

## STORY OF A PHONY QUOTATION

# A Futile Effort to Pin It Down

'A Racial Program for the 20th Century'  
Seems to Exist Only in Somebody's Imagination

(See Editorial: "Running Down a Hoax")

This story begins, in so far as it concerns us, with The Star's publication last March of a letter from R. A. Hester, then the chairman of the Montgomery County Chapter, Maryland Petition Committee, Inc.

In the course of his letter, commenting on a news story, Mr. Hester wrote that—  
"Over 40 years ago, an English Communist, Israel Cohen, wrote:

"We must realize that our people's most powerful weapon, is racial tension. By extending into the consciousness of the dark races that for centuries they have been oppressed by the whites, we can mold them to the program of the Communist Party. In America we will aim for subtle victory. While inflaming the Negro minority against the whites, we will endeavor to instill in the whites a guilt complex for their exploitation of the Negroes. We will aid the Negroes to rise in prominence in every walk of life, in the professions and in the world of sports and entertainment. With this prestige, the Negroes will be able to intermarry with the whites and begin a process which will deliver America to our cause." (From "A Racial Program for the Twentieth Century" 1912.)"

The letter and quotation remained unchallenged until the following June, when The Star received a letter (for publication) from Herman Edelsberg, director of the Washington Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

In his letter Mr. Edelsberg said that Representative Abernethy of Mississippi, during debate on the civil rights bill, had placed the quotation in the Congressional Record (June 7). Mr. Abernethy had explained that "Israel Cohen, a leading Communist in England, in his 'A Racial Program for the 20th Century,' wrote, in 1912" the passage referred to above. Mr. Edelsberg said his own research convinced him that the alleged quotation was a fabrication, that no such publication as "A Racial Program for the Twentieth Century" was known either to the Library of Congress or the National Union Catalogue, which summarizes holdings of 800 principal libraries in the United States. Furthermore, he said, he had been unable to find any information that might serve to identify an English Communist, Israel Cohen.

Mr. Edelsberg's letter with an Edi-

### MISSING CARTOONISTS.

Cartoonist Jim Berryman is vacationing in Latin America. Cartoonist Gdb Crockett is snowbound in the wilds of Montgomery County. We hope things will change for the better in the near future.

"small Rightist newspaper" and was supplied to that newspaper by an employee of the Library of Congress. "It was accepted in good faith by the publisher, but he does not possess a copy of 'A Racial Program for the Twentieth Century' nor has he ever seen one . . . Inquiries made in England have been equally fruitless."

Mr. Stephenson enclosed a photostat of a reference to Israel Cohen in "Who's Who in World Jewry" which contained his London address.

Within a few days after the receipt of the letter from Mr. Stephenson, The Star received a letter from Everette Severe, the new Chairman of the Montgomery County Chapter of the Maryland Petition Committee, Inc. Mr. Severe wrote:

"On July 15, a director of the Maryland Petition Committee, Mr. E. T. Smith, received a letter from Mr. Eustace Mullins, Box 1785, Chicago (90), Illinois. Mr. Mullins, who was formerly with Senator McCarthy's office, gave us permission to quote his letter, which read in part as follows: 'The Cohen quote was copied by me from a Zionist publication while doing research work at the Library of Congress in 1962. It has since been reprinted widely in many publications. Congressman Abernethy inserted it in the Congressional Record after it had been generally circulated for three years. I do not have my files with me in Chicago, or I could give you the exact name and date of the publication in which the Cohen statement appeared. I used this quotation more than three years ago, and have not had occasion to refer to it since, because it was never questioned.'"

A letter was written to Mr. Mullins at the Chicago address. It related the circumstances and requested him to furnish some clue to the source of the alleged quotation, or to the location of his "files," with the understanding that The Star would then undertake the research, following any lead that Mr. Mullins might furnish, to run the quotation down.

Mr. Mullins promptly responded, writing on station-

aid. I never visited America until the fall of 1931. I was there for only two weeks and did not write anything political while there. I published my autobiography under the title 'A Jewish Pilgrimage' last November. If you can get a copy . . . you will see that I could not possibly have written the statement. I am very curious myself to learn who this Israel Cohen was who wrote it. Why not ask the writer who sent you the letter? He ought to be able to tell you where he found the statement, whether in a book, pamphlet or magazine. . . . I have never known of an American Jewish writer having the same name as myself. My career is set forth in 'Who's Who' and in the catalogue of the British Museum. I am credited with a long list of books, pamphlets, etc., but none of them has anything to do with Communism or the Negro question."

The Star next requested a research assistant at the Library of Congress to make a thorough search, first, for a publication, "A Racial Program for the Twentieth Century," by Israel Cohen or by anybody else; second, for the alleged quotation from the works of Mr. Cohen. The research was fruitless in both its aims.

The Star next requested the director of the Jewish Information Bureau, Inc., 250 West 87th Street, New York, to make a search for the publication or the quotation or the identity of an English Communist named Israel Cohen. Bernard G. Richards, director and chairman of the board of the Jewish Information Bureau, replied that "A Racial Program for the Twentieth Century" was "entirely unknown" and that the alleged quotation was, on its face, fraudulent. The only Israel Cohen known to Mr. Richards was the distinguished writer in London, previously referred to. Mr. Richards, naturally, suggested that we try the Library of Congress, for if there was any such publication as the one described, it would surely be listed.

The Star concluded there was no such publication as "A Racial Program for the Twentieth Century" and that the alleged quotation was a hoax. But as discussion of the incident had died down, as The Star had already acknowledged its error in printing the alleged quotation, and as printing it again might put the "quotation" back in circulation, it was decided to drop the matter—unless it popped up again.



might serve to identify an English Communist, Israel Cohen. The Star printed Mr. Edelsberg's letter with an Editor's Note, explaining that Mr. Hester, when asked by The Star to give the source of the alleged quotation, said he had read it in "some newspaper," but could not remember which one. The Star apologized for having printed the letter from Mr. Hester without first establishing authenticity of the alleged quotation and stated that a subsequent check of immediately available sources revealed no such publication as "A Racial Program for the Twentieth Century."

Publication of Mr. Edelsberg's letter seemed to close the incident until the latter part of July, when The Star received a letter from a reader, not for publication, taking issue with Mr. Edelsberg. She said that an Israel Cohen lived in London, was listed in the British Who's Who, that he had written extensively, was the author of numerous publications, and that the same quotation appearing in Mr. Hester's letter to The Star in March had previously appeared as an advertisement in the December, 1956, issue of "The Virginian," published at Newport News, Va.

A letter was immediately dispatched to the editor of "The Virginian" requesting information as to the source of the alleged Cohen quotation.

The editor, William Stephenson, replied by reciting his own efforts to establish its source. "Personally," he wrote, "I have been forced to conclude that the 'quotation' is phony."

It had first appeared, Mr. Stephenson wrote, in a

following any lead that Mr. Mullins might furnish, to run the quotation down.

Mr. Mullins promptly responded, writing on stationery of the "American Humane Church," Route 1, Huntley, Ill. The stationery described him as "Rev. Eustace Mullins, director, Society for the Propagation of the Human Faith."

Said Mr. Mullins: "I had done research on the writings of one Israel Cohen, a Communist, several years ago, but I do not have my files available. At any rate, Mr. Edelsberg seems determined to make a political issue of the matter, and the church feels that I should devote my time to religious problems."

He concluded his letter by inviting The Star to join his church in its crusade against "the barbarous Hebrew method" of slaughtering meat animals.

The Star considered Mr. Mullins' letter to be a revealing evasion of the question of where he got the quotation, and wrote to Israel Cohen, now nearly 80 years old, living in London. He was asked if he could shed any light on the matter.

Mr. Cohen promptly replied, in his own clear handwriting, that he was astonished. "I have never written a book, pamphlet or article under the title 'A Racial Program for the Twentieth Century', or under any title resembling this or any subject relating to it. . . . I have never been a Communist or had any sympathy with the movement. In 1912 I was living in Berlin, where I worked in the Secretariat of the World Zionist Organization and acted as correspondent of the Glasgow Her-

tion, and as printing it again might put the "quotation" back in circulation. It was decided to drop the matter—unless it popped up again.

It popped up again last week. This time the "quotation" was included in some of the "hate literature" mailed from some anonymous source in Philadelphia to Arlington County high school pupils and signed "Veritas."

This time the phony quotation is described as "an excerpt from testimony given on the floor of the House of Representatives" June 7, 1957. The anonymous literature mailed to Arlington pupils attempts to authenticate the "quotation" by citing the Congressional Record as the official source.

Mr. Edelsberg cites other examples of the circulation of Mr. Abernethy's statement in the Congressional Record.

The Richmond News Leader on June 26, 1957, carried a letter, with Mr. Abernethy's picture, quoting his insertion in the Congressional Record.

A magazine, "South," quoted the statement in its lead editorial in its October 21, 1957, edition.

The "quotation" was carried in a column by Charles Hill in the Jackson, Mississippi, Clarion Ledger, in October of 1957.

The Citizens' Council of America, in Texas, reprinted the Abernethy statement from the Congressional Record in its news letter of September 8, 1957, and the same statement was used in a radio broadcast on January 19, 1958.

The statement will doubtless continue to circulate. This recital of The Star's experience in trying to trace its origin may help to prove that it is a fraud or produce evidence to the contrary.



## Running Down a Hoax

In adjoining columns on this page today we print an account of our efforts to run down the source of what we are convinced was a fraudulent quotation contained in a letter printed in The Star last March. The "quotation" had been in circulation for some time before its inadvertent publication in The Star. But since Representative Abernethy of Mississippi, under the impression that it was authentic, inserted the quotation in the Congressional Record last June, it has been given broader currency with an added color of authenticity. We have recited our own efforts to trace the "quotation" in the belief that others will also be convinced that it is spurious, or that someone may be able to establish its real source. Certainly one innocent victim of this fraud has been Israel Cohen of London, a journalist and writer of excellent reputation, whose name seems to have been gratuitously exploited as part of the fabrication.