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# Baltimore Jews during the Civil War

By ISAAC M. FEIN\*

The number of Jews in the United States tripled during the decade preceding the Civil War. From about fifty thousand in 1850, it grew to about one hundred and fifty thousand by 1860.<sup>1</sup> Since Baltimore was an important center, and a port of landing at that, the rate of growth of its Jewish population was, naturally, larger than that of the country at large. In 1840, there were in Baltimore less than two hundred Jewish families.<sup>2</sup> By 1855, only fifteen years later, the number grew about sevenfold, to between twelve to fifteen hundred families.<sup>3</sup> In 1859, the estimated number of individuals was between five to seven thousand,<sup>4</sup> and six years later, in 1865, this figure again doubled and the estimated number was between ten to twelve thousand.<sup>5</sup>

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The following abbreviations are used in the notes:

|             |                                                                                       |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>AZJ</i>  | <i>Algemeine Zeitung des Judenthums.</i>                                              |
| BHC         | Baltimore Hebrew Congregation (Baltimore, Md.).                                       |
| <i>Cyc.</i> | <i>Biographical Encyclopedia of Representative Men of Maryland</i> (Baltimore, 1879). |
| HSC         | Har Sinai Congregation (Baltimore, Md.).                                              |
| <i>Isr</i>  | <i>Israelite</i> (Cincinnati)                                                         |
| JHSM        | Jewish Historical Society of Maryland.                                                |
| JTSAL       | Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America (New York City).                |
| <i>Occ</i>  | <i>Occident</i> (Philadelphia).                                                       |
| OSC         | Oheb Shalom Congregation (Baltimore, Md.).                                            |

<sup>1</sup> Bertram Wallace Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War* (Philadelphia, 1951), pp. 1 and 247, n. 1.

<sup>2</sup> William S. Rayner, *Address at the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Har Sinai Congregation* (Baltimore, 1892).

<sup>3</sup> *Isr*, July 27, 1855.

<sup>4</sup> I. J. Benjamin, *Three Years in America* (Philadelphia, 1956), 2 vols., vol. I, p. 305.

<sup>5</sup> *AZJ*, July, 1865, p. 617.

In Baltimore, as in other American cities with large German populations, the Jews formed a colony within the larger German colony. Jewish youngsters attended German schools; adults belonged to all kinds of German Vereins, sport societies, etc. In this case the formula "*Wie es sich christelt so judelt es sich*" ought to be changed to: "*Wie es sich deutschelt so judelt es sich.*" The majority of the Germans belonged to the Democratic party.<sup>6</sup> Their newspaper was *Der Deutsche Correspondent*, which, while not defending slavery as a "divine institution," was quite outspoken on the issue and defended it on a rational basis. The paper called upon its readers, immigrants in a new land,

never to forget that the Constitution of the United States in support of which every adopted citizen of the Republic has sworn an oath of loyalty, sanctions and protects the institution of slavery.<sup>7</sup>

From this the immigrant was to draw the only possible conclusion: Beware, live up to your oath, defense of slavery means good citizenship. To the Jews, and at that period practically all of them were German Jews, *Der Deutsche Correspondent* was the "Jewish paper." In it the Baltimore Jews found advertisements and reports of Jewish events in the city. Most of the Jews, like the non-Jewish Germans, were for the status quo on the issue of slavery.

At the two extremes were the German elite and the 48'ers. The elite was economically and socially related to the South. This group was outspoken for slavery without any reservations, and later it became secessionist. Slavery was defended by them on the basis of the Constitution and also because it was a "divine institution." There was a corresponding group among the Jews. The German 48'ers, however, were liberals who saw that

the same principles which were involved in Europe of 1848 are involved in America in 1861.<sup>8</sup>

This quotation is from the strongly Republican Baltimore German daily, *Der Wecker*, the paper whose political stand was expressed

<sup>6</sup> For a detailed discussion on the Germans in Baltimore during the Civil War see Dieter Cunz, *The Maryland Germans* (Princeton University Press, 1948), pp. 284-315.

<sup>7</sup> *Deutsche Correspondent*, May 13, 1891. The paper's stand on the Civil War problems, reviewed in the issue published on occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the paper.

<sup>8</sup> *Der Wecker*, June 18, 1861.

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by the statement: "Within the Union happy, outside the Union unhappy."<sup>9</sup> There were correspondingly Jewish 48'ers, who felt the same way and Rabbi David Einhorn's monthly *Sinai* expressed their sentiments, which were similar to those of the *Wecker*.

These various points of view found their expression in the sermons, writings, addresses and discourses of the rabbis of those days. Whether the rabbis were independent in their opinions or were merely reflecting the point of view of their members,—an interesting problem in itself,—is not the issue here. There is no doubt, however, that their opinions were reflected in the community and the records, which contemporary rabbis left behind, help us understand the moods of the people, and to learn about the life of the Jews at that time.

During the period we are discussing there were in Baltimore four synagogues.<sup>10</sup> The first charter giving the Jews in Maryland the right to establish a synagogue was granted in 1830. Five rabbis officiated during this period in those four synagogues. The first to come to the city, in 1840, Abraham Rice, was the first ordained rabbi to come to the United States.<sup>11</sup> Concerning him, Isaac Leeser declared: "We know of none in the country on whose shoulders the dignity of Rabbi could be more fittingly placed."<sup>12</sup> Rabbi Rice had, by the time, now under discussion, very little influence. In private correspondence he expressed apprehension and prayed that God should

guard us in these times from all troubles and misfortunes,  
and that the whole thing should pass peacefully for the  
Jews.<sup>13</sup>

The other four rabbis exercised considerable influence. Unfortunately, their sermons have not been recorded in the minute books of their respective congregations. Except for a telling remark about "unfortunate times which has befallen us,"<sup>14</sup> about "arrears in

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, Jan. 18, 1861.

<sup>10</sup> The Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, for many years known as Lloyd Street Synagogue and Stadt Schul, established in 1830; Fells Point Hebrew Friendship Congregation, established in 1838; Har Sinai Verein established in 1842, and Oheb Shalom Congregation, established in 1853.

<sup>11</sup> Hyman B. Grinstein, *The Rise of the Jewish Community of New York, 1654-1860* (Philadelphia, 1945), p. 543, n. 14.

<sup>12</sup> *Occ.*, Vol. XX, no. 4 (June, 1862), p. 142.

<sup>13</sup> Letter by Abraham Rice, 1862. Collection of sermons and letters by Rabbi Abraham Rice in the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York.

<sup>14</sup> BHC, Minute Book, April 6, 1862, p. 263.

dues" and, what seems to be a natural concomitant, the reduction in the salaries of the rabbis,—such as a reduction in Rabbi Szold's salary from \$125.00 to \$75.00 per month, and a similar reduction in the salary of Rabbi Illoway,<sup>15</sup>—there is nothing to give any indication that there was a severe crisis, let alone a war going on. We have to depend on reports of the rabbis' sermons in the Jewish national press and the local English press. Full texts are rare in either case. We have, of course, more sermons of Rabbi David Einhorn, since he had his monthly magazine, *Sinai*, at his disposal.

In the oldest and most orthodox synagogue in the city, the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, Rabbi Bernnard Illoway defended the status quo. He took this position with regard to minutest rituals: nothing was to be changed; and he took a similar position in regard to the major social issue of the day,—slavery. In a sermon delivered on the National Fast Day, January 4, 1861, proclaimed by President James Buchanan, Illoway pleaded for "peace and harmony." He was not preaching secession but declared his open sympathy for the secessionists:

The ends for which men unite in society and submit to government, are to enjoy security for their property and freedom for their persons . . . who can blame our brethern of the South for their being inclined to secede from a society under whose government those ends cannot be attained and whose union is kept together . . . by . . . heavy iron ties of violence and arbitrary force? Who can blame our brethern of the South for seceding from a society whose government cannot or will not protect the property, rights and privileges of a great portion of the Union against the encroachments of a majority misguided by some influential, ambitious aspirants and selfish politicians who, under the color of religion and the disguise of philanthropy, have thrown the country into a general state of confusion, and millions into want and poverty? . . .

This is followed by the usual strong appeal for states' rights and Illoway went even so far as to compare the rights of the states with those of foreign countries as follows:

We have no right to exercise violence against the institutions of other states or other countries.

As was usual with clergymen who favored slavery, Illoway too "proved" that the Bible approved of slavery, for "Why did not

<sup>15</sup> OSC, Minute Book, March, 1861; BHC, Minute Book, July 29, 1861, p. 222.

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Moses . . . prohibit the buying or selling of slaves?" or "Where was ever a greater philanthropist than Abraham, and why did he not set free his slaves?" He insisted that "The country must free itself from the influence of some individuals who exert all their efforts to mislead it under the disguise of Religion and Philanthropy."<sup>16</sup> From the texts he quoted, it is obvious that he had in mind the Abolitionists. And all this on the Fast Day proclaimed as a day of prayer for the unity of the people. Illoway had in his congregation, as we will see later, people who shared his views on this subject.

From the extreme right, we turn to the center. This position was taken by two rabbis, Henry Hochheimer and the more important one, Benjamin Szold. A careful reading of Szold's inaugural sermon of September, 1859, leaves no doubt that this rabbi was a man who would do everything in his power to bring peace among the various religious factions, and he, therefore, could not take a clear stand on major issues. He pleads time and again for "reconciliation" among the different groups. The young rabbi (Szold was thirty years old when he came to Baltimore) promises to lay down his

principles of belief . . . and show the causes of the dissensions that have arisen in the midst of Israel: the spirit of the time on one side and the tradition on the other . . . .

He goes on to expound that on the one side there are those who claim that

time has no power over the divine commandments, they were holy to our forefathers and they must be holy to us . . . We are not allowed to change them.

As against these he points to those who believe that

free reasoning is the main thing . . . , that the religious life is dependent upon the influence of the time.

He summarizes the opposing points of view as follows:

Many want to press all religious demands in obsolete garb . . . the others again yield everything to the authority of the times.

What, in the light of these diametrically opposing points of view, were Szold's "principles of belief"?

<sup>16</sup> *Occ.*, vol. XVIII, no. 44 (Jan. 24, 1861), pp. 267-268.

It is evident that in neither direction the exclusive truth is contained. The truth, in general, must lie in a right medium . . . The truth, the full truth, is contained in both directions.

And again, and again, he speaks of a "reconcilable sense," "conciliatory spirit,"<sup>17</sup> but fails to present a clear picture of his own religious philosophy, unless love of peace was, indeed, the mainstay of his thinking.

Szold's unwillingness to take a clear-cut position on most fundamental issues led at times to extremes. To cite but one, albeit an outstanding one: that Rabbi Szold was devoted to the idea of the restoration of the Jewish homeland in Palestine needs no proof. He found it, nevertheless, possible, no doubt, for "conciliatory" reasons, to introduce changes in his prayer book *Abodath Israel*, which do not square at all with his "Zionist" views. He omitted, for example, the prayers dealing with the Messiah; he introduced a special prayer for the Fast Day of the Ninth of Ab, not a prayer for restoration of the destroyed homeland, but:

We do not unduly lament over the Temple that is destroyed . . . We mourn not despairingly over the downfall of Jerusalem, for all places whither Thou hast sent us, shall be consecrated unto Thee through the worship of Thy name . . . Thou hast given us another home in place of that which we lost in the land of our fathers.

He introduced many similar changes in his prayerbook.<sup>18</sup>

It was only natural for Szold and his middle of the road group to take an attitude of, so called, "neutrality" also on the issues of the Civil War. Szold spoke for that group when on December 22, 1860, he preached on "Peace and Union."<sup>19</sup> Again Szold expressed his hopes for "reconciliation." He quoted the Bible and the Talmud to substantiate his thesis that "peace is the angel of consolation," that "all . . . heartily long for . . . peace and reconciliation," that the warring sections should discuss their problems for

The language . . . proves itself the harbinger of peace and reconciliation, it is in the power of this heavenly gift [lan-

<sup>17</sup> Rabbi Benjamin Szold, "Inaugural Sermon." Translated from the German by Sophie and Henrietta Szold (the Rabbi's wife and daughter respectively), 1909. Manuscript in OSC, copy in JHSM.

<sup>18</sup> Moshe Davis, *Yahadut Amerika Be-Hitpathutah* (New York, 1951), pp. 307-312.

<sup>19</sup> *Isr*, vol. VII (Jan. 11, 1861), p. 220.

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guage] to reconcile . . . The spirit of faith . . . is the holy language that proclaims peace and reconciliation to mankind.

He reduced all of the troubles of the country to:

The land of the free and the home of the brave is the tumultuous arena of unbridled passions, mad partisans and hungry office seekers [and he appealed to] the charming power of argument,

but he failed to give any indication of his position in the "argument" except, of course, that he is for the Union. His position, while not spelled out, is quite clear: peace above all, peace at any price. A very popular position in those days.<sup>20</sup>

Szold's sermons were, naturally, published in Isaac Mayer Wise's *Israelite*. The two saw eye to eye on this issue as well as on many purely religious issues,—this, in spite of the fact that they are considered founders of two different schools of American Judaism. Both strove for peace above all and were willing to make many concessions for the sake of it.

True, both Szold and Wise, delivered eloquent eulogies on the death of Lincoln. Said Szold in his *Vaterland und Freiheit*,

In the household of our nation there cannot be a reign of two mothers, next to freedom there cannot be slavery, next to a Union there cannot be a Confederation,

and he explained Lincoln to the Jews:

To us Jews Lincoln has a special meaning. In the course of history we found many fatherlands. We never knew freedom. It was here in the United States that we found freedom. It was Lincoln, who was so devoted to freedom, that we may, indeed, consider him a son of Israel . . . Because of his love for freedom, we Jews must honor his memory. If he were not . . . flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone, he was mind of our mind and soul of our soul.<sup>21</sup>

Said Wise:

This Abraham Lincoln . . . endeared himself to so many millions of hearts and gained the admiration of millions

<sup>20</sup> Rabbi Henry Hochheimer's sermons were in a vein, similar to those of Rabbi Szold. *Occ*, vol. VII, no. 9 (Dec., 1859), pp. 444-453; vol. VII (Jan. 25, 1861), p. 236; *Sermons*, separately published, Nov. 4, 1865.

<sup>21</sup> Mss.—descendants Rabbi Szold's family; published in Emanuel Hertz, *Abraham Lincoln: The Tribute of the Synagogue* under the title of "On the Death of Lincoln" (New York City, 1927), pp. 39-47.



of people at home and abroad . . . myriads of freed men consider [him] as their Savior.<sup>22</sup>

Korn is, of course, right when he states that Wise was really against slavery and

showed no unwillingness to state his beliefs once slavery ceased to be a political issue. They [his beliefs] are, of course, the idea of a man opposed to slavery.<sup>23</sup>

This was, no doubt, also Szold's idea as well as the idea of all those who associated themselves with him. He surely believed in the 60's what he subsequently stated in the late 70's:

There reigns a God of love, who does not suffer men to be doomed to misery and to be enthralled in slavery. Men are born and destined to be free.<sup>24</sup>

The issue, however, is not how one felt about slavery, but rather how one acted at the time of crisis. They spoke eloquently about Lincoln when slavery was already abolished, when the war was over, when Lincoln was dead,—This, in the good old Jewish tradition of: — אַחֲרֵי מוֹת קְדוּשִׁים אָמֹר "Speak only good of the dead."

Szold was, of course, active in assisting Jewish soldiers when they were in trouble. He secured furloughs for them for the High Holidays<sup>25</sup> and the episode of Szold's pleading with President Lincoln for the life of a Jewish deserter is common knowledge.<sup>26</sup>

Much has been written about Rabbi Szold being called "a derisive nickname: the Rabbi of Timbuktu."<sup>27</sup> This would seem to indicate that Rabbi Szold was considered a fighter for the Negro cause. This, however, was not the case. The Negroes in Maryland were freed by an act passed by the Constitutional Convention of 1864 (Article XXIV) which was to go into effect on November 1, 1864, a full year before the Thirteenth Amendment, which freed the Negro slaves in the whole Union, was ratified. A month after this law went into effect on December 1, 1864, a group of Baltimore liberals founded "The Baltimore Association for the Education

<sup>22</sup> *Isr*, vol. XI, no. 44 (April 28, 1865), p. 348.

<sup>23</sup> Bertram W. Korn, "Isaac Mayer Wise on the Civil War," *Hebrew Union College Annual*, vol. XX, p. 640.

<sup>24</sup> Rabbi Szold, "Passover Sermon," *The Jewish Chronicle*, April 6, 1877.

<sup>25</sup> *Isr*, vol. X, no. 229 (Jan. 15, 1864).

<sup>26</sup> *Jewish Messenger*, vol. XIV, no. 9 (Sept. 4, 1863), p. 69; *Baltimore Sunday Herald*, May 24, 1896; B. W. Korn, *op. cit.*, p. 109, notes 69, 70.

<sup>27</sup> Marvin Lowenthal, *Henrietta Szold* (New York, 1942), p. 1.

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and Moral Improvement of the Colored People.” The “derisive nickname” story arose because Szold joined this Society. The fact, however, is that he joined it only about a year after it was established, on December 1, 1864. When the Rabbi joined the Society on November 6, 1865, it had already established sixteen schools for Negroes in Baltimore. Marvin Lowenthal, who speaks about the “derisive nickname,” obviously did not check on this bit of chronology as he missed one more point. This group of Baltimore liberals was so proud of their activities on behalf of the Negroes, that “they wanted the Association to be known as Timbaktu.”<sup>28</sup> Far from being a term of derision, it was to its members a term of honor and distinction.

The middle of the road group was the careful group. The name of Rabbi Szold’s congregation, Oheb Shalom, befits their philosophy and their activities.

The Jewish 48’ers, who saw in the Civil War issues the same issues that they had fought for in Europe, found their champion and spokesman in the Reform Rabbi, David Einhorn. In his inaugural sermon, delivered on September 29, 1855, he clearly stated his religious and social philosophy. He stated that

The old world is fast crumbling and a new world seeks to rise from its ruins . . . The religious idea cannot persist in one and the same form.

Turning from Jewish problems to general, he discussed

a humanity, the members of which have one and the same right, possess the same claim to happiness and a state of blessedness which will be realized already here on earth. All men possess one and the same natural and spiritual origin, the same native nobility, and are, therefore, entitled to the same rights, the same laws . . . To achieve this goal we need only indomitable courage in our battle against the forces of darkness.<sup>29</sup>

In his monthly *Sinai*, which he established only about six months after his arrival in Baltimore,<sup>30</sup> Einhorn fought against all defenders

<sup>28</sup> Alexandra Lee Levin, *The Szolds of Lombard Street* (Philadelphia, 1960), p. 49.

<sup>29</sup> Dr. David Einhorn, *Inaugural Sermon, 1855* (translated from the German by Dr. Abraham B. Arnold), also in Kaufmann Kohler, ed., *David Einhorn Memorial Volume* (New York, 1911), pp. 31-44.

<sup>30</sup> The first issue of *Sinai: Ein Organ für Erkenntniss und Veredlung des Judenthums* whose motto was *את אחי אנוכי מבקש* [“I seek my brethren.”], appeared in February, 1856.

of slavery, especially those among the clergy, Jewish as well as non-Jewish. In reporting a meeting of Presbyterians in Cleveland who were told that in the South both clergy as well as lay leaders have slaves "on principle," since "slavery is a divine ordinance, sanctified by the Bible," Einhorn comments that the southern church defends slavery because the church

unfortunately is not a free agent, is not independent of the state, it follows the politics of the ruling party . . . the church leaders read the Bible according to its letter, not according to its spirit.<sup>31</sup>

Einhorn was very careful to make a distinction between church and religion. The "church and the state have nothing in common," not so religion, which is "to permeate every phase of life." Since church and state are separate and have "nothing in common," Einhorn even criticized President Lincoln when the latter, in an order to the army, used the expression "Christian people."<sup>32</sup>

In *Sinai*, he published four articles<sup>33</sup> against Rabbi Morris Jacob Raphall, who preached in defense of slavery.<sup>34</sup> In these articles he castigated Raphall, called him all kinds of names, and Einhorn was, indeed, a master of name calling and bitter sarcasm. At the same time, however, Einhorn carefully examined and discussed the passages quoted by Raphall. His conclusion was that the "learned Rabbi" missed the whole point of the Mosaic attitude to slavery. Indeed, he regards Raphall's talk as both "shameful and senseless."<sup>35</sup> In bitterness, and perhaps more in pain, Einhorn wrote:

A Jew, a sapling of that stem, which praises the Lord daily for the deliverance out of Egyptian yoke of slavery, undertook to defend slavery . . . "Alas for ears that hear such things."<sup>35a</sup> We are obliged to reject such words because they are a "A profanation of God's name."<sup>35b</sup>

Einhorn's articles were, naturally, discussed approvingly in the abolitionist daily, *Der Wecker*.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>31</sup> *Sinai*, vol. II, no. 6 (July 1, 1857), p. 599.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. VIII, no. 11 (Dec., 1862), p. 313.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. VI, no. 1 (Feb., 1861), pp. 2-20; vol. VI, no. 2 (March, 1861), pp. 45-50, 60-61; vol. VI, no. 3 (April, 1861), pp. 99-100.

<sup>34</sup> The discourse on the *Bible View on Slavery* was delivered at the B'nai Jeshurun Synagogue in New York on the occasion of the National Fast Day, Jan. 4, 1861.

<sup>35</sup> *Sinai*, vol. VI, no. 2 (March, 1861), p. 45.

<sup>35a</sup> The Hebrew original reads: **אוי לאנשים שכך שומעו**.

<sup>35b</sup> The Hebrew original reads: **חלול השם**.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. VI, no. 1 (Feb. 1, 1861), pp. 9, 22.

<sup>37</sup> *Der Wecker*, Feb. 6 and 7, 1861.

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Time and again Einhorn returned to the problem of slavery—"the cancer of the union."<sup>38</sup>

Does the Negro have less ability to think, to feel, to will? Does he have less of a desire to happiness? Was he born not to be entitled to all these? Does the Negro have an iron neck that does not feel a burdensome yoke? Does he have a stiffer heart that does not bleed when . . . his beloved child is torn away from him?<sup>39</sup>

To those who feared that Negro emancipation might prove dangerous for the progress of humanity, Einhorn's answer was: "The end never justifies the means. Slavery is immoral and must be abolished."<sup>40</sup> While he was certain that slavery was to be fought against by everybody, he demanded and expected that Jews would be more sensitive to this issue than anyone else. He was shocked by the fact that "there are even immigrant Jews, who are so blinded as to be enthusiastic for secession and slavery."<sup>41</sup>

Einhorn sounds like a man of our era when he bewailed the state of religion in his days:

There are enough churches, synagogues and temples, but there is very little religion, little morality . . . here [among the Jews]. Everything is empty, everything is glimmer . . . Here, too, rules the golden eagle rather than the cherubim . . . Here, too, all feelings of the heart and dreams are concentrated only on acquiring [things] . . . There is only one thought: to make as much as possible.<sup>42</sup>

Einhorn took his religion and, what to him was synonymous with it, ethical conduct, very seriously. He demanded much of himself and expected others too, and especially rabbis, to live a moral life. Since to him it was immoral to defend slavery or to besmirch the name of the Jew, he denounced those rabbis whom he found wanting in this respect. To a report published in *Sinai* that Rabbi Simon Tuska of Memphis had compared the Jews, who had come there to do business with the military, with "greedy birds of prey," Einhorn added a long note reproaching Tuska:

A Jew in a responsible position, and especially a Rabbi, dares not be against the Union and make statements detrimental to the good name of the Jewish people.

<sup>38</sup> *Sinai*, vol. I, no. 9 (Oct., 1856), p. 259.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. VII, no. 7 (Aug., 1862), p. 187.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. II, no. 11 (Dec., 1857), p. 357.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. VI, no. 3 (April, 1861), p. 95.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. VII, no. 1 (Feb., 1861), p. 30.

He expressed the hope that people would remember those Jews who stood by the republic in the hour of its "gravest danger" and those who by their deeds proved to be "detractors of their own stem."<sup>43</sup> A long and bitter correspondence ensued. Einhorn refused to accept ambiguous denials and was relentless in his denunciations.<sup>44</sup>

The word of a rabbi carried weight with both the pro-slavery as well as the anti-slavery elements. Rabbi Raphall's defense of slavery was widely distributed in the South.<sup>45</sup> One of Einhorn's

<sup>45</sup> B. W. Korn, *op cit.*, p. 250, notes 20-25.

patriotic sermons was published and the profits from its sale went to the Sanitary Commission.<sup>46</sup>

It is quite obvious that two such men as Einhorn and Szold could not get along. The rift between them, and it was a very bitter rift, began immediately after Rabbi Szold had delivered his inaugural sermon. Einhorn savagely attacked Szold<sup>47</sup> and the latter in turn "demasked" Einhorn in an eighteen-page small print brochure.<sup>48</sup> There was no limit to the invectives hurled by each one against the other. Wise, of course, came to Szold's defense.<sup>49</sup> Before long the two respective congregations became involved. The Oheb Shalom Congregation went so far as to call a meeting of its members to protest against "the preacher of a sect called the Har Sinai Verein." Among other things, they decided that

for the protection of our children's religious morale [they] will not admit in [their] homes . . . the keeping or reading of the so-called *Sinai*.<sup>50</sup>

Perhaps the difference between the two Rabbis, and in a large sense between the two congregations, whose spokesmen they were, can be seen from the following two episodes. In connection with discriminations against American Jews in Switzerland, a meeting of Jewish representatives from four states was held in Baltimore,

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. VII, no. 7 (Aug., 1862), p. 199.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. VII, no. 7 (Aug., 1862), pp. 199-200; vol. VII, no. 8 (Sept., 1862), p. 227; vol. VII, no. 9 (Oct., 1862), p. 257; vol. VII, no. 10 (Nov., 1862), p. 284.

<sup>46</sup> Max J. Kohler, "The Jews and the American Anti-Slavery Movement," *Publication of the American Jewish Historical Society*, vol. V (1897), p. 151.

<sup>47</sup> "Das Schicksal der Oheb Shalom Gemeinde," *Sinai*, vol. IV, no. 11 (Dec., 1859), pp. 321-339.

<sup>48</sup> Dr. Benjamin Szold, *Der Enthüllte Einhorn* (Baltimore, 1859). On the front page there is a quotation from *Proverbs* XII:19: "The lip of truth shall be established forever, but a lying tongue is but for moment."

<sup>49</sup> *Isr.*, vol. VI (Dec. 9, 1859), p. 182.

<sup>50</sup> B. Szold, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

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on October 28, 1857. At this meeting, it was decided to send a delegation to President Buchanan to petition him in this matter. In spite of the President's assurances: "Gentlemen, I have given you my word and I will do it,"<sup>51</sup> nothing was done. There were more petitions, delegations, and memoranda, but all to no avail. Einhorn grew impatient with empty promises. When the Government refused to intervene in the Mortara case, he realized that Buchanan could not be trusted. He, indeed, realized that the President was consistent. How could he, possibly, ask the Swiss Government to interfere with the laws of the cantons when he stood squarely for states' rights in his own country? How can one demand equality for American Jews in Switzerland and be for discrimination against Negroes in America?<sup>51a</sup> Einhorn used his biting sarcasm even in attacking the President of the country. His moral indignation was aroused when the Chief Executive went back on his promises. For Einhorn, a man's social position was of little consequence.

In the second episode, we again meet Buchanan. The second personage, however, was Rabbi Szold. It took place a few years later. Buchanan was no longer President and Rabbi Szold met him at a summer resort. He related the meeting to his wife: "Today I saw and talked to ex-president James Buchanan . . . Imagine Sofie! *He* offered *me* his hand . . . I looked searchingly into his face and was enchanted by his thinker's brow, his diplomatic nose, and his childlike mouth."<sup>52</sup> There is in this episode not only a difference between two characters, on the one hand a fiery abolitionist, and on the other, a real **אוהב שלום** [lover of peace]. There is a difference in their respective *Weltanschauungen*, which, naturally, also determined their approaches to the Civil War and the related problems.

Unlike Leeser, who anticipated the Haskalah slogan "Be a man in the world and a Jew at home."<sup>53</sup> by saying: "In the synagogue we want Jews, in public matters only Americans,"<sup>54</sup> Einhorn made no such division. He insisted that Jews, indeed, because they are

<sup>51</sup> *Isr*, Nov. 13, 1857.

<sup>51a</sup> *Sinai*, vol. III, no. 4 (May, 1859), p. 124; vol. III, no. 12 (Jan., 1859), pp. 1147-1151.

<sup>52</sup> A. L. Levin, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

<sup>53</sup> This slogan **ויהודי באוהלך** **אדם בצאתך** היה was introduced by the Hebrew poet Judah Leib Gordon in his poem "הקיצה עמי" ["Awake, my people"], in 1863 (*J. L. Gordon Writings* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv, 1950), p. 17.

<sup>54</sup> *Occ*, vol. VII, no. 11 (Feb., 1855), p. 558.

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Jews, are to be active in civic affairs. Civic affairs are to be their concern. In speaking of the War, he warned the Jews:

You, Israelites, stand more to lose . . . much, infinitely more than gold and silver. Do you comprehend your duties as members of the American people?<sup>55</sup>

Indeed, it is the duty of Jews as Jews to fight bigotry, for "Jews for thousands of years consciously or unconsciously were fighting for freedom of conscience."<sup>56</sup> The struggle of the Jews is not, however, a struggle for the improvement of their own lot. "Israel, the people of peoples, is called upon to fight against the whole world for the whole world."<sup>57</sup> Einhorn is convinced that the Jews and the United States have similar destinies. The Jews are to fight "for the whole world" and so does the United States:

America of the future will not rest on slave chains or belittling its adopted citizens. It will also give up its disinterestedness in the fate of other peoples of the world.<sup>58</sup>

Baltimore Jews, the right and the center, began to be concerned lest the Rabbi's pronouncements endanger their position. Baltimore was a city on a powder keg, and people whom Einhorn sarcastically characterized as "educated in politics and theology" called a protest meeting against Einhorn in a desire to disassociate the Jewish community from him.<sup>59</sup> Let us bear in mind that all this took place only about thirty years after Jews had been granted equality in Maryland in 1826. Jews feared that their loyalty was still being questioned. It was only a few years after Einhorn's predecessor in the Har Sinai Verein, the reader, Max Soutro, suggested to the Board, and the latter approved the suggestion, to do away with the commemoration of the Ninth of Ab because

Our Christian brothers with whom we form one social body may think that since we mourn and wail for the destruction of Jerusalem, that we yearn to return there and that our patriotism for our present abode is not a genuine, a real, an ardent one.

And then, he added,

should our congregation become bigger and our principles more generally known, so that we would not have to be

<sup>55</sup> *Sinai*, vol. V, no. 1 (Feb., 1861), p. 23.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. I, no. 11 (Dec., 1856), p. 355.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. I, no. 12 (Jan., 1861), p. 367.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. VII, no. 7 (Aug., 1862), p. 185.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. VI, no. 1 (Feb., 1861), p. 32.



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afraid any longer of misconceptions, we could then celebrate the 9th of Ab in a suitable fashion.<sup>60</sup>

Einhorn was accused of lacking a sense of responsibility for the well-being of the entire community. To this, Einhorn replied that he is aware that "for the crime of one of us, the entire community is held responsible," and it is, indeed, his concern for the community that obliges him to call upon the Jews to "behave decently, to fight against prejudices."<sup>61</sup> It was his sense of mutual responsibility that made him later, in his *War With Amalek*, call upon American Jews to fight against Jewish smugglers to

make war also upon the Amalek in our own midst . . . they bring shame and disgrace upon us and our religious faith.<sup>62</sup>

Prior to these events, he had fought the mob rule of the Know Nothings when they were riding high in the state. Baltimore was in virtual control of the "Red Necks," "Rip Rads," "Black Snakes," and similar clubs of the Know Nothing party. It was the period when "roughnecks felt free to disturb balls, picnics, and other gatherings and break them up."<sup>63</sup> It was the period when in the election campaign of 1856 there were "scores of citizens insulted and severely beaten. Hundreds were wounded, shot and killed."<sup>64</sup> "A foreigner," according to the memoirs of a contemporary Jew, "could only cast his vote by running through a gauntlet of pistols, knives, and clubs."<sup>65</sup> Einhorn was convinced that

once we start to evaluate people by the country of birth, next will come an evaluation by religion and in this case surely, the Jews, the so-called crucifiers of the crucified, will be in great danger.<sup>66</sup>

He called again and again to fight against the Know Nothings for the defeat of the Know Nothing will be the victory of the fundamental Mosaic law of equality of the stranger with the native before the law.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>60</sup> HSC, Minute Book, Aug. 3, 1845.

<sup>61</sup> David Einhorn, "Sermon," April 30, 1863 in Kaufmann Kohler, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 120.

<sup>62</sup> Quoted in B. W. Korn, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

<sup>63</sup> Harry Friedenwald, *Letters and Addresses by Aaron Friedenwald* (Baltimore, 1906), pp. 29-30.

<sup>64</sup> Matthew Page Andrews, *Tercentenary History of Maryland*, 4 vols. (Chicago-Baltimore, 1905), vol. I, p. 781.

<sup>65</sup> Simeon Hecht, *Memoirs*, p. 30 [original manuscript is owned by the descendants of Simeon Hecht and covers the period 1824-1872. Photostats of the manuscript are located at the JHSM].

<sup>66</sup> *Sinai*, vol. I, no. 11 (Dec., 1856), p. 354.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. I, no. 11 (Dec., 1856), p. 355.



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The situation did not improve much with the defeat of the Know Nothings and the rise of the Republican Party. Baltimore, known as "mobtown," was even more in a turmoil than the rest of the country. There was fear of the new party, of the "Black Republicans." Again, in face of opposition and danger, Einhorn makes clear his position:

We are aware of the concern of those who fear that this party may lead to the dissolution of the Union. We don't share these views, if only because if the Union is based on immoral foundations, it is not fit to survive, nor is it worth surviving.<sup>68</sup>

This was said at a time when, according to Hyman Spitz, a contemporary who lived in Baltimore during the Civil War:

The Union people had to keep still and had to pretend to be Rebels. In order to be treated right in school our [the word "our" no doubt, signifies either Jewish" or "Foreign"] children were obliged to carry Rebel emblems.<sup>69</sup>

The political situation in the country generally, and in Maryland especially, continued from bad to worse. In the 1860 Presidential elections Lincoln, in Maryland, received only 2,294 votes out of a total of 92,502. The secessionist movement was very strong. The General Assembly of 1860 adopted a resolution that

should the hour ever arrive when the Union must be dissolved, Maryland will cast her lot with her sister states of the South and abide their fortune to the fullest extent.<sup>70</sup>

Even as late as September 11, 1861, months after the start of the war, the Secretary of War, Simon Cameron deemed it necessary to arrest all Maryland legislators to prevent the passage of an ordinance of secession.

Maryland remained with the North, not as a contemporary writer would have it, because "its population became mixed, the ancient stock having absorbed much bad blood,"<sup>71</sup> but because the Federal Army kept close watch over the state because of its tremendous geographic importance. Washington, D.C. was situated between

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. I, no. 9 (Oct., 1856), p. 259.

<sup>69</sup> Hyman Philip Spitz, "An Autobiography," in Jacob Rader Marcus, *Memoirs of American Jews, 1775-1865*, 3 vols. (Philadelphia, 1955), vol. I, p. 300.

<sup>70</sup> M. P. Andrews, *op. cit.*, p. 818.

<sup>71</sup> W. Jefferson Buchanan, *Maryland's Crisis, A Political Outline* (Richmond, 1863), p. 15.

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secessionist Virginia and Maryland, and in addition, three railroads, by which loyal troops could reach the capital, converged in Baltimore. The situation in the city deteriorated rapidly. A great many citizens were arrested,—among them even the Mayor and the Marshal. On April 19th, Federal troops, on their way to Washington, were attacked. Among the six [!] arrested for “assaulting” was Joseph Friedenwald, a member of a leading Jewish family in the city.<sup>72</sup> A Jewish eye-witness relates that

one soldier was . . . beaten to death by the mob and left on the sidewalk to perish. After the commotion ceased, mother went over to the store and ordered the clerks to bring the body in. This was done. The mob threatened to sack the establishment, and there was no relief until the police came . . . everyone expected . . . that the State of Maryland would secede.<sup>73</sup>

On the following day the shops of both abolitionist publications, *Der Wecker* and *Sinai*, were demolished. Einhorn's life was in danger. According to his version, he was “requested” by his congregation to leave town.<sup>74</sup> The congregation, however, asked him to make a correction in his report of the events. They claimed that “there had been no meeting of the congregation,” that his “warm friends knew quite well that [his] sense of duty would not permit [him] to leave [his] congregation at such a time,” and that only their “concern about [his] safety made some of them make a remark that “the congregation in all probability would not mind” if he left town.<sup>75</sup> Be it as it may, Einhorn, with his family, fled to Philadelphia. Before long he began to publish his *Sinai* in that city and in the first issue gave a full account of the events which led to his flight from Baltimore.<sup>76</sup> The magazine continued in Philadelphia only for another year and a half. In the last issue Einhorn stated that “Sinai dies in the battle against slavery.”<sup>76a</sup>

Many members of Har Sinai were in sympathy with their Rabbi's views, even if much more cautious than he was. Three weeks after his escape, on May 12th, he was asked by the congregation to return with the understanding that “for the sake of your own

<sup>72</sup> “Pratt Street Riots,” *The Sun* (April 16, 1861), Magazine Section, p. 10.

<sup>73</sup> S. Hecht, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

<sup>74</sup> *Sinai*, vol. VI (June, 1861), p. 139.

<sup>75</sup> S. G. Putzel, Secretary of HSC, letter to Rabbi Einhorn, Baltimore, June 11, 1861.

<sup>76</sup> *Sinai*, vol. VI, no. 6 (June, 1861), pp. 135-142.

<sup>76a</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. VII, no. 10 (Dec., 1862), p. 319.

safety as well as out of consideration for the members of your congregation," they were asking him "not to comment from the pulpit on the excitable issues of the time." They assured him that this request is dictated only by the prevailing "sad circumstances." As was to be expected, he rejected the invitation and rejected it again when a delegation from the Har Sinai Congregation waited on him on May 29th.<sup>77</sup> Fear was the characteristic of Baltimore. Even as late as 1864, Wise reported on a visit to the city:

In politics, of course, one must penetrate into the secrecy of private circles to learn the opinions held by various persons.<sup>78</sup>

That Einhorn was bitter, is quite understandable. In his correspondence with one of his staunch supporters, Reuben Oppenheimer,<sup>79</sup> he points an accusing finger against his opponents at his own temple:

there is nothing so loathsome, indeed, than this riffraff of bacon reformers. The light of the Rabbis becomes a destroying torch in the hands of such people. Luther was right when he said in his own manner of speaking: "certain people are like a drunken horseman. If you help him mount the horse from one side, he will fall down from the other side."<sup>80</sup>

He is mindful that along "with much hatred [he] found much love in Baltimore." He is happy that many Baltimore friends, Jews and non-Jews, visit him in Philadelphia.<sup>80a</sup> On the whole, however, he was bitter about his experiences in Baltimore:

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. VI, no. 6 (June, 1861), p. 160.

<sup>78</sup> *Isr.*, vol. X, no. 29 (Jan. 15, 1864).

<sup>79</sup> Oppenheimer was one of Rabbi Einhorn's closest friends. Like his Rabbi, he, too, was for open discussion of political as well as religious questions. He published a protest against a resolution of The Richmond Young Men Literary Association that "political and religious questions of any kind are out of order." *Sinai*, vol. I, no. 3 (April, 1856), p. 69. The Einhorn-Oppenheimer correspondence is located at the American Jewish Historical Society.

<sup>80</sup> Einhorn, letter to Oppenheimer, Philadelphia, Aug. 17, 1861.

<sup>80a</sup> Among the visitors was the liberal educator Friedrich Knapp, the principal of the Deutsche und Englische Schule. This school was attended by wealthy Jewish boys. Hebrew was taught in different classes. *Sinai*, vol. V, no. 10 (Nov., 1860), p. 322b.

A very interesting description of the Jewish students in this school, about the relationship between "the chosen and the *goyim*," about the Jewish boys "with Hittite noses, curly hair" is given by H. L. Mencken, who attended the school in the 80's. Mencken, who learned Hebrew there, relates how difficult it was to teach "these reluctant Yido-Americans the principles of their sacred tongue." H. L. Mencken, *Happy Days* (New York, 1955), pp. 23-25.

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It would be bad if I found here [in Philadelphia] Jews who are as bad as those in Baltimore . . . Baltimore made me, practically, unsociable . . . A week from next Sabbath I am giving my first sermon in Keneseth Israel . . . [where he, in the meantime, had been elected Rabbi]. I hope that the interval of three months will have been sufficient to cleanse myself from the dirt which the Baltimore orthodox and reformers have thrown on me.

In all his bitterness he comforts his friends and urges them to believe that “the next battles will leave a real blood bath, but slavery will be drowned in that bath.” The most intimate personal matters are related by him to the war. Announcing the birth of his son, Einhorn says: “The boy started out by being anxious to take a look at America at the very moment they fought at Bull Run.” The letter was written at the High Holiday season, and Einhorn declared: “Now comes the Holy Season and I hope that the Southern rebels will be sent to perdition, Amen!”<sup>81</sup>

Einhorn’s extreme animosity toward the secessionists is, perhaps, best seen in his eulogy of President Lincoln. He regarded the martyred President as “the Messiah of his people,” “the high priest of freedom.” He did, however, find “one fault” with Lincoln, “He was too mild to the Rebels.”<sup>82</sup>

To return to Baltimore. With the beginning of the War, business partnerships and even families, were broken up on account of attitudes to the war issues. A Jewish merchant relates in passing, as if it were an everyday occurrence: “The war broke out, one partner was a Rebel, the other a Union man; they broke up the business.”<sup>83</sup> The important Friedenwald family, members of Rabbi Illoway’s congregation, were “from grandfather down, all . . . Democrats and during the war strong secessionists.” The exception was Dr. Aaron Friedenwald, who at first felt that “Lincoln’s election was a great catastrophe. Later he changed his politics . . . he had many a quarrel with his family about politics.”<sup>84</sup>

Dr. Aaron Friedenwald was in Europe between 1860-1862. His lively correspondence with different members of the family gives a clear picture of what was going on in the Friedenwald family

<sup>81</sup> Letter of Einhorn to Oppenheimer, Aug. 17, 1861. The phrase he uses is “*schlagen* כפירות.”

<sup>82</sup> David Einhorn, “Eulogy on the Death of Lincoln,” in Kaufmann Kohler, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 137.

<sup>83</sup> H. P. Spitz, in J. R. Marcus, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 299.

<sup>84</sup> Bertha Friedenwald [wife of Dr. Aaron Friedenwald], *Memoirs*, p. 8. [The original manuscript covering the period 1862-1895 is located at the JHSM.]

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and, no doubt, in many a Jewish family in Baltimore, and, as he says, "what a Marylander so far from home thinks."<sup>85</sup> The letters from Baltimore are filled with enthusiasm for the Southern cause.

The Confederate army . . . most courageous, educated, gentlemanly band ever assembled . . . their devotion to the cause knows no limits . . . Union Shriekers . . . my sympathies are for the South and I pray for their success . . .<sup>86</sup>

From the correspondence, we learn how anxious the family was to convert Dr. Aaron to the "cause," and how they failed in this. In February, 1861, he writes to brother Moses about, "The ruthless domineering of a debauched black Republicanism" and "the hot-headed, impulsive, fanatic, unreliable, irresponsible 'cotton politicians' . . ." He has as yet no objection to secession as such. He regards South Carolina's act of seceding from the Union merely as an insult to the South. His only concern is that South Carolina was

led by the ambitious design of being recognized as the leader in a movement in which they all [the Southern States] have a common interest.<sup>87</sup>

Brother Moses, naturally, overlooked the remarks about the "cotton politicians." He rejoiced over Aaron's uncomplimentary words about the "Black Republicans." He assumed that the latter, too, shares his secessionist sympathies. Dr. Aaron made it clear that he considers the Union as

a holy institution, against which no tongue can speak but in blasphemy, against which no hand can be directed but in sacrilege.<sup>88</sup>

Two months later he again assures his brother that "my feelings . . . are at variance with those you entertain." He is still, however, ". . . opposed to the Republican party . . . but I do not feel disposed to unite myself with everyone of its assailants."<sup>89</sup>

Two more months passed. By June, he became more explicit. He "cannot share your secessionist views . . . The Southerners have no more right to secede from the Union than they have to cut their

<sup>85</sup> Harry Friedenwald, *op. cit.*, p. 66. The quotations (85-102) are based on this volume and are supplemented by excerpts from the full text of the letters; Microfilms Library, Baltimore Hebrew College, roll 1.

<sup>86</sup> Harry Friedenwald, Microfilms.

<sup>87</sup> Harry Friedenwald, Microfilms, p. 57, Berlin, Feb., 1861.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58, Berlin, Feb. 26, 1861.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 60-61, Paris, April 30, 1861.

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throats . . ." Even now he assures the family that "I am as much opposed to black Republicanism as ever, but I think our duty is to the Union and our own state."<sup>90</sup> A few weeks later, he feels obliged to explain to his father that "it is rather fortunate for me that I do not share your secessionist views."<sup>91</sup> When the news reached him about the defeat of the Federal troops at Bull Run, he informed the family that when he "read the news [his] nervous system received a shock . . . [he] felt more like going home and enlisting than anything else."<sup>92</sup> By November, he became "a stronger Unionist than ever."<sup>93</sup>

In the letters to him, the family stressed the unrest in Baltimore, the "disgrace" of having Federal troops stationed in the city. Dr. Aaron [Friedenwald] laughs it off as really unimportant. He reminds them of the days of the Know Nothings:

As for it being a galling sight for Baltimoreans to see Northern troops infesting their city, permit me to say that our townsmen can stand a great deal. Any body of men who could so long tolerate the anarchy of "Knownothingism" can also have a little forbearance towards Northern troops. I do not pity them in the least.<sup>93a</sup>

He was, naturally, bitter about one brother, Ike, who did not only theorize on the rights of the South to secede, but joined the Confederate Army. He wishes him ". . . nothing else but a small shot in you know where."<sup>94</sup>

Dr. Friedenwald compared conditions in Europe with those in the United States. Although his family tried to convince him that they "are with the South and . . . pray for their success,"<sup>95</sup> Dr. Aaron endeavored to impress them with the importance of the Union. From Paris, he wrote to his father that

if a few more had had an opportunity of comparing the political institutions of Europe with those of our hitherto happy country, there would be considerably less eagerness evinced for a dissolution of the Union.<sup>96</sup>

Dr. Friedenwald had quite an understanding for mass psychology. He was not at all impressed by the mass appeal of the secessionists.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 62-64, Paris, June 2, 1861.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 73, Paris, July 20, 1861.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75, Prague, Aug. 30, 1861.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80, Vienna, Nov. 14, 1861.

<sup>93a</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 66, Paris, June 2, 1861.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, date and place illegible, April or May, 1861.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61, Paris, June 2, 1861.

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When we hear of the great enthusiasm . . . in favor of secession . . . are we really to believe that the Union sentiment, which existed but a few months ago, has been completely metamorphosed? I . . . am not of this opinion. An excited public opinion can easily force people to abandon principles which they entertained before. "Those which are not with us are against us" is a powerful argument . . . We Baltimoreans have had sufficient evidence of the force of public opinion. I recollect very well when it was nothing less than dangerous to say the least thing about Know-Nothingism, which is now, thank God, completely defunct. As it was then held that everything anti-"Know-Nothing" was un-American, so now everything Union is confounded with Abolitionism.<sup>97</sup>

The fact that the Southerners were enthusiastic in their fighting the Federal troops did not impress him at all. "This is not the first time that passion has proven stronger than good sense."<sup>98</sup>

Psychologist that he was, Dr. Friedenwald was no prophet. He erred on one major problem. He had

no doubt that, even in case of the triumph of the North—and everything is in favor of this—a final separation will take place<sup>99</sup> . . . a reconciliation can never again take place now between the two sections of the country.<sup>100</sup>

A long letter to his father sheds an interesting light on the American Foreign Service abroad. He describes in detail his conversation with the American Consul in Paris, who was to stamp his passport, so that he could return to the United States. The Consul insisted that he swear allegiance to the Union. Friedenwald, Marylander that he was, was indignant and in turn insisted that he be told whether such an oath is demanded of everybody or only of Marylanders, since they were under suspicion of sympathy with the South. It was only when the Consul assured him that

our orders are positively to require an oath of allegiance to the Constitution and Government of the United States previous to granting any claim on the service of this Consulate, that he swore allegiance "without the least hesitation."<sup>101</sup>

Aaron Friedenwald returned to Baltimore in July, 1862, and for the first time became pessimistic:

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64, Paris, June 2, 1861.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81, Vienna, December 5, 1861.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65, Paris, June 2, 1861.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78, Vienna, Oct. 22, 1861.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 73, Paris, July 20, 1861.



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It would be more expedient to give up to the Southerners than to slaughter so many thousands uselessly.<sup>102</sup>

In relating some further events in Dr. Friedenwald's life in connection with Civil War, we are really relating the lives of many.

About a year after his return, Dr. Friedenwald was arrested and charged with running the blockade. From his wife's memoirs, we learn about Dr. Friedenwald as well as about conditions generally.

He [Dr. Aaron] was put in a nasty place in what used to be a Negro jail . . . The real reason for his arrest was that one of his brothers was in the Southern army . . . The people to whom papa owed his arrest were some friends who made a lot of money that way, by informing on innocent people and then going to them and telling them: "If you can pay \$50 or more we know someone who can help you out of this." Papa often related how he answered the Provost Marshall, who tried his utmost to get papa to say something which would be brought up against brother Ike, but he answered him without fear; "Do you want me to testify against my brother? Such things are not done."<sup>103</sup>

A few months after his arrest Dr. Friedenwald was drafted into the army. As was customary in those days, he found a substitute. From a diary of a contemporary Jew we learn that

Lincoln's call for three hundred thousand men to impress into the army . . . created a great deal of fraud. The man of means for 500 to a 1,000 dollars would buy a substitute in his place, if his name was drafted from the lottery wheel. The one with no means had to serve . . . A number of substitutes took the money and fled, and notably the Government Detectives, who were organized just to prevent the same . . . it, moreover, created many ostentatious and assuming people, who were called . . . "Shoddyites," from the name of a cloth called "shoddy," which was then a new creation—being made from old woolen rags ground up and seemingly made into new cloth.<sup>104</sup>

Dr. Friedenwald's substitute turned out to be a "bounty jumper" and he was again drafted. In 1864 and 1865, Dr. Friedenwald and Dr. Abraham B. Arnold, a close friend of Rabbi Einhorn, a professor of medicine at the University of Maryland, and a leading Jewish communal worker,<sup>105</sup> attended

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 86, Baltimore, Sept. 9, 1862.

<sup>103</sup> Bertha Friedenwald, *Memoirs*.

<sup>104</sup> S. Hecht, *Memoirs*.

<sup>105</sup> *Cyc*, Baltimore, 1879, p. 60.



to the wounds of the soldiers, both Union and Confederate. They worked there day and night and we [women] were all busy making lint bandages . . . .<sup>106</sup>

There is an interesting footnote to the chapter of the Friedenwalds and the Civil War. In a letter to his son Jonas, dated Baltimore, October 22, 1929, Dr. Harry Friedenwald, the son of Dr. Aaron, relates his answer to an appeal "to protect our neighborhood from Negro invasion." His answer was:

We Jews have had such a long experience in segregation and we found it so intolerable, that I would never actively promote such a movement. I consider any such restrictions based upon color, race or religion, as the manifestations of such injustice that I could not take a hand in it. This country cannot endure permanently a caste system with a caste of untouchables.

When he was told that "nothing was going to rouse the animosity against the Jews more than this attitude on the part of Jews aligning themselves with the Negroes," Dr. Harry replied: "Frankly, I am glad to know that there are other Jews who take the same attitude."<sup>106a</sup>

Informing became a most profitable business. Frame-ups were the order of the day. A leading Jewish communal worker, a pioneer in the manufacture of ready-made clothes, Moses Wiesenfeld, was accused of doing business with the South. In this case, as in that of Dr. Friedenwald, the accuser was the same Provost Marshal, William S. Fish, who subsequently was convicted of various crimes and sent to the penitentiary in Albany.<sup>106b</sup> Wiesenfeld's defense was that the confederate buttons found in his factory were planted there by "disgruntled workers."<sup>107</sup> The manufacturer, Moses Wiesenfeld, was convicted and spent two years in jail in Albany, New York. There is circumstantial evidence that casts some doubts about his guilt. Regardless, however, of the guilt or innocence of the men involved, the evidence is rather interesting: (1) from the records of the Union party in Baltimore, we know that Wiesenfeld was an active member of its committee;<sup>108</sup> (2) two letters, in con-

<sup>106</sup> Bertha Friedenwald, *op. cit.*

<sup>106a</sup> Friedenwald, Microfilms, roll 19.

<sup>106b</sup> M. P. Andrews, *op. cit.*, p. 873.

<sup>107</sup> Mrs. Joseph Wiesenfeld, Memorandum (American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati), March 7, 1941.

<sup>108</sup> *Proceedings and Speeches at a Public Meeting of the Friends of the Union* (Baltimore, 1861), p. 1.

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nection with this case, are quite enlightening. One letter is from a friend of the family in Springfield, Illinois, who, on learning of the arrest, wrote to the family:

I offer my humble services. In case I can do anything in his behalf with our worthy President, whom I have a slight acquaintance with . . . Treat this confidentially.<sup>109</sup>

The second letter is from the fiery Abolitionist, a war hero, Provost Marshal of Baltimore, Leopold Blumenberg, to the United States Marshal in New York. He describes Wiesenfeld as

a merchant on the highest standing, . . . a man of the strictest integrity, [and asks that he] treat the prisoner as kindly as possible . . . Such kindness will not only oblige your humble servant, who will hold himself ready to reciprocate at any time, but . . . you will secure the kindest feelings of the whole community.<sup>110</sup>

Upon his release from prison, Wiesenfeld was assisted by the strong pro-unionist, Johns Hopkins, who re-established him in business.<sup>111</sup> It is impossible to assume that, in the prevailing climate of the times, people of the calibre of a Hopkins and a Blumenberg would help one who was doing business with the enemy. We find in this one episode much interesting historical material. Here is one Jew serving on the committee of the Union Party in Baltimore; another who has an acquaintance with Lincoln and wishes to intercede with the President, on behalf of his friend; a third Jew, a General, a war hero, a Provost Marshal of Baltimore, interceding on his behalf, and a man of the standing of a Johns Hopkins involved in re-establishing in business a former Jewish "convict."

All available sources indicate that the War and its issues caused dissensions in many families. The outstanding Jewish family in the city, and for that matter, one of the leading Jewish families in the country, was—the Cohens of Baltimore. This was a family of important bankers, industrialists, and professionals. While one of them, Mendes I. Cohen, belonged to the Peace Party, a camouflaged

<sup>109</sup> I. Hammerslaugh, letter to the Wiesenfeld Family, Springfield, Ill., Oct. 28, 1864, original at JHSM.

<sup>110</sup> Leopold Blumenberg, letter to R. Murray, Esq., U.S. Marshal, New York, Baltimore, Jan. 1865, copy at JHSM.

<sup>111</sup> Mrs. Joseph Wiesenfeld, Memorandum. Johns Hopkins was no stranger to the Jewish community. In 1869, he offered the Jewish Free Burial Society an acre of land as burial ground. The society declined the offer. It did not care to create a "potter field," Isidor Blum, *The Jews of Baltimore* (Baltimore-Washington, 1910), p. 19.

secessionist group, and was a delegate to the State Peace Convention,<sup>112</sup> another, Edward, went one step further and served in the Confederate army,<sup>113</sup> and a third, Joshua I., was a strong pro-unionist.<sup>113a</sup> The above mentioned Hyman Spitz relates what seemed to him to be a common event;

The son, who had charge of the business, left it and went South, taking the money with him, which he spent in helping the rebel cause.<sup>114</sup>

Most Jews were small merchants and peddlers and they were hard hit in the early period of the war.

The city was in a horrible condition, business was entirely stopped, there was no work for mechanics or laborers . . . Many enlisted to get the bounties to prevent their families from starving.<sup>115</sup>

There were, naturally, exceptions.

Mr. Rosenstock, provision dealer, has donated to Rabbi Illoway and Rabbi Szold 5,000 lbs. of the best flour to distribute among the city poor, without distinction of faith or politics.<sup>116</sup>

With the progress of the war, however, the situation changed considerably.

Fortunes were made quickly in these days . . . there were a great deal of speculators notably some of our leading coreligionists. Money . . . became plentiful. Some men arose from obscurity and became multimillionaires in a very short time . . . great opportunities to commit excessive frauds . . . It was a noted saying at the time, and according to my opinion, a very true one, that the war could have been ended in two years if it had not been for the Wall Street speculators . . . The pie was too full of plums to be eaten at one sitting. Among the speculators were some of our coreligionists.<sup>117</sup>

Some of the Baltimore Jews became big real estate men, bankers, railroad magnates, and manufacturers of ready-clothes, which grew

<sup>112</sup> *The Sun*, Sept. 7, 1861.

<sup>113a</sup> *The Sun*, Aug. 9, 1861.

<sup>113</sup> Emma Mordecai, "Diary," in J. R. Marcus, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 324.

<sup>114</sup> H. P. Spitz, in J. R. Marcus, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 300.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>116</sup> *The Sun*, Aug. 21, 1861.

<sup>117</sup> S. Hecht, *Memoirs*, pp. 41-42.

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tremendously as a result of Government orders for uniforms. The economic situation, indeed, improved so much that a local Jewish correspondent wrote:

The Jews on the whole, by their intelligence and their activity, have acquired some wealth . . . They are not sorry that they have left their Polish and German villages . . . The Poles are numerous here.<sup>118</sup>

The correspondent overlooked one small group which remained poor. Once the salaries of the clergy were cut,<sup>119</sup> they were not raised, even when conditions improved. A pathetic letter of a cantor to the congregation explains the economic conditions right after the war. In this letter, Cantor Leucht introduces the presently popular concept of an escalator clause. He makes an appeal to the Board of the congregation that

The return of peace has not been accompanied, as was anticipated, by a reduction in prices but on the contrary most articles of necessity are held at higher figures than ever.

He is, therefore, asking for a \$500 raise per annum with the understanding that

of course, the requested increase to be discontinued . . . at such a time as a return may be had to a settled and satisfactory condition of financial affairs.

The pathetic part of the letter comes at the very end. The man is in fear of losing his position on account of his request, hence:

While I hope that the congregation will act favorably upon my petition, I do not desire it to be understood as being unwilling . . . to abide by our present contract.<sup>120</sup>

The increase was not granted.

There were Baltimore Jews in the Northern as well as in the Southern Army. The figure of eleven Jews for the whole of Maryland, given by Simon Wolf,<sup>121</sup> should be revised. The outstanding Jew in terms of military accomplishments was, no doubt, Brigadier

<sup>118</sup> *AZJ*, 1865, p. 940.

<sup>119</sup> *Supra*, p. 70.

<sup>120</sup> *BHC*, Minute Book, p. 370, Aug. 10, 1865.

<sup>121</sup> Simon Wolf, *The American Jew as Patriot, Soldier and Citizen* (Philadelphia, 1895), pp. 199-200 and 412.

General Leopold Blumenberg, mentioned above.<sup>122</sup> An outspoken Abolitionist, he, too, as his Rabbi David Einhorn, was threatened by the secessionists. When Lincoln issued his call for volunteers, Blumenberg gave up his successful manufacturing business, volunteered on September 26, 1861, and devoted himself to the raising of the later important Fifth Regiment of Maryland. On January 28, 1862, he was appointed Major of the Fifth Regiment and a month later, February 8, 1862, he became Major in the militia of the State of Maryland. He gained great distinction in the bloody battle of the Civil War at Antietam when, under command of General George B. McClellan, he was in full command of Hampton. After his recovery from severe wounds at "Bloody Lane" Battle, on September 17, 1862, he was appointed on May 16, 1863, by President Lincoln as Provost Marshal of Baltimore, and later promoted by President Andrew Johnson to Brigadier General.<sup>123</sup> In 1864, he was very active in the Lincoln campaign. Lincoln thought very highly of Blumenberg. When the latter was in trouble, the President came to his defense and asked the Secretary of War "to give him [Blumenberg] a hearing." He reminded the Secretary that he is dealing with one who

has suffered for us and served us well, had the rope round his neck for being our friend, and raised troops, fought, and has been wounded.<sup>124</sup>

Hyman Spitz was a member of the "Society of The Minute Men" which was to protect the city when in danger.<sup>125</sup>

War or no war, life marched on. There are reports of meetings of various societies. Indeed, while the war was raging, the three literary associations of Baltimore, The Cliosophic, Mendelssohn and Independent Hebrew, issued on January 19, 1864, a call for the

establishment of a Hebrew National College for the purpose of educating the youth, both mentally and religiously.<sup>126</sup>

<sup>122</sup> *Supra*, p. 91.

<sup>123</sup> *History and Roster of Maryland Volunteers, War 1861-1865* (Baltimore, 1892), vol. I, pp. 179 and 181; *Baltimore, Seine Vergangenheit und Gegenwart* (Baltimore, 1887), pp. 303-304; *Der Wecker*, April 30, 1861, and Oct. 12, 1864; *Baltimore American*, July 28, 1864.

<sup>124</sup> President Lincoln to the Secretary of War, Washington, Jan. 25, 1865, in B. W. Korn, *op. cit.*, p. 239.

<sup>125</sup> H. P. Spitz, in J. R. Marcus, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 300.

<sup>126</sup> *Occ*, vol. XXI, no. 11 (Feb., 1864), pp. 523-524; vol. XXII, no. 3 (June, 1864), pp. 143-144; *Isr*, vol. X, no. 47 (May 20, 1864); Report by Leon Dalsheimer, Secretary of the Committee for Establishment of a Hebrew National College, Feb. 4, 1864.

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The benevolent societies continued with their collections and annual banquets.

The Jewish Benevolent Society celebrated with a banquet its ninth anniversary. There were present 230 members. Five thousand dollars was collected . . . a society of women occupies itself by procuring linens for the needy, another by giving instruction for children and orphans. The project of erecting a Jewish hospital will soon be carried out in spite of all these burdens. The Jews co-operate very much in maintaining the Christian societies and especially the one which has as its object the promotion of the amelioration of the poor classes.<sup>127</sup>

Then, there was the eternal problem of Jewish rights. The terms of equality granted the Maryland Jews by the enactment of what is generally known as The Jew Bill, which passed in 1826, provided that in assuming an office of trust with the government one who "professes to be a Jew" is to declare "his belief in a future state of rewards and punishments."<sup>128</sup> Such a declaration was demanded only of Jews. When the Constitutional Convention of 1864 convened in Annapolis for the purpose of drawing up a new Constitution for the State, Joshua I. Cohen was active in an effort to revoke this specific Jewish oath. He "mentioned the subject to several of the Baltimore delegations and to some few others." In his memorandum, a follow-up to his personal visit, to the Governor, Augustus William Bradford, he expressed the hope that he, Bradford, would assist in removing "this last remnant of a by-gone prejudice." He suggested that the law be changed to, "no religious test should be required as a qualification for office."<sup>129</sup> The convention did not act on this matter and the law, while not enforced today, is still on the books of Maryland.

In one of his letters to his former teacher, Rabbi Woolf Hamburger, Rabbi Rice wrote about the United States in general:

I am living in darkness . . . the quality of the people in this land is very low. Almost all eat foul food and violate the Sabbath. Thousands marry non-Jewish women. I am in great doubt whether it is permissible for a Jew to live in this land, [and about Baltimore specifically]. "*In Baltimore*

<sup>127</sup> *AZJ*, 1864, p. 226; also, *The Sun*, Oct. 1, 1861.

<sup>128</sup> Code of Maryland, Public General Laws, Article LXX, section 9. This declaration, although not enforced, is still on the book of the State.

<sup>129</sup> Letter of Joshua I. Cohen to Governor Bradford, Baltimore, May 17, 1864 (Maryland Historical Society).

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*ist alle Hoffnung verloren* [In Baltimore all hope is lost].<sup>130</sup>

We know, of course, that Rice was wrong. Speaking of Baltimore, the economist, Jacob Hollander, said,

The Civil War suspended the prosperity of the city, suspended, but not destroyed. After the period of reconstruction, Baltimore emerged as an important industrial center.<sup>131</sup>

What Hollander said about Baltimore generally may be applied to its Jewish community. The Jewish community emerged from the Civil War crisis much stronger and more integrated. It was indeed, at this period that it began to go through a period of its own secession,—secession from the German community,—which finally resulted in a complete divorce from it. It ceased to be a colony within a colony and instead it became an independent Baltimore Jewish community.

<sup>130</sup> Letter of Abraham Rice to Isaac Leeser, 24 Ab, 5091 (Aug., 1851) [Rice Collection, JTSAL].

<sup>131</sup> Jacob H. Hollander, *The Financial History of Baltimore* (Baltimore, 1899), p. 201.