
THE AMERICAN SECTION
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EXECUTIVE OF THE WORLD ZIONIST ORGANIZATION
AND THE JEWISH AGENCY

BEN HECHT'S "PERFIDY" –

*An analysis
of his rewriting of history*

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INTRODUCTION

Wild charges and accusations against the Jewish leadership in general, and the Jewish Agency in particular, concerning their alleged lack of efforts to save the Jews of Nazi occupied Europe are contained in a book by Ben Hecht, entitled "Perfidy." Some American Jews who read the book have been asking questions about the truth of this or that allegation.

The following booklet does not pretend to answer all that requires an answer in Ben Hecht's version of history. It is intended only to refute certain of the major points raised by the author and show that his theories have very little foundation in true historical facts.

These refutations, however, are most authoritative. They have been authorized by H. E. Moshe Sharett who, during the period involved, was head of the Political Department of the Jewish Agency, became Israel's first Minister of Foreign Affairs and later Prime Minister. Mr. Sharett is currently Chairman of the Executive of the World Zionist Organization and of the Jewish Agency.

THE MOST obvious fact emerging from reading Ben Hecht's book "Perfidy" is that the author is not really writing a history of the tragic holocaust of European Jewry or of the Hungarian Jewry in particular, nor is he even engaged in a fictionized rendering of the Kastner-Gruenwald trial. Instead, he is engaged in political pamphleteering. Hecht, who is an avowed supporter of Irgun causes but who never visited Israel, today tries to revive old fraternal feuds which time has already mitigated and which have long since been channeled into normal political fields by the groups involved. The effect by which Hecht seeks to exploit the martyrdom of European Jewry for his dubious partisan purposes is perhaps the most revolting aspect of this book.

Why should Hecht indulge in this exercise, showing such bitterness not only against the leaders of Jewry but against Israel itself? A reasonable answer to this question may well have been given recently by a veteran of the Irgun, the well-known Israel journalist Aviezer Golan, in an article in "Yediot Achronot": "Not a single member of the Irgun Zuu Leumi or Lehi, living in Israel today and concerned with its fate, could indulge in such total negation and such deep hatred (of Israel and its leaders) as the negation and hatred of Ben Hecht in his book. It is the hatred of the self-exiled who glance from afar at what they imagine to have been the work of their hands, and who have no part in it."

The method used by Hecht would not put to shame the most notorious falsifiers of history, past or present. Essentially, the method is composed of four elements. First, the invention of Big Lies, of such scope and nature that they defy any brief denial; second, the distortion of facts, sometimes subtle, sometimes not-so-subtle; third, the "selective" quotations—out of context—of sentences and half-sentences, giving them a meaning quite opposite to the statement as a whole; fourth, the invention of small lies, of minor importance but intended to give an impression of detailed documentation and veracity to the major lies, distortions and mis-quotations.

All four of these elements are deftly used by Hecht

in the different aspects of his "story." And writing it up, Hecht conveniently forgets some of the most fundamental facts of those crucial years. There is no recognition of the fact that the events occurred while the entire free world was engaged in a mortal struggle against Hitler's Germany, a struggle in which thousands of Jewish volunteers of the Palestine Brigade fought to hasten the downfall of the Nazi Reich. Nor is there any understanding of the tragic truth that one of the major stumbling blocks—if not the most important one—of a more effective rescue effort was the very absence of a sovereign Jewish State. Indeed, today, after more than thirteen years of Israel's Statehood, it is difficult to remember how things looked in 1942 or 1944. One must make quite an effort to realize that the man who four years later was the Prime Minister of Israel had to request respectfully in advance an appointment with the British High Commissioner, whose name few people remember by now; and that the man who became Israel's first Foreign Minister had to depend on the good-will of some British officials to secure a seat on a plane to London. (And he could not possibly go to Turkey if the Turkish Government did not grant him a visa on time.) Or that the future President of Israel—not an unknown personality even at that time—had to wait for a whole month for an audience with the British Foreign Secretary. Indeed, history is so easily forgotten—and Mr. Hecht makes full use of this.

And, of course, there is no mention in Hecht's book of the fact that during those tragic years the Yishuv and its leaders were preparing the ground for the establishment of the Jewish State. Nor is there any hint that between 1953 and 1956 the Kastner-Gruenwald case was not the sole pre-occupation of Israel. Some, including Ben-Gurion, were somewhat more concerned with beating off the Egyptian "fedayeen" (marauder) attacks and fighting the Sinai campaign. Or, to take another example, if the leaders of Israel were so anxious—as Hecht alleges—to tone down the Nazi horrors against the Jews, why should they have defied large parts of the world public opinion by insisting on a public trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem, so that all the grim facts of that horrible period could be brought to light?

The Big Lie

THE FUNDAMENTAL Big Lie of Hecht is so horrendous that its invention by a sane mind is almost unconceivable: that the late Dr. Chaim Weizmann and other "members of the ruling clique" were not interested in the rescue of Jews, nay, that they were in tacit agreement with the Nazis, since they feared that mass immigration would destroy their "British-protected" rule. And this is charged after that same "ruling clique" led and won Israel's War of Independence and, on the very first day of statehood, opened the gates of the country to mass immigration for more than one million Jews who have come since then.

From this follows the second of Hecht's Big Lies: "The Revisionist movement took one other daring decision . . . to break the British blockade of Palestine. . . . As Jabotinsky's Chiefs of Illegal Immigration, they kidnapped thousands of Jews from under Nazi noses and sent them bouncing off in ships to the Holy Land. . . ." In fact, of course, the bulk of the clandestine immigration was organized and carried out by the Jewish Agency and the Haganah. In Israel today, as will be shown later, there are tens of thousands who came in illegal boats run by the Haganah as against an isolated few brought to the country by the Irgun.

The falsification of history by Hecht extends all along the line: from the general events of those years, through the history of the holocaust and the rescue efforts of the Yishuv, to the Kastner-Gruenwald trial. Let us just cite a few examples:

PAGE 3: Hecht claims that in 1938 it was possible to come to Palestine without being prevented by the British. It is well known, however, that only so called "capitalists" were given unrestricted entry permits.

PAGE 4: Hecht claims that a "sort of war" had been going on in Palestine, started by an underground army—Irgun Zvai Leumi. This falsifies history, since Jewish self-defense started in Palestine at the turn of the century with the Hashomer and later the Haganah, and the Irgun Zvai Leumi was only an off-shoot (small in numbers) of that latter organization.

PAGE 5: "It finally ended with the British de-camping and the Arabs taking over." All that because of the Irgun

Zvai Leumi? It had nothing to do with the preceding illegal immigration, the political struggle, or the victory in the U.N. Special Committee On Palestine (UNSCOP) which was unanimous in its finding that the British have to depart? There was never a Haganah and a Palmach, there never was a U.N. resolution partitioning Palestine and establishing the Jewish State?

PAGE 19: Hecht claims that Chaim Weizmann was "an Englishman with Jewish leanings." He makes this point in order to support his contention that in 1939, Dr. Weizmann announced that he was taking a recess from all Jewish activities in order to concentrate on the war effort. The career of Chaim Weizmann, for three decades President of the World Zionist Organization and first President of Israel requires no defense against Ben Hecht's dubious humor.

PAGE 21: The Zionists in Palestine wanted "only the best Jews," says Hecht, and therefore prevented large-scale immigration. In order to support his contentions, he quotes a letter from the United Jewish Appeal to a Rabbi in Maryland. The quotation, itself, does not bear out the contentions. (It also explains very carefully that the official Jewish organizations could not at that time *officially* reveal their authority over illegal immigration, for such admission would have meant the end of their existence under the British.) Since it would not fit his charges, Hecht, of course, fails to mention the fundamental "detail" that until the publication of the "White Paper" well-to-do immigrants could enter Palestine without restrictions. Any person who could bring in \$5,000, or any artisan who could bring in \$2,500, could immigrate without regard to any quotas or numerical limitations. The restrictions concerned those without financial means, on the basis of "labor schedules" which were issued by the British Mandatory Government twice a year for the following six months. The constant tug of war between the Jewish Agency and the Mandatory Government over these quotas for impecunious immigrants was a central feature of Zionist activity of that period. This was a struggle not for "the best Jews" (in the sense Hecht uses the term) but the popular masses of poor immigrants from Poland, Central Europe and Yemen. These penniless Jews formed the majority of the immigrants whose number in 1935

alone totalled 72,000 (60,000 of them legal immigrants, 12,000 "tourists" who remained in Palestine). All the phases of this struggle for larger quotas are fully recorded in the published bi-annual reports submitted by the Political Department of the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem to the successive Zionist Congresses. They also figured prominently in the annual memoranda of the Jewish Agency Executive to the Mandates Commission of the League of Nations in Geneva.

PAGE 25: It is untrue to say that the only illegal immigration going on prior to World War II was that started by the Revisionists. Tens of thousands were brought by the Haganah. (And why was there illegal immigration if Jews were not prevented from coming by the British, as claimed by Hecht only a few pages earlier?)

PAGE 32: "Nevertheless . . . the Jewish leaders decided on their course of obeying the White Paper." Yet, in 1939, Mr. Ben-Gurion said that "We shall fight the war as if there was no White Paper and fight the White Paper as if there was no war"; and this was the Jewish Agency's attitude till the end of the war. Indeed, the Jewish Agency, on one hand, organized the illegal immigration, the demonstrations against the White Paper, and on the other hand, called upon the youth to enlist in the Palestine Brigade which fought with the British forces against the Nazi Axis.

It is preposterous to call the Partition plan a "United Nations-British" document, since the British fought tooth-and-nail against its adoption. They voted against it in the U.N. and refused to collaborate in its implementation.

PAGE 39: It is untrue that the government had given a "precise and specific go-ahead to the Altalena." In support of this contention, Mr. Hecht only quotes Mr. Begin's assertion. And Mr. Begin was, of course, on the other side of this argument. The importation of arms by the Irgun was an open attempt to defy the authority of the legal government of Israel by force of arms and the maintenance of a private army. No government can countenance such attempts.

The Tragedy of the Holocaust

IT IS, HOWEVER, the tragedy of the holocaust where Hecht's falsification of history is most extensive. It falls into three categories: the Zionist leadership, a) was not interested in the rescue of the European Jewry; b) made no effort to save the Jews doomed by the Nazis; c) repressed the news about the holocaust.

"I told the British Royal Commission," Weizmann is quoted (on pages 19-20) by Hecht as telling the Zionist Congress in 1937, "that the hopes of Europe's six million Jews were centered on emigration. I was asked 'Can you bring six million Jews to Palestine?' I replied, 'No'. . . . The old ones will pass . . . they were 'dust,' economic and moral dust in a cruel world. . . ." This, Hecht writes, "was virtually a plan to abandon them in their danger." . . . The implication is that Weizmann, foreseeing the murder of Europe's six million Jews, decided that they were expendable. If it were not self-evident that this was not the case, it could be easily proved by a further passage in the same speech, so selectively quoted by Hecht—in which Weizmann expounds his plan of accelerating the rate of immigration to Palestine by some 150 per cent, so as to make it possible for two million Jews to come to Palestine. Obviously, what Weizmann meant when he said "the old ones will pass," was that they would live out their lives in the places of their abode in Europe. World War II and its horrors intervened to impede this plan; but one fact stands out on the record: while Hecht and others like him talked, the men he now maligns—Weizmann, Ben-Gurion, Sharett and others—organized the immigration and rescue, by legal and clandestine means, of hundreds of thousands of victims and potential victims of the Hitler regime.

The rescue efforts were many-fold. Besides illegal immigration, they included the dropping of parachutists behind the Nazi lines, arranged by the British under the pressure from the Jewish Agency (and even Hecht mentions them when he thinks that he can utilize the heroism of one of them, Hanna Senes, for his purpose). There were the efforts to induce the Allied Governments, including the Soviet government, to issue stern warnings to the Nazis. Among the docu-

ments published in Jerusalem during the Eichmann trial were parts of the Weizmann archives, which include correspondence concerning a meeting between Dr. Weizmann and Anthony Eden, then British Foreign Secretary. In asking for the meeting (on June 6, 1944), Weizmann clearly states that "... it is, of course, my paramount duty to try and discover the course of action which offers the best hope of saving Jewish lives."

That meeting took place on July 6, 1944, with Mr. Sharett also present having flown in from Jerusalem. Among other subjects, Dr. Weizmann suggested that the Allies should bomb the Nazi death camps and the railroads leading to them. Almost two months after the meeting, came the British refusal. Dr. Weizmann was advised that "in view of the very great technical difficulties involved, we have no option but to refrain from pursuing the proposal in present circumstances." The nature of these "technical difficulties" was not explained.

Hecht makes much of an isolated sentence quoted from a statement made in Tel Aviv in 1943 by Itzhak Gruenbaum, chief of the Rescue Committee of the Jewish Agency that "when they asked me, couldn't you give money out of the UJA funds for the rescue of Jews in Europe? I said 'No!' And I again say No." Even the most cursory study of the book from which Hecht quotes—a collection of Gruenbaum's speeches—shows that the sentence has been most viciously torn out of context. As usual, Hecht fails to quote any other passages, which would put the quoted sentence in proper light. In fact, Gruenbaum stressed that "we must continue with all our rescue operations and not leave a stone unturned to stop the massacre. We must demand retaliation and toward this end we must join forces with the Poles who also demand this. . . . I want to emphasize again, in conclusion, that we must do all in our power to help people and to save lives, to the extent that lives may still be saved. At the same time, we must not neglect our Zionist task. . . ."

With the Jewish Agency determined, according to Hecht, to let the European Jewry be destroyed, it remained, of course, for the Irgun to save them. In fact, however, their practical contribution to the rescue effort (aside from fund-raising and propaganda activities) was the dispatch of one solitary immigrant ship carrying 600 persons. As against this, the military

arm of the Jewish Agency, the Haganah, organized the rescue of more than 70,000 lives during the years of 1943-1945—to say nothing of the hundreds of thousands who were brought to Palestine—legally and illegally—before that.

It is an ironic sidelight of history that the only illegal ship organized by the Irgun—renamed with appropriate modesty the “Ben Hecht”—was the one vessel that did not resist but surrendered quietly and its people were taken to Cyprus by the British, who were alerted well in advance by the noisy pomp and publicity by Mr. Hecht and his friends. When the State of Israel was created, and forthwith attacked by the neighboring Arab armies, Israel had immediately put a scratch Navy into operation. The only ships available were the hulks of the illegal immigrant ships rusting in Haifa harbor. The “Ben Hecht” was included among them. After Israel’s victory, the government received a peremptory demand from the Ben Hecht Associates to pay for the use of this vessel—the only case of its kind. The Israel Treasury, not a very rich institution at that period, had to pay out in hard dollars the price of that ship. This was the Ben Hecht contribution to illegal immigration and to Israel’s naval victories.

Alerting the World

AND AS FOR trying to suppress the news about what went on in Nazi occupied Europe: how utterly naive, to say the least, for anyone who was already an adult person at the time to suppose that the leaders of the Yishuv and the Jewish Agency would be emotionally and politically capable—even if this was at all possible in practice—of suppressing the news about the enormous calamity, relegating it to their files and making of it the subject of only confidential correspondence. What are the exact facts? On November 23, 1942, the first reports from Poland were authoritatively made public at a session of the Vaad Leumi, the representative body of the Jews in Palestine, in which Mr. Sharett participated on behalf of the Jewish Agency. This was immediately followed by public meetings throughout the country and by street demonstrations in Tel Aviv. The whole Yishuv was plunged into a frenzy of excitement. It was this session of the Vaad Leumi and its reverbera-

tions in the country and abroad which touched off the world Jewish reaction, beginning in the United States, crossing over the Atlantic to England and involving other countries.

On November 30th, a special session of the Assefat Hanivcharim was convened in the Jewish Agency building in Jerusalem. It proclaimed three days of mourning, culminating on the third day (December 2nd), with a general stoppage of work and the closing of shops from noon till midnight, and demonstrations in the streets. In Tel Aviv, about a hundred thousand people marched on that occasion. On January 5th, 1943 all Jewish shops in Jerusalem were closed and meetings held in the synagogues.

On January 12, 1943, there was a country-wide rally of party leaders, heads of organizations and institutions, members of local authorities, representatives of professions, etc., to voice the Yishuv's shock at the continuing holocaust and the Allied governments' apparent indifference.

Another special session of the Assefat Hanivcharim on February 22nd launched a solemn Appeal to The Nations and was followed by yet another country-wide stoppage of work. On March 2nd, 1943, the first mass meeting of mourning and protest was held in New York, at the Madison Square Garden, addressed, among others, by the late Dr. Chaim Weizmann and Rabbi Stephen Wise.

As the reports about the continuation of massacres kept pouring in, a renewed stoppage of work was observed throughout Palestine on June 15, 1943, and a petition was launched to be signed by every adult Jew, for submission to Allied governments. A year later, a new spasm of acute anxiety convulsed the Yishuv in the face of the invasion of Hungary by Hitler's hordes. Again, a country-wide rally was held at the Jewish Agency building in Jerusalem on June 5, 1944. Throughout this period, a National Rescue Committee, formed jointly by the Jewish Agency and the Vaad Leumi was in operation. The Yishuv's Emergency Campaign, which acted continuously through the war, and to which tens of thousands contributed regularly, devoted a large part of its proceeds to such attempts at rescue as seemed possible. In London and New York, leaders of the Jewish Agency and other Jewish bodies were constantly active in exploring all ways of salvation

and, at least, in making the free world aware of what was happening.

And as a matter of fact, Hecht again contradicts himself on this point. He claims that there was a conspiracy of silence, but on his own admission (page 189), he claims that he managed to get wide publicity all through the U.S.A. and elsewhere for his appeals.

There was, however, one subject on which a "conspiracy of silence" existed: the actual rescue work of the Haganah whose success was imperiled by publicity. Those who wanted to save Jews, not garner headlines, did not advertise the names of ships or their location in the press. That was minimal responsibility to the National Cause. But the publicity conscious Irgun made up for the lack of achievement by loud publicity. And each time they sounded the trumpets, it was easier for the British to locate illegal ships.

The Kastner Case

AND NOW we come to the Kastner-Gruenwald trial and to the Brandt story. Mr. Hecht claims that the Israel Government charged Gruenwald with libel because it felt itself directly affected. In fact, under Israel law, the government has to provide defense whenever a government official is libeled. Even a government driver accused before a traffic court gets such legal aid. Hecht says that the whole suit against Gruenwald was a shady Mapai machination. Actually, the Ministry of Justice, which is in charge of all suits on behalf of the government, was during that period in the hands of the Progressive Party leader, Mr. Pinhas Rosen, whose party affiliation Mr. Hecht carefully avoids to mention.

The main "documentation" of Hecht's book are the charges made by Gruenwald's defense attorney Mr. Tamir. What is more accurate and impartial than the statements and summations of an attorney for the defense, when pleading his client's case? Hecht, of course, makes also extensive use of the strong words of condemnation against Kastner in District Judge Halevi's verdict. But—again as usual—he all but ignores the Supreme Court's review of Halevi's judgment, in which the majority decision rejected those views. Instead of accept-

ing the view that Kastner was a wilfull Nazi collaborator (and acting as such as a representative of the Jewish Agency, as Mr. Hecht insinuates), this is what the Supreme Court found:

"Kastner's motives, therefore, were colored by his considered opinion that the most effective way of saving the Jews was by negotiating for their lives with the Nazis. When he visited Cluj, he still had hopes that these financial negotiations would succeed. He had not specifically warned the leaders of Cluj of their impending fate—deportation to the extermination camps of Auschwitz—but at the time he was not sure that the final decision on this step had been taken, and he still hoped to stave off the blow. He did, however, warn them of the general seriousness of the situation and urged them to intensify their escape efforts. . . . He could not, even if he had so desired, rouse them to full-scale resistance and escape, since they were neither physically nor mentally capable of putting up resistance, nor were any large-scale plans for escape feasible, due to the increased vigilance on the borders. . . ."

"In short, during the period of the holocaust, Kastner had been guided wholly and solely by his desire to save the maximum number of lives and thus fulfill his moral duty as the director of the Relief and Rescue Committee. . . . Above all, nothing in his conduct could be interpreted as being collaboration with the Nazis or as paving the way for the destruction of Hungarian Jewry," the Supreme Court declared.

The completely uncorroborated assertion is made (pages 207-8) that Dr. Kastner's murder was organized or approved by the Israel government. Obviously, it was the excitement engendered by the trial that whipped up the kind of popular wrath that, in turn, instigated people to murder. In addition, it must, of course, be emphasized that the murderers were brought to trial and convicted in open court, without any of Mr. Hecht's insinuations coming to the fore.

Hecht leaves the Brandt story, as a "climax," for the end of his book. Actually, it is a considerable anti-climax, for Joel Brandt is a figure familiar to anyone who has done even the most superficial research about the Nazi period. Brandt has told his story repeatedly and he has been written about in books and articles.

Hecht uses the Brandt story to make several charges against the Jewish Agency: that the Jewish Agency handed over Brandt to the British Intelligence, that the Jewish Agency leaders were not willing to consider the "Jews for trucks" offer brought from the Nazis by Brandt and therefore collaborated with the British to prevent Brandt's return to Hungary, and, of course, that the leaders, including Dr. Weizmann, were not particularly interested in the fate of Hungarian Jewry in the first place.

The Brandt Story

FROM MR. SHARETT's then secret report on the Brandt mission, dated June 27, 1944, and made public during the Eichmann trial (and thus available to Mr. Hecht as it was to every journalist covering the trial), it is abundantly clear that the Turkish authorities refused to give Mr. Sharett a visa to meet Brandt in Ankara, despite intervention by the British Ambassador there. "The Head of the G.S.I. then suggested that I should go to Aleppo to meet Brandt; there would be no objection to his returning to Hungary from Aleppo which was practically on the border. I went to the Chief Secretary and he also agreed. So, with the full knowledge and consent of the Chief Secretary and the Chief of Military Intelligence, I left for Aleppo by car, timing my arrival to synchronize with that of Brandt and one of our own people from Istanbul who was accompanying him, so that I could meet him at the station and take him off the train. We arrived very late—about 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 7th, having left Haifa on Tuesday morning. Brandt's train was due at 6:00 a.m. One of my friends went to the station to meet it and found that a British Security Officer also turned up, and took Brandt into custody."

Obviously, there was some foul play. The Agency made frantic efforts to obtain Brandt's release and enable him to return to Hungary with some sort of reply that would give the Nazis the impression that the door is still open for negotiations. In one of those meetings, between Mr. Sharett and the British High Commissioner in Jerusalem, the latter admitted that there were weighty arguments for Brandt's return but any decision must come from London. Says Mr. Sharett in the

aforementioned secret report: "I then said that moreover Brandt would not have left Turkey for Syria were it not for. . . . Here the High Commissioner interrupted me rather shortly: 'I know what you are going to say; you are going to argue that there has been a breach of faith. Don't go on! The answer is very simple: This is war!'"

Finally, on July 6, 1944, the meeting between Foreign Secretary Eden and Dr. Weizmann and Mr. Sharett took place. On this occasion they reiterated the request for bombing Auschwitz and the railroads leading to it, but mainly they urged that the most should be made of Brandt's mission. They also requested permission that Menahem Bader should be permitted to visit Hungary on behalf of the Jewish Agency. Eden stated that "they could not possibly agree to anything that looked like negotiating with the enemy. The question of Bader's going would have to be referred to the War Cabinet. As to Brandt, he intimated that H.M. Government would be prepared to let him go back, but Soviet consent was essential." On July 15th, Mr. Sharett was informed by the Foreign Office in London that "after the most careful consideration H.M. Government have decided that they could not agree to Mr. Bader's proposed journey to Hungary. . . ." The Jewish Agency was also informed that the Soviet Government refused to discuss any such plan.

And while Sharett still conducted the negotiations with the British, they publicly denounced the offer as "blackmail" and rejected the Nazi overtures. Once the U.S., Britain and Russia refused to consider ransom — how could the Jewish Agency smuggle out and into German occupied Europe the ten thousand trucks demanded by the Nazis "to be used only on the Eastern front?" Mr. Hecht's book gives no reply to this intriguing question.

Hecht takes yet another stab at the late Dr. Weizmann. Quoting verbatim Dr. Weizmann's letter of December 29, 1944, in reply to Brandt's memorandum of December 7th, and explaining why he could not have met Brandt until then, Hecht indicates that Weizmann was simply not interested in what Brandt had to tell him. Hecht obscures the fact that all this did not occur right after Brandt arrived from Hungary. In fact, Dr. Weizmann at that time was in London while the exchange

of letters took place after Dr. Weizmann returned to Palestine. And the clear impression presented by Hecht is, that until then Dr. Weizmann had no idea of what was happening to the Hungarian Jewry. In fact, of course, Dr. Weizmann was notified after Brandt arrived in Ankara and contacted the Jewish Agency representatives on May 19, 1944, and he immediately became engaged in the many-fold attempts to make some use of the Brandt mission for additional rescue efforts.

IT IS NOT SURPRISING, however, that Mr. Hecht quotes only Dr. Weizmann's reply to Brandt, but not Brandt's own letter. Because that letter contains the following sentences: "... Permit me also to express the thanks of the Hungarian Jewry for your help and big efforts undertaken by you for their rescue, as far as possible. We know well that you are still doing whatever is in your power. . . ."

This, then, is how Brandt — whom Hecht describes as the main hero of his story — regarded the late Dr. Weizmann and the rescue efforts of the Jewish Agency. It is, indeed, a far cry from the picture painted by Mr. Hecht seventeen years later!