

JEWISH WRITERS IN SOVIET ACTIVE

'Cosmopolitans' Purged in '49
Reappearing—Publishing
in Yiddish Predicted

By HARRISON E. SALISBURY

Soviet authorities appear to have launched a comprehensive but publicly unannounced drive to rehabilitate Jewish literary victims of past purges, both living and dead.

The latest Soviet literary journals to reach New York are studded with reports about the work of Yiddish writers who lost their lives in the 1948-49 anti-Semitic campaign.

Almost every issue of these publications also contains one or more articles by Russian writers and critics of Jewish origin who lost their jobs and whose reputations were besmirched in the 1948-49 drive against "cosmopolitanism."

Comparison of names of current contributors and the names of victims of the "cosmopolitanism" drive shows a startling degree of correlation. It almost appears as if former criticism as a "cosmopolitan" in 1949 is a recipe for recognition in 1956.

One of the most notable "rehabilitations" has been achieved by Aleksandr Isbakh. His novel "Years of Life," about Jewish life, was assailed in terms of such open anti-Semitism in 1949 that the Moscow censors suppressed all reference to it in dispatches abroad.

Today Mr. Isbakh is a writer for the literary weekly Literaturnaya Gazeta and for the monthly literary magazine Novy Mir. Both publications are issued by the Union of Soviet Writers.

Others Resume Careers

The literary critic D. Danin, who was expelled as a candidate member of the Communist party in 1949 for "cosmopolitanism," is now an essayist for Znamya and other literary organs.

P. G. Antokolsky and G. Brovman, both expelled from the Gorky literary institute in 1949, have resumed their literary careers. A special article was published by Literaturnaya Gazeta, dedicated to the sixtieth birthday of Mr. Antokolsky, a lyric poet.

Another prominent victim of the "cosmopolitanism" drive was L. Sheinin, a member of the executive board of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee. The committee was dissolved in the 1948-49 anti-Semitic purge.

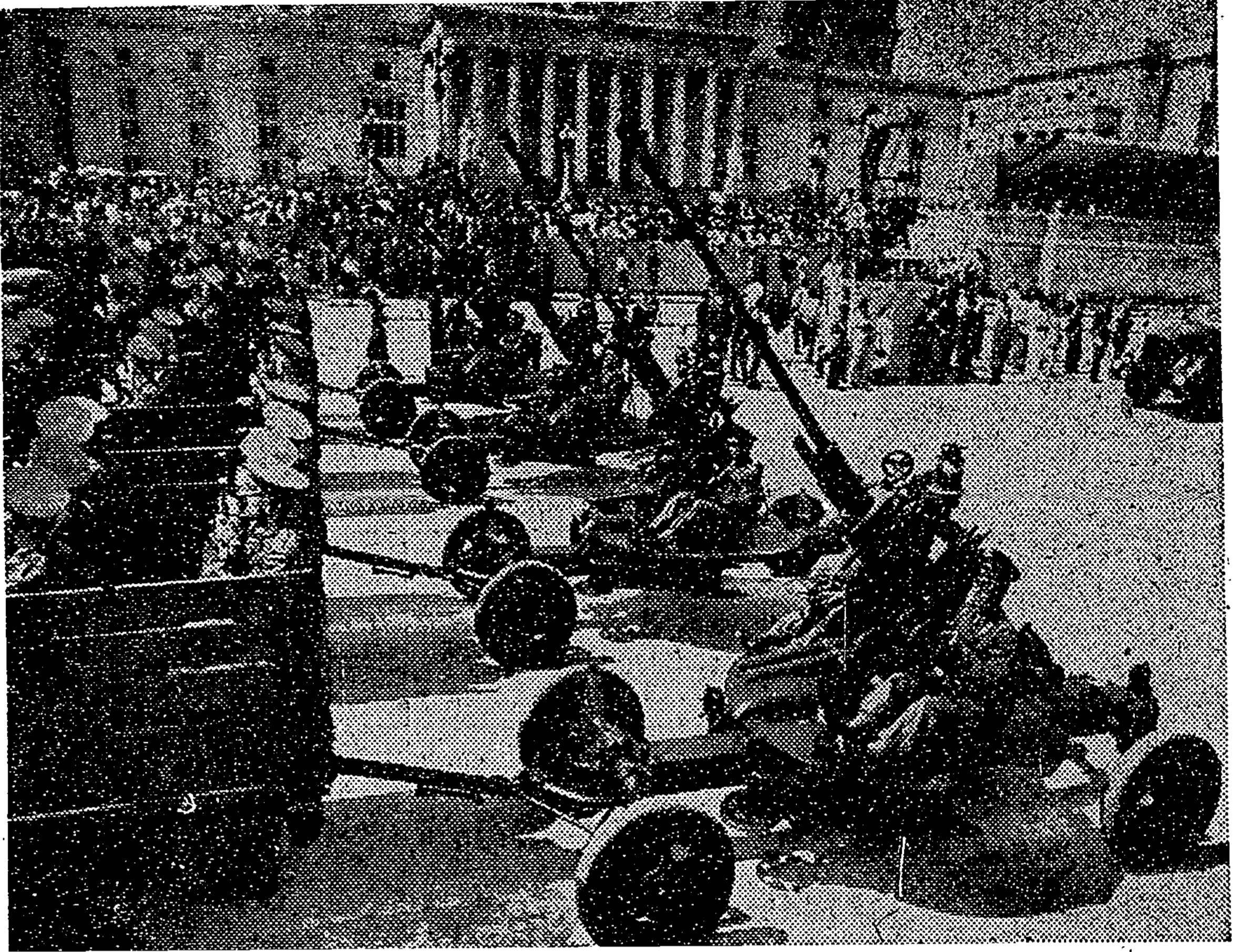
Most of the members of its executive board, including Itsik Feffer, David Bergelson, Peretz Markish, David Hofsteyn and Leib Kvitko, were executed. Some, like Samuel Halkin and Moishe Broderzon, were exiled to Siberia.

Mr. Sheinin is believed also to have spent some time in the hands of the Soviet secret police. Now he has emerged as a leading contributor to Literaturnaya Gazeta.

Mr. Kvitko's poems, like those of Mr. Feffer and Mr. Markish, have been made the subject of special articles in the newspaper.

All this activity has been carried on without public announcement of the fate of the victims of the anti-Semitic campaigns. The established formula seems to be publication of a commemorative article or a new edition of a writer's works. Survivors are given an opportunity to resume their careers.

Thus far all publication of rehabilitated Yiddish writers has been in Russian translation. Plans for publication in Yiddish



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SHOW OF STRENGTH: Anti-aircraft units being towed by troop-filled trucks were part of last Sunday's military display in Warsaw. The demonstration was part of ceremonies commemorating twelfth anniversary of the Communist regime in Poland. Soviet Premier Nikolai A. Bulganin headed a group of Russian leaders who attended the observance.

were said to be held up by the lack of Yiddish typographical facilities.

However, according to Chaim Suller, general manager of the morning Freiheit, New York Communist Yiddish-language newspaper, who just returned from Moscow, discussions are in progress for the revival of Yiddish publishing. There has been none since 1948.

Mr. Suller said he had been told that it was proposed to re-establish a Yiddish-language publishing house and to launch a Yiddish-language literary journal. He heard of no plans for a Yiddish daily paper.

The Yiddish theatre, closed in Moscow in 1948, probably will be revived, Mr. Suller said, but initially this may take the form of a traveling stock company. Yiddish performers have already been appearing in the last two years.

Mr. Suller brought back a list of seventy-one Yiddish writers said to be active in their field in the Soviet Union. Among those he mentioned was Mr. Halkin, who told him that a book of his poetry in Russian translation would soon appear. Other writers on Mr. Suller's list included Noah Lurye of Moscow, said to be writing an autobiographical novel; Abram Kagan of Kiev, writing a cycle of short stories; Itsik Kipnis of Kiev, a new novelette and Aaron Vergelis of Moscow, a book of poetry based on life in Central Asia and the Far East.

Others included Yakov Shternberg, Moscow, poems about Alexander Pushkin; H. Balushteyn, Kishinev, poetry; Nokhem Oislander, Moscow, a monograph on the Yiddish dramatist Osher Shwartzman; Uri Finkel, Minsk, a novel about the 1905 revolution; Prof. Shats Anin, Riga, a work on Yiddish classics, and M. Belenky, Moscow, a drama about Spinoza.