.

It was intended that the installation should be in the Autumn but, due to the death of the President's wife, the installation had to be postponed. In the meantime, the President of the European Cooperative *Edwin Guggenheim* visited Göteborg on his way to the installation of the Norgeslosjen and gave a lecture for the members of the forerunner of the lodge.

In December, the decision was made to install *Logen Gothia* in January and that the first lodge in *Finland* should be installed in the Spring. The Supreme Lodge had sent the charter for this lodge to *Fredslogen* in Stockholm. But the political circumstances - Finland lived in fear of the Sovietunion - made it impossible to realize this plan. And at present, there is still no lodge in Finland, although there are Finnish Jews who are members of *Fredslogen* and the *Sister Circle of Fredslogen*.

*Logen Gothia No. 1929* was installed on January 18, 1953 by the Board of *Fredslogen*. Three of the chairs of the Board, however, were occupied by brethren from Göteborg who had been among those who had implanted the idea of B'nai B'rith in Sweden - the three who were still left in Göteborg: *Walter Frank*, *Rabbi Albert Kahlberg* and *Edmund Scharlinski*. The President of *Fredslogen*, *Arne Levin*, introduced the 29 recipiendi, who were thereafter installed by ex-President *Rabbi Emil Kronheim*. The brethren of *Fredslogen* who were domiciled in Göteborg were taken over by the new lodge, so that it could start its activities with 36 brethren. *Arne Levin* read the charter, dated 5 August 1952, and thereafter *Emil Kronheim* declared the lodge installed.

1953 was also the year when the Order could celebrate its 110th anniversary, the same year when the first mountaineers reached the top of Mount Everest.

## The Sister Circle of Fredslogen

A short time after the installation of *Fredslogen*, some wives of the members of the lodge established informal contacts with each other for mutual support and above all to support and help the widows of deceased brethren. They also thought that they did not know each other well enough and wished for a more personal relationship.

After two years, they founded *Fredslogens Systerkrets* - the sister circle of *Fredslogen* - in 1951. Margot Hirschmann became the first chairwoman of the circle and soon the number of its members - wives of brethren, widows and unmarried daughters - was about equal to the number of the members of the lodge. The circle developed its own cultural activities and its own humanitarian projects, among them the support of the Alyn Institute in Israel, a home for physical disabled children. The circle co-operates intimately with the lodge in many cultural and social activities and, together, they arrange parties for the children and the old-aged members of the Jewish community.

## Regional Co-operation in the North

After the installation of *Logen Gothia*, there were lodges in all the big cities of Scandinavia and, quite naturally, the lodges continued to keep contact with each other after they had managed to establish B'nai B'rith in the whole area. The co-operation of the lodges was formalized when delegates of all the five lodges, on May 3, 1953, met in Göteborg and constituted the *Skandinaviska Logerådet* - the Scandinavian Lodge Council.

This was the first regional co-operative in Europe. A year after the installation of *District 19 Continental Europe*, on September 4, 1955<sup>6</sup>, the Scandinavian Lodge Council changed its name to Interscandinavian Lodge Council but retook its earlier name after four years.

The council held its first working meeting in November 1955 in Stockholm. *Leo Fischer* was elected President and *Ino Nathansen* became Secretary, both from *Danmark Logen*. The council resolved to edit a journal *Logeblad för Skandinaviens B'nai Brith* (fig.6). The editor was *Simon Krenziski* and the paper, printed in the Spring of 1956, reported on the founding of the *Scandinavian Lodge Council* and on the activities of the lodges in Malmö, Gothenburg, Oslo and Copenhagen. It told also of the growing anti-Semitism in France, where the French ADL-section<sup>7</sup> under the chairmanship of *Georges Jacob* fought Poul-Jade's »Front Nationale«, that had received 2.500 000 votes in the elections and 49 members of Parliament.

No. 2 of the journal was printed in February 1957 and was edited by *Torben Meyer*, of Copenhagen (fig.7). Two more numbers were printed in the same year, and since then *B'nai B'rith Nyt* has been published as a quarterly. Its lay-out remains almost unchanged and it is still edited by *Torben Meyer* - except for a short interlude in 1976, when the author of this chronicle was the editor.

We learn from those first numbers that the Scandinavian lodges embarked upon their first joint project: to follow the example of *Logen Gothia* and start fund raising for the old-age home in Haifa in honour of the deceased Honorary Grand President of the District *Rabbi Leo Baeck*.

The year 1956 saw the Sinai-war and the Soviet attack on Hungary. Many refugees from Hungary, who came to Scandinavia, were Jews, and the lodges tried to care for them and to integrate them into the Jewish society in their new countries. To integrate refugees was no new and unfamiliar task. Many of the members of the lodges could look back on a life of changing fortunes (fig. 5).

In the following winter, Jews began to flee from North-Africa to France and to Israel, and the Scandinavian lodges sent tens of tons of clothing to Marseille, which had become a centre of support for the refugees.

In 1956, the Fredslogen was host for the *1st Congress of District 19 Continental Europe*.

After this Congress, at the end of 1956, *Fredslogen* took the question of founding an ADL-section<sup>8</sup> into consideration. The general opinion was, that the peaceful situation of

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<sup>6</sup> See Vol.13, No.2 of this journal.

<sup>7</sup> ADL - The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. See Vol.10 No.2 and Vol.13 No.2 of this journal.

<sup>8</sup> ADL - The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. See Vol.10 No.2 and Vol.13 No.2 of this journal.

Scandinavian Jewry did not demand such organization. In March 1957, however, when the chairman of the ADL in France *Georges Jacob* visited the Scandinavian lodges and gave a survey over the work of the ADL in the French lodges, voices were raised among the brethren of the Swedish lodges to start similar work in Scandinavia.

In November, an Interscandinavian lodge-weekend was arranged in Malmö, and the participants resolved to repeat this arrangement annually. Later, these annual meetings at the time of the Swedish public holiday »Alla Helgons Dag« - All Saints' Day - at the beginning of November, were called *Skandinaviska Logerårskongressen* - the Convention of the Scandinavian Lodge Council. The President of the Council, assisted by a Secretary and a Treasurer should take care of the affairs of the Council between the conventions, and very soon it was resolved that this executive and delegates from the lodges should also meet annually in late Spring, the so called *Skandinaviska Logerårsmötet* - Scandinavian Lodge Council Meeting.

In March 1957, *Aron Neuman* was elected President after *Leo Fischer*, and the Presidency moved to Stockholm. Three years later, in November 1959, *Julius Selikowitz* succeeded him, and the Presidency of the Lodge Council moved to Oslo. There it stayed until 1963, when *Svend Abrahamsen* was elected President and the Presidency moved to Copenhagen.

In November 1960, *Fredslogen* inaugurated its own lodge centre. At that time, the *Malmölogen* too had its own centre, which it left in 1963, moving to the new centre of the Jewish community. The other Scandinavian lodges used to hold their meetings in public banqueting rooms, but *Danmark Logen* could, in 1968, move to the centre of the Jewish community. *Logen Gothia* did the same in 1973. Many years later, *Fredslogen* could no longer afford the rent for its centre and moved its meetings to banqueting rooms.

The stream of refugees from North Africa grew and Marseille asked for financial support and clothing. The lodges in Denmark and Norway sent money to the auxiliary fund, the Swedish lodges sent their money to the lodge in Marseille. In 1962, *Danmark Logen*, *Norgeslosjen* and *Logen Gothia* collected 3 tons of clothes each, *Fredslogen* collected 20 tons.

In 1962, *Danmark Logen* celebrated its 50th anniversary, publishing a book, the main part of which is *Danmark Logens Historie* - the History of the Denmark Lodge - by *Julius Margolinsky*. In the same year, Malmö and Oslo celebrated their 10th anniversary. In August, the *7th District Congress* took place in Copenhagen and later, in the Autumn, the 10th Convention of the Scandinavian Lodge Council was held in Oslo, at the same time celebrating the anniversary of the lodge.

The convention in Oslo gave birth to a *Scandinavian Cultural Commission* that was to coordinate the work of the cultural committees of the five lodges. The Commission, chaired by its founder *Max Gorosch* of Stockholm, met the next Spring at the Royal Library of Copenhagen and continued to meet twice a year in connection with the meetings of the Lodge Council. After a couple of years, however, the travelling expenses of the Cultural Commission were too burdensome for the budget, and the questions of cultural activities were incorporated into the agenda of the meetings of the Scandinavian Lodge Council.



# LOGEBLAD

för

## Skandinavians B'NAI B'RITH

Nr 2 Reklaktion, ansvarig utgivare: Simon Krenzisky 1956



### B'NAI B'RITH

NR. 2 FEBRUAR 1957

*Nyt*

UDGIVET AF DET INTERSKANDINAVISKE LOGERÅD

### Idealen inom B'NAI B'RITH

Att hedra sin fader och moder anser många vara det yppersta av den judiska religionens alla bud. I den dagliga morgonbönen läser vi om de ting vilkas frukter människan njuter i denna värld medan värdet i sin helhet bevaras åt henne till den kommande världen och främst anføres åter budet att hedra fader och moder, efterföljt bland annat av uppmaningen att utföra kärleksgärningar och att stifta fred mellan människan och hennes nästa. Till slut står dock att granskning av toran uppväger allt detta.

Dessa ideal gäller även för B'NAI B'RITH. I sig själv religiöst neutral står logen dock helt på judisk grund i sin allmänmänskliga strävan att vinna kunskap, stifta fred i världen, skapa ro och harmoni.

Medlet att uppnå ett dylikt mål torde för en medlem av B'NAI B'RITH vara att vid förhandlingar städs visa sig beredd att uppgiva sin egen vilja på det att vår medbroder skall kunna uppgiva sin, då situationen så kräver.

*Simon Krenzisky*

### B'nai B'rith har nu 400.000 medlemmer

Det överste råd för Ordnen B'nai B'rith har afholdt sit årlige møde i Washington, hvori også deltog repræsentanter for England og Israel. Størpræsident *Philip M. Klutznick* afsløjte beretning og meddelte bl. a., at medlemstallet stog var forøget med det resultat, at ordenen nu for første gang i sin 113 år gamle historie havde et medlemsskab på ca. 400.000 mænd, kvinder og unge mennesker.

— I det store og gribende drama omkring Israel har B'nai B'rith spillet en tilfældig, om end ikke uvigtig rolle, fortsatte præsident Klutznick. Det vigtigste for os må være at se, hvor vi kan hjælpe. Hvad enten vi sidder til højre eller nede blandt de almindelige gæster, så må B. B. altid bidrage i stort eller småt til at beskytte jødisk liv og — hvad der ikke er mindre vigtigt — til at ophjælpe det.

— Jeg ville ikke være ærlig, hvis jeg sagde, at jeg var enig i alt, hvad der er sagt og gjort af Forenede Nationer, af vor egen regering eller af Frankrig, Storbritannien, Rusland, Israel og andre lande. Det er min ret som frit menneske, men hvad vi må gå efter er dette:

Vi bør mere end nogens anden støde på Forenede Nationer's betydning, kæmpe for at bevare institutionen og så kæde om dens integritet. Hvilke fejl den end gør, er den det eneste tilbageværende håb om menneskehedens overlevelse. Tror vi på dette, har vi lov til at håbe, at en ny stor æra venter denne institution. Lad der aldrig opstå nogen kluft mellem USA, England og Frankrig, som kan forvandle Det mellemste Østen til et nyt Korea.

Efter beretningen meddelte præsidenten for B. B.'s Nonsky-fond, at man ventede det nye B'nai B'rith-hus i Washington færdigt til september, og præsident Klutznick erklærede så, at det næste årsmøde for første gang i ordenens 114-årige historie ville blive holdt i dens egen bygning.

På mødet blev det vedtaget, at det bestående arbejdsfælleskab mellem logerne i Syd-Amerika skulle omdannes til en distrikt-storloge nr. 20, og denne vil blive installeret i årets løb. Den begynder med 29 loger i 12 forskellige stater, nemlig seks i Brasilien, fem i Argentina og nogle færre i Bolivia, Colombia, Co-

Fig. 6

Fig. 7

### The Order Reaches the Biblical Age

1963 saw the 120th anniversary of the Order, and a group of 40 Scandinavian brethren and their wives made a tour to the United States to participate in the event. On the initiative of *Fredslogen*, the author of this paper wrote a short history of B'nai B'rith that was sent to the five lodges, and in *B'nai B'rith Nyt* two short surveys were published. The History of B'nai B'rith that the Scandinavian Lodge Council had asked for, was, however, not written until a whole decade later: *Bnai Brith - Förbundets söner*, B'nai B'rith - Sons of the Covenant, by *Hans W. Levy*, Göteborg 1974, published by the Scandinavian Lodge Council.

In the first half of the 1960's, the B'nai B'rith lodges numbered more than 200.000 brethren world wide, chapters and youth lodges not included, but District 19 Continental Europe counted no more than 2.000 members. An important portion - 500 of them - belonged to the five Scandinavian lodges. In addition, the Sister Circle of Stockholm numbered about 100 members.

The region was still working on the project of founding a lodge in Finland, and the installation of the lodge was planned to take place in March 1964. In the Spring of 1964, the Scandinavian journal *B'nai B'rith Nyt* showed the headline »Welcome Finland«.

There were two main reasons for the endeavours of founding a lodge in Finland. Pro primo the wish to have a meeting place for the different groups within the Finnish Jewish community. And pro secunda the wish to be able to form an own district the day the French lodges would become as strong as the number of Jews in France indicated, by far the largest Jewish group in all Europe, and might wish to go their own way. But once again, the hope of founding a 6th lodge in the North failed.

The discussions of forming an own district, however, continued, fuelled by the obvious neglect by the central bodies of the District. On one occasion, the Scandinavian members of the Executive Committee of the District had not even received an invitation to the meeting. The Constitution of B'nai B'rith demanded 10 lodges with 1.000 members in order to found a new district and this seemed to be quite possible. An other alternative seemed to be to join the British district.

These problems have been discussed again and again until the present day, but the leadership of the Scandinavian region and mainly the region's member in the Executive Committee warned that this would mean becoming an island in the North, far from the Jewish centres on the Continent of Europe.

Instead, the Scandinavian lodges, on the initiative of *Aron Neuman*, of Stockholm, proposed to the *9th District Congress* 1964 in Scheveningen, that the District should be organized in regions, following the Scandinavian example. But the Executive Committee watered down this proposition beyond recognition.

In 1965, the President of the Scandinavian Lodge Council *Svend Abrahamsen*, suddenly passed away and the five lodges asked *Ino Nathansen* to take over, so the Presidency stayed in Copenhagen for 3 more years.

In the late Spring of 1967, Egypt shaped the *casus belli* that resulted in the Six Day War. The Scandinavian lodges immediately transferred all funds they could raise to Israel, and volunteers prepared themselves to leave their homes in order to support the threatened Jewish homeland.

From 1968 on, and with its peak in 1969, Poland »purged« itself from its surviving Jewish population - about 20.000 left the country, and Denmark and Sweden gave refuge to almost one third of the banished and Norway to a smaller number. All lodges tried to assist the newcomers.

As mentioned in Vol.13, No 2, page 112 of this publication, the arrival of almost 400 Polish Jewish students at the university of Lund was the start signal for the *Hillel House* of the Scandinavian lodges and, in a way, of this journal. Fig. 8 and 9.



# LITTERA JUDAICA

NR 1 — SEPTEMBER 1973

PAPERS FROM THE TABLE OF THE WORKING GROUP FOR JUDAIC RESEARCH AT THE HILLEL HOUSE OF LUND, PUBLISHED BY THE SCANDINAVIAN LODGE COUNCIL OF B'NAI B'RITH



UPPSATSER AV ARBETSGRUPPEN FÖR JUDAISK FORSKNING VID HILLEL Huset I LUND. UTGIVNA GENOM FÖRSORG AV B'NAI B'RITHS SKANDINAVISKA LOGERAD.

## LITTERA JUDAICA — INFÖR NUET OCH FRAMTIDEN.

av Jaff Szac

De judiska samhällena i diasporan har en lång och ärorik vetenskaplig tradition. Efter att den judiska staten hade upphört att existera, fungerade vetenskapliga centra (akademier) som judendomens andliga ledare. Däri bottnar en betydande del av det judiska undret — en på sitt eget land berövad nations obrutna kontinuitet genom århundraden, trots oräkneliga utrotnings- och assimileringssörsök. Den judiska samhälls känslan gjorde att akademier verkade som församlingsarnas inbegripande del, med osynliga bånd sammanlänkande hela judendomen. Den traditionella judiska högskolan för vetenskap och lärdom har alltid tagit sig uttryck i stödjandet och främjandet av den judiska vetenskapen.

Ur detta djupa historiska perspektiv ser vi Littera Judaica och dess syften.

Några ord om Arbetsgruppen för Judaic Research. Den kom till för att stimulera och utveckla judisk forskning i hela Skandinavien. Parallellt med att bedriva egen forskning vill Arbetsgruppen uppnå följande mål:

## LITTERA JUDAICA — ITS PRESENT AND ITS FUTURE.

by Jaff Szac

The Jewish communities in the diaspora have a long and glorious tradition in science and learning. Following the extinction of the Jewish state the various academic centres stepped in as spiritual guides. They account for the fact that Judaism has stayed alive although deprived of its connection with a motherland and in spite of the pressure from outside to assimilate. The strong tie of solidarity amongst the Jews was promoted by these centres and influenced Judaism generally. The Jewish attitude towards learning resulted in encouragement and promotion of science.

It is from this historic background that we view Littera Judaica and its purpose

First a few words about the Working Group for Judaic Research. This team was established to promote and develop Jewish scientific research throughout Scandinavia. Apart from its own work the Group has the following goals in mind:

# JUDAISK FORSKNING!

I Lund grundades i januari 1973 Arbetsgruppen för judisk forskning. Vi presenterar här Arbetsgruppen, dess målsättning och dess bakgrund.

Den undervisning och forskning, som bedrivs idag vid universitetet, vilar på grunder, som fastställdes redan under medeltiden. Visserligen har en utveckling skett. Men fortfarande har grans- och tillväxtskaper svårt att göra sig gällande.

Men utan att tillhöra viss institution, sådd bedriver kvalificerade judaistiska studier. Dess målsättning är att på en så bred läskrets som möjligt. Dess tredje nummer väntas i dagarna.

Många tusen flyktingar lever f.n. i Skandinavien. Många har i årstiden bedrivit kvalificerad judaisk forskning i sina utrymningssänder. På bar kunnat publicera sig. Arbetsgruppen ser som sin uppgift att tillvarata dessa kunskaper och på så sätt ge nya och stimulerande impulser till fortsatt forskning. Även den unga generationen har visat ett pånyttigt intresse för judaistik. Genom uppmuntrarna vill man skapa underlag för en framtida forskargeneration.

## Judaistiken eftersatt

Judaistiken är en sådan tvärvetenskap. Dess forskningsområden kan definieras som "det judiska folket, dess historia, religion, kultur och samhällsförhållanden". Inom detta område har universitetsorganisationen bara tillåtit mer systematisk forskning i exegetik, religionshistoria och senare språkvetenskap. Det har vid flera tillfällen framställts önskemål om att förverkliga judaistiken ställning.

## Littera Judaica

Som ett svar på dessa önskemål bildades Arbetsgruppen. Dess målsättning är att befrämja, uppmuntra och stötta judaisk forskning i Skandinavien. Redan nu fungerar gruppen som kontaktpunkt mellan forskare, som ofta tidigare inte känt till varandras existens. Forskningsresultaten sammanställs och publiceras i gruppens egen kvartalskrift, "Littera Judaica" är för närvarande den enda judisk-vetenskapliga tidskriften i Skandinavien. Tidskriften, som står på mycket hög vetenskaplig nivå, vänder sig inte enbart till forskare. Den är även ett kontaktpunkt för människor,

## Forskningsinstitut

Gruppens yttersta målsättning är att förbereda basen för något, som man tänker sig skall bli ett Skandinaviskt Institut för judaistik.

## Även i Stockholm

Det bör i detta sammanhang nämnas att det i Stockholm bildades en motsvarande sammanslutning i november 1973, "Sällskapet för judaistisk forskning". Ordförande är docent Bernhard Tarschys. De två grupperna är för närvarande oberoende av varandra. Diskussioner har esoteriskt inlett om den framtida organisationen.



Arbetsgruppen för judisk forskning, Box 977, 220 09 Lund

Styrelse: Ordf. PE Egon Lansky (även redaktör för Littera Judaica)  
PE Helena Flax  
PE Zsigmond Gruzka  
PE Jaff Szac

BULLETTINEN 2/74, MALMÖ

tells the story of the founding of the Working Group for Judaic Research in Lund in January 1973 and of Littera Judaica — "the only journal for scientific Judaistic in Scandinavia".

It tells also of the founding of the (Scandinavian) Society for Jewish Studies in Stockholm in November of the same year. And it mentions plans for a co-operation between Lund and Stockholm.

Fig. 8

Fig. 9

## New Attitudes in a Modern World

In 1968, the author of this paper *Hans W. Levy* of Göteborg, was elected President of the Scandinavian Lodge Council. In the same year, he was elected member of the Executive Committee of the District and used his double capacity to work for a more intimate cooperation between the Scandinavian lodges and other Jewish organizations.

He also acted as the Scandinavian lodges' delegate to *ADL-Europe*. After the Six Day War, the fight against anti-Semitism and »anti-Zionism«, the new expression for mostly anti-Jewish sentiments, had become an important item in the work of the Scandinavian B'nai B'rith. In 1969, the activities of Arab terror organizations reached the Scandinavian countries and during the Holy Days, the synagogues had to be guarded by the police.

Against the advice of the President of the Lodge Council, who observed that it would be better to support existing youth organization, *Fredslogen* started a Youth Lodge for young adults between 18 and 25 years of age. In 1969 the lodge had 25 members but it soon ended in inertness.

In 1970, the District adopted a new constitution and the 18th Convention of the Scandinavian Lodge Council, in the same year, resolved to construct new statutes for the

Council. *Kaj S. Oppenheim*, of Copenhagen, *Willy Rödner*, of Oslo and the President of the Council, who had also been involved in the construction of the Constitution of the District, were charged with this task. With few amendments, these statutes are still valid. Many years later, it was resolved that the five lodges should try to find a common wording for their individual statutes, and for some years a commission, chaired by *Paul Gringer* of Copenhagen, worked on this problem.

In 1971 the *15th Congress of District 19 Continental Europe* took place in Stockholm. The new constitution of the District was confirmed but the *President of B'nai B'rith*, *William Wexler*, who participated in the Congress, told the plenary that B'nai B'rith in Europe should abandon its concept of exclusiveness. »If you want to be restrictive when you appoint new members, be restrictive but for heaven's sake, a p p o i n t.«

A few years later, in 1974, the Scandinavian Lodge Council wrote in its minutes that the difference between the United States and Scandinavia is that although »we can not be a self-appointed elite, we would be too few even if all were to join us.«

In Göteborg, in 1975, when the president of the Scandinavian Lodge Council was at the same time the editor of the quarterly of the Jewish Community, he used this capacity in order to do away with the veil of close secrecy and on the one hand to animate youth to join the local B'nai B'rith lodge and on the other hand to establish co-operation with the local WIZO regarding cultural arrangements, a co-operation that has continued until the present days.

In 1974, the President of the Scandinavian Lodge Council, in his capacity as Secretary General of the District, represented District 19 Continental Europe at the International Congress of the Order in Israel. On this occasion, the Congress decided that the *Order of B'nai B'rith* henceforth should adapt a name, that fitted the work of a modern organization, and should therefore call itself *B'nai B'rith International*.

Some weeks later, the District asked all lodges whether they could accept that existing male lodges became mixed lodges. So that when the commission, at the end of the decade, wrote the final proposition for identical Scandinavian lodge statutes, *Hans W. Levy*, now no longer president of the Council but counsellor of the commission, arranged that the expression Order be dropped and the expression »brother« be replaced by »member«. Four lodges accepted these statutes at the beginning, only Norgeslosjen kept different statutes. Since 1989 Logen Gothia is no longer a lodge for men alone, but a *mixed lodge*, at present the only one in Scandinavia.

Endeavours to find modern forms for the rites of the lodges, which could be adopted by all the five lodges, however, were not followed up by decisions.

## Beyond the Scandinavian Borders

A continuous task was the work for Soviet Jewry. The reports from the lodges, especially those from *Danmark Logen* and *Fredslogen*, told during many years to come of great numbers of parcels that have been sent to needy Jews in the Soviet Union.

In 1974, the Scandinavian lodges tried to cooperate on a manifestation for Soviet Jewry, but the endeavours failed. In Göteborg, however, the President of the *Scandinavian Lodge Council* could provide material for a long article by the political editor of the most important Swedish daily outside of Stockholm, *Göteborgs-Posten*, and also follow the request for an article by his own pen from another newspaper, *Göteborgs Tidningen*.

## Danmark Logen

1912/14 Just Cohen\*  
1914/15 Hartvig Cohn  
1915/16 Gerson Oppenhejm  
1916/17 S. E. Trier  
1917/18 J. H. Melchior  
1918/20 Carl Levysohn  
1920/22 E. F. Jacob  
1922/24 Ludvig Salomonsen  
1924/26 Louis Fraenkel  
1926/28 William Nathan  
1928/30 E. F. Jacob  
1930/32 William Nathan  
1932/35 Kaj S. Oppenhejm  
1935/36 Harald R. Melchior  
1936/37 E. F. Jacob  
1937/39 Sofus Oppenheim  
1939/40 Leo Fischer<sup>1</sup>  
1940/43 Kaj S. Oppenhejm<sup>3</sup>  
1943/47 Oscar Fraenkel  
1947/49 Harald R. Melchior  
1949/51 Leo Fischer<sup>1</sup>  
1951/53 Marcus Melchior  
1953/55 Jörgen Lachmann  
1955/57 Louis Altermann  
1957/59 Ino Nathansen<sup>6</sup>  
1959/60 Richard Gelvan  
1960/62 Svend Abrahamsen  
1962/64 Carl Metz  
1964/66 Leif Nathan<sup>7</sup>  
1966/68 Olaf Grün  
1968/70 Henning Metz  
1970/71 Ino Nathansen<sup>6</sup>  
1971/72 Henning Metz  
1972/74 Carl H. Melchior  
1974/76 Henry Kormind  
1976/78 Paul Gringer  
1978/80 Bent Melchior  
1980/81 Hans Metzon  
1981/83 Allan Metz  
1983/84 Bent Melchior  
1984/86 Bent Schalimtzek  
1986/88 Ebbe Siber  
1988/89 David M. Gerschwald  
1989/90 Carl H. Melchior  
1990/92 Fred Robert Hirsch

## Fredslogen

1949/52 Emil Kronheim\*  
1952/54 Arne Levin  
1954/56 Aron Neuman<sup>2</sup>  
1956/58 Jona Lando

1958/61 Herman Molvidson<sup>4</sup>  
1961/62 Kurt Oppenheimer  
1962/63 Aron Neuman<sup>2</sup>  
1963/64 Kurt Oppenheimer  
1964/65 Charles Kocklin<sup>™</sup>  
1966-67 Hans Benzian<sup>™™</sup>  
1968-69 Paul Kamras  
1970-71 Richard Zaudy  
1972-73 Peter Guter  
1974-76 Heinz Säbel  
1977 Peter Guter  
1978-79 Henry Fox  
1980 Peter Guter  
1981-82 Gustav Goldberg  
1983 Manfred Ginsburg  
1984 Tobias Rawet  
1985-86 Henry Haskel  
1987-88 Peter Stein  
1989-90 Arthur Hermele  
1991-92 Erik Lempert

## Malmölogen

1952/55 Julius Herbst\*  
1955/56 Louis Aronsson  
1956/58 Daniel Bagner  
1958/60 Robert Simby  
1960/62 Nissen Zippis  
1962/64 Harry Rubinstein  
1964/65 Willy Mannheimer  
1965/67 Sigurd Friedman  
1967/69 David Lempert  
1969/71 Ewerth Rubenowitz  
1971/73 Simon Kahn  
1973/75 Helmer Fischbein  
1975/77 Fred Kahn  
1977/78 Nissen Zippis  
1978/79 David Lempert  
1979/81 Paul Becker<sup>8</sup>  
1981/83 Ulf Winnitsky  
1983 David Lempert  
1984-85 Martin Uncyk<sup>™™™</sup>  
1986-87 Paul Becker<sup>8</sup>  
1988-89 Jan Berman  
1990-91 Leo Lazar  
1992 Paul Becker<sup>8</sup>

## Norges Losjen

1952/55 Zalman Aronzon\*  
1955/57 Mendel Bernstein  
1957/60 Julius Selikowitz  
1960/63 Sigmund Farang  
1963/66 Samuel Steinmann

1966/68 Sally Demborg  
 1968/70 Markus Sender  
 1970/72 Ivar Metz  
 1972/73 Sigmund Farang  
 1973/76 Sigmund Levand  
 1976/77 Eliel Schick  
 1977/79 Herman Kahan  
 1979/80 Sally Demborg  
 1980/82 Idar Levin  
 1982/84 Henrik Gurlén  
 1984/86 Herman Abrahamsen  
 1986/88 Michael D. Levi  
 1989-90 Rolf Kirschner<sup>\*\*\*</sup>  
 1991-92 Kenneth Harris

1988/90 Hans W Levy<sup>5</sup>  
 1990/ Michael D Levi

The term of the President of the Scandinavian Lodge Council runs generally from November to October

- \* ) The term of the President of the lodge runs from summer to summer (1990/1992)
- \*\* ) May 1964-Dec 1965
- \*\*\* ) The term of the President of the lodge runs from January to December (1990-1992)

### Logen Gothia

1953-61 Julius Hüttner<sup>\*\*\*</sup>  
 1962-63 Isidor Neuman  
 1964-65 Hans W Levy<sup>5</sup>  
 1966-67 Gösta Samuelsson  
 1968-69 Bror Rittri  
 1970-71 Allan Garellick  
 1972-73 Theodor Lilienthal  
 1974 Isidor Neuman  
 1975-76 Simon Enk  
 1977-78 Norman Bodlander  
 1979 Allan Garellick  
 1980 Simon Enk  
 1981 Bror Rittri  
 1982-83 Ulf Fridberg  
 1984 Berndt Fibert  
 1985-86 Mendel Kleiner  
 1987-88 Meinhold Müller  
 1989-90 Michael Ben-Menachem  
 1991-92 Bror Rittri

- 1) Member from 1951 and Vice President of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft/Union from 1953, Vice President of the District until 1962
- 2) Member of the Executive Committee of the District 1956-62, Vice President of the District 1962-68, Member of the Board of Governors of B'nai B'rith 1965-68
- 3) Member of the Executive Committee of the District 1962-68
- 4) Member of the Executive Committee of the District 1965-68, Vice President of the District 1968-73, Member of the Board of Governors of B'nai B'rith 1968-73
- 5) Member of the Executive Committee of the District 1968 and Assistant Secretary General 1969-71, Secretary General of the District 1973-79, Vice President of the District 1981-87, Member of the Board of Governors of B'nai B'rith International 1974-82, Member of the International Council of B'nai B'rith 1978-80, International Vice President of B'nai B'rith 1982-86
- 6) Member of the Executive Committee of the District 1968-71
- 7) Member of the Executive Committee of the District 1979-81
- 8) Member of the Executive Committee 1987-89 and Secretary General of the District 1989-91
- 9) Member of the Executive Committee of the District 1991-

### The Scandinavian Lodge Council

1955/57 Leo Fischer<sup>1</sup>  
 1957/59 Aron Neuman<sup>2</sup>  
 1960/63 Julius Selikowitz  
 1963/65 Svend Abrahamsen  
 1965/68 Ino Nathansen<sup>6</sup>  
 1968/75 Hans W Levy<sup>5</sup>  
 1975/77 Marcus Sander  
 1977/81 Ewerth Rubenowitz  
 1981/84 Peter Guter  
 1984/87 Bent Melchior  
 1988 Ebbe Siber

Fig.10 The presidents of the Scandinavian B'nai B'rith Lodges and the Scandinavian Lodge Council

During the *18th Congress of the District*, in Tel Aviv, the President of the Scandinavian Lodge Council met with the leadership of the Russian speaking lodge *Shalach et ami* in Israel and established a contact between the President of the lodge and Amnesty International. Later, in 1983, he acted as one of the representatives of the District at the World Conference on Soviet Jewry in Jerusalem.

In 1977 the Childrens' Home in Haifa, a district project for which the Scandinavian lodges had raised substantial amounts but the completion of which had been delayed by the Yom Kippur War and its aftermath, was finally inaugurated.

In 1983, the *21st Congress of the District* took place in Copenhagen. During this and the next year, the Scandinavian lodges increased their endeavours to raise money for the district project to enlarge the Rambam Cancer Hospital in Haifa which was inaugurated in autumn 1985.

One of the two main problems that were discussed during the Scandinavian conventions in the 1980's was the economy of the District. The District still had all too few members and therefore the burden on the lodges was heavy. As a result of this, the lodges could not afford local projects of importance.

The other problem was the large area covered by the District. To visit other lodges and to participate in conventions was expensive. A special problem was linguistic. Most members of the Scandinavian lodges speak English. A lesser number can communicate in German and practically nobody in French. From the minutes of the meetings of the *Scandinavian Lodge Council* we learn, however, that the President in 1984 told the lodges that they can communicate with the office of the District in Basel in English and on another occasion he pointed to the »special friendly relations with the French region« and the French ADL.

### **Fighting discrimination**

In 1967, when the armies of the neighbouring Arab states had deployed for their attack on Israel, and the Jewish state in only six days had gained a total victory, the prestige of Israel and the Jews in the Western world had reached a peak. A year later, however, the students' revolt borne by leftist ideals and a marxist conception of history, was the signal that times were changing. Although Egypt, within less than one decade, was to make peace with Israel, increasing parts of Western intelligentsia had declared war against Zionism, in fact against the survival of Israel. This »anti-Zionism« reached new heights when the United Nations' General Assembly in 1975 adopted a resolution declaring that Zionism is racism. And soon increasing numbers of people, especially journalists, saw their chance to forget Auschwitz, and there was no longer much difference between anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism.

In 1976, *Leo Eitinger* and *Imre Herz* of Oslo, succeeded in halting the Norwegian radio's and television's anti-Israel programmes, a case that they forced all the way up to Parliament.

In the same year, Jan Benjamin Rødner of Oslo, published his book »Løgnere iblant oss« - Liars in our midst - an analysis of anti-Zionist propaganda, and Leo Eitinger published, together with Pater Hallvard Rieber-Mohn, a collection of articles on Norway, Israel and anti-Semitism »Retten til å overleve« - The Right to survive. *Herman Sachnowitz*

described his suffering in Auschwitz in his book »Det angår også Deg« - This Concerns You too.

This was also the year when PLO opened an office in Stockholm. *Fredslogen*, in cooperation with the local Solidarity Committee for Israel, tried in vain to prevent this opening.

In Denmark, *Chief Rabbi Bent Melchior* studied schoolbooks on religion and told the *Scandinavian Lodge Council*, in a meeting in 1977, that he was astonished, after reading these teachings, that there was not a greater number of anti-Semites in the country.

In Norway, the lodge supported *Jan Benjamin Rødner* in publishing a brochure about Israel, and *Leo Eitinger* and *Imre Herz* continued their anti-defamation work. The lodge was also involved in the case of a teacher in history, *Hoaas*, whose biased teaching on Israel and the Jews was stopped. The President of the lodge, *Herman Kahan*, lectured in schools and for students of theology.

In 1977, the number of programs against Israel increased on the Swedish radio and television. *Hans W. Levy* was now the ADL-man of *Logen Gothia* and he discovered that the Radio/ TV-authority was not used to much reaction - 30 letters were considered as an important public opinion and 100 letters would be a kind of a popular rising never seen before. A first test of this, with about 30 letters from different parts of the country, was successful.

In the next year, *Danmark Loge* reported to the Scandinavian Lodge Council about its fight against a nazi publisher in Aarhus that had reprinted a book from the nazi era »Extracts from the Talmud«.

In 1979, the *Swedish Council of Christians and Jews* was founded and the author of this report, as a member of the founding Board and a board member to the present day, followed the example of the director of the District *E.L. Ehrlich* in Basel working on increasing the understanding between the Jewish and the surrounding Gentile world and especially in the lodges. In Stockholm, *Chief Rabbi Morton H. Narrowe* became one of the leaders of this movement.

# B' NAI B' RITH

## SIONISMENS PLANER FOR OVERTAGELSE AV VERDENSHERREDØMMET

### FORORD

Det er ikke alle som er klar over den store kamp som foregår i vår verden mellom gode og mindre gode jøder. Sionismen er fra gammel tid oppstått som en liberalistisk, blasfemisk sekt, som litt etter litt fikk mye å si for sekulariseringen i samfunnet. ( Her må det tilføyes at opprettelsen av staten Israel er imot den jødiske Lov og Tradisjon, fordi denne staten ikke kan opprettes før Messias er kommet ). Denne boken forteller hvordan de sataniske sionistene har klart å oppnå så stor makt i dag, ved å bruke frimureriet som et middel i sin kamp for å overta verdensmakt. Deres mål er en verden styrt av en konge, som skal herske over alle folkeslag. Det er i alle folks interesse at denne boken blir skrevet for å avsløre sionismens kyniske planer og strategi. Denne boken er tilegnet både sanne jøder, muslimer og kristne, med håp om at de sammen skal knuse denne sionistiske, sataniske sammensvergelsen. Jeg ber alle lesere om selv å tenke nøye etter om ikke denne boken er et supplement til for eks. Huxley's "Brave new world". Noen vil betrakte boken som science fiction, men dagens realiteter i verdenspolitikken vil bekrefte innholdet. Planleggingen foregår på et " Bilderberger-møte " som varer i 24 dager, hvor B'nai B'rith - frimurerlosgjens øverste leder - Viseste Saïomos Vikar - taler til 300 frimurermestere. Jeg vil avslutte med å appellere til alle ærlige mennesker om å kjempe for rettferd for alle folkeslag, slik at vi som frie mennesker, og ikke som slaver for den sionistiske storfinansen, kan bestemme vår egen fremtid.

**Alfred Olsen**

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Fig.11

### The ADL at Work

During the next decade, in Denmark and Norway most of the struggle against anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism was performed by the Jewish community of these countries. In Sweden, in 1980, the different groups working for a better understanding of Israel, and the Jewish communities started the *Solidarity Committee for Israel* and a year later, on a similar basis, a *Swedish Committee against anti-Semitism* was started.

Thanks to the author of this report, during the whole decade, being one of the three Presidents of the *Central Jewish Council in Sweden*, also being on the Board of the *Solidarity Committee* right from the beginning and co-operating with the *Committee against Anti-Semitism*, the *B'nai B'rith* and its *Anti-Defamation League* were soon heavily involved in the fight in Sweden.

In 1974, there were many places in Stockholm where inflammatory anti-Semitic prints were put on parked cars and it was soon learnt, that this propaganda was spread in many ways, both in Sweden and by mail to other countries. Private persons and also the Jewish communities asked the public prosecutor to take action, but in vain. The author of the propaganda was a certain Ditlieb Felderer in a suburb of Stockholm. Later his inflammatory propaganda was spread in the United States by the Institute For Historical Review. When he began to send covers with »hair from the alleged victims of Auschwitz« to addresses in Poland, Germany, Austria and other European countries as well as the USA and Canada, the writer of this report finally alarmed the *B'nai B'rith in Washington* and the *ADL of B'nai B'rith in New York*. Soon Jews around the globe called on Swedish Embassies and in California a certain Melvin Mermelstein, a survivor of the Shoa, and the Simon Wiesenthal Center went to court. At the end of 1982, in Stockholm, the public prosecutor realized that something had to be done. There is a law against racial discrimination and, in April 1983, Felderer was sentenced to 10 months in prison. That was the end of his activities. As far as is known, this is the first time a penalty for the denial of the Holocaust has been included in a court decision.

These days, the Jews of Sweden have to import their kosher meat. During the 1920s, Norway and Switzerland - the two countries in Western Europe which did not welcome Jews before the second half of the 19th century - outlawed shechita, the Jewish way of slaughtering animals. In 1937, when there was a great understanding in Sweden for racial theories and German nazism, the Swedish parliament, against the advice of the government, banned shechita »for the sake of protecting animals«. There was, however, still a loophole in the law which was not closed until 1980. Shortly afterwards, the government decided that the special duties on meat that protect the Swedish farmers, should not be levied on kosher meat that the Jewish communities were importing. In 1983, when the Socialist government had again come to power, the duties on kosher meat were re-introduced. In vain, the communities protested against this »Judenzoll«. But when Prime Minister Olof Palme, in 1984, visited New York, the B'nai B'rith was alarmed and mobilized all its diplomatic connections. Two months later, the duties were abolished.

In 1984, SIPRI, an International Institute in the service of peace based in Stockholm, published its annual report for 1983 telling its readers about the weapons exported by different countries and »the pariah states Israel and South Africa«. The author of this report contacted *E.L. Ehrlich* in Basel, director of the office of the District, who has the necessary political contacts with the board members of SIPRI, who were soon to meet in Italy. A short time afterwards when he was sitting on the dais of the International Convention of B'nai B'rith in Washington in his capacity of International Vice President of B'nai B'rith, awaiting Ronald Reagan, President of the United States, who was standing for re-election and scheduled to address the auditorium some minutes later, he received a telex and was able to hastily tell the Convention the story, and read the cable, informing that the director of SIPRI had been asked to resign.

In a speech to *Fredslogen* in May 1985 he summed up the role of B'nai B'rith in the fight: »Allow me to see B'nai B'rith - contrary to many European sisters and brothers - not as a brotherhood but as a fighting organization. Until the Messianic era has begun, Man must fight for his cause and for his continued existence, especially we Jews.«

In 1984, on Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, the business premises of a member of the lodge in Copenhagen were blown up, and in the summer of 1985, bombs



exploded in front of the building of the Jewish Community of Copenhagen and at an airline office.

At this time, there were PLO-offices in all the three Scandinavian capitals.

Three days after the murder of the Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme, in 1986, the flagship of the socialdemocratic press in Sweden, Aftonbladet, published a photograph and an article that hinted at Jewish involvement in the murder. Bombs were placed, but did not explode, outside the Jewish owned office of the North-West Orient Airlines in Stockholm and, at the end of 1985, a young Jewish woman in Göteborg received a letter bomb that was put out of action in time because the envelope carried the inscription »damned Jew, bang and you are dead - NRP« - the name of the Nazi party of Sweden.

## Glasnost

The fight at home, however, did not intrude upon the international perspective.

The Swedish lodges followed with interest the fate of the Ethiopian Jews. And when, in 1985, a general in Sudan was sentenced to death because he had helped Ethiopian Jews, the author contacted the Swedish government, which, together with the German and a few other governments, had the death sentence changed to 54 years of imprisonment.

During the years of oppression, many members of the Scandinavian lodges had visited the Soviet Union in order to call on Jews whose application for exit visas had been refused. These »refusniks« needed especially the moral support of the outside world because, as some kind of revenge, the authorities had seen to it that they lost their ordinary jobs and had to earn a living under severe conditions. Secrete Jewish prints were also brought to the underground teachers among the Soviet Jews.

As late as at the beginning of 1988, a whole year after the first signals of »glasnost« and »perestrojka«, these Jewish visitors came back to Denmark and Sweden reporting that Soviet Jews were still suffering. But, before the end of the year, the exodus of the Jews from the Soviet Union began and at the *24th District Congress* in Stockholm, in August 1989, representatives from various countries in Central and Eastern Europe could participate as guests.

In the spring of 1989, *Chief Rabbi Bent Melchior* was invited to a kosher dinner at the residence of the Soviet ambassador to Denmark and, in the autumn of the same year, the *Scandinavian Lodge Council* decided that he should be responsible for the contacts with the Jews on the southern coast of the Baltic. The convention also followed the scheme of the Jewish Communities of the North and allotted the main responsibility for Lithuania with Vilnius (Vilna) to the lodges of Sweden and Kaunas (Kovno) to the lodge of Norway. Latvia with Riga was allotted to the lodge of Denmark, and Estonia with Tallin (Reval) and Tartu (Dorpat) should be cared for by Helsinki, where there is no lodge.

As a matter of fact, this division of the reborn Baltic States has never worked according to the scheme, but in their daily work the lodges show their responsibility for the Jews in the Baltic countries.

In February 1990 the first »Conference of Baltic Jewish Communities« took place in Tallin (Estonia). The Baltic delegations included representatives from Leningrad (now renamed St. Petersburg) in the East to Kaliningrad (former Königsberg) in the West. The Nordic delegates from Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland included representatives from the lodges, among them *Chief Rabbi Bent Melchior* and the *President of the*

*Scandinavian Lodge Council*. There were also delegates from Moscow. The political deliberations circled around the themes anti-Semitism and emigration. There was, however, a consensus not to use this expression but to discuss »return« and »repatriation«.

A few months later, the signatory states of the Helsinki Agreement on Security and Cooperation held a Conference in Copenhagen and parallel, in order to be able to co-operate, there was a last *World Conference on Soviet Jewry*. The theme was »The Road to Moscow and Beyond« and *Chief Rabbi Bent Melchior* and the *President of the Scandinavian Lodge Council* had the honour to chair parts of the meeting.

A »First Festival of Baltic Jewish Culture« was planned to start in Riga (Latvia) in August 1991. Then came the attempted coup against Gorbachev and the flights which were to bring the Nordic delegates, were cancelled. But some Scandinavian Jews, among them the just mentioned, booked private tickets in order to assist their fellow Jews in the Baltics States. Boris Yeltsin had just crushed the plot in Moscow and the last bullet had just been fired in Riga when they arrived and, in a miraculous way, the hosts managed to revive the programme within the two days prior to the scheduled opening.

### The Many Facets of Daily Tasks

When the Pope visited Scandinavia in 1989, the Lodges were involved in the activities - via press releases and direct letters - to summon the Holy Chair to establish diplomatic relations with Israel.

In the same year, Yassir Arafat visited the Scandinavian capitals and was received by the foreign ministers of Norway and Sweden. The Danish Foreign Minister, however, refused to receive the PLO leader. Members of the Scandinavian lodges wrote articles and letters to the editor in many newspapers.

In Sweden, the lodges in the same way tried to counteract the damage to public opinion, caused by the inflammatory bias of Foreign Minister Sten Andersson and his Secretary of State Pierre Schori. In the same year, the lodges took up the struggle against the recently started local radio station Radio Islam in Stockholm. The final fight, however, that brought the main responsible, Ahmed Rami, to jail and stopped the broadcast, was not fought by the lodges but by the Swedish Committee against Anti-Semitism.

However, this did not put a stop to other anti-Semitic movements in Scandinavia. From Norway e.g., at the beginning of 1992, a journal was distributed to the editors of newspapers in Scandinavia (fig.8) that in principle is a modern »Protocol of the Elders of Zion«. And in Stockholm, on Jom Ha'atmaut 1992, a Jewish-owned restaurant was blown up. The fight against terrorists is, of course a matter for the police, but the on-going struggle against the spreading of anti-Semitism is one of the main tasks of the lodges.

In 1990, *Fredslogen* asked the Swedish Foreign Minister to work for the release of three Jews who had been jailed in Syria, and all the Scandinavian lodges contacted their national foreign ministries in order to draw their attention to the severe situation of the Jews of Ethiopia.

Many Jewish journals paid attention to the involvement of *Fredslogen* in the Exodus of the Jews from the disintegrating Soviet Union. But the Baltic Jews who still stayed in their countries were not forgotten and just as this paper is being written, *Fredslogen* has donated a schoolbus to the Jewish community of Vilnius.

Within the Jewish community in Scandinavia, B'nai B'rith plays a unique roll as a meeting place for Jews of all convictions and political opinions and counteracts the increasing polarization between Jews and Non-Jews.

*The names of members of B'nai B'rith are printed in Italics. In Europe and most districts outside of North America, the members are called »brother« and »sister«. No academic titles have been used in the text.*

Bibliography: See Vol.13 No.2, page 126 of this journal

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Errata:

Vol.10 No.2, page 124

Read: »No.1992 Loge Cassuto, Milano (1954)  
No.2032 Loggia Elia Benamozegh, Rome (1955)«

Vol.13 No.2, page 115

The first lines on this page are missing:

»everybody was at home - the army, the navy, the airforce was mobilized within hours. The Egyptians were pushed back...«

The last lines on this page are erroneously repeated on the next page.