

SHARON A DEFENDER OF JEWS?

An EDITORIAL

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Jewish Currents



*Chief Blackbird, The Ogalla Sioux
by Adolph Alexander Weinman*

SELF-PORTRAIT
BY LEROI JONES

By
MARK NAISON

o

WHO DECIDES
HOW MANY
CHILDREN?

By
CAROL JOCHNOWITZ

NYC COALITION OF BLACK/JEWISH LEADERS

A STATEMENT

FELLOWSHIP IN BROWNSVILLE

By *KHAVER PAVER*

Black History Month Issue

Jewish Currents

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Our Cover: "Chief Blackbird, The Ogalla Sioux," by Adolph Alexander Weinman (1870-1952), bronze, 1903, 16 1/4" x 12 1/2" x 11 1/2". Coming from Germany in 1885, Weinman opened a studio in 1902. Prominent in the 1904 St. Louis Exposition was his sculpture, "The Destiny of the Red Man." In 1916 he designed the United States dime and half dollar. (Brooklyn Museum Collection—Courtesy Newark Museum exhibit, "American Bronze Sculpture: 1850 to Present," Oct. 19, 1984-Feb. 3, 1985. Catalog. 72 pages. 89 photos, \$12.95.)

HAVE YOU MOVED?

To be sure you do not miss an issue, your change of address must be received by us no later than the 10th of the month. Changes received after that will not take effect for another month.

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SHARON A DEFENDER OF JEWS?

An EDITORIAL

Jan. 18

The jury in the case of Ariel Sharon vs. *Time* Magazine is, at this writing, still out. Charged by Manhattan Federal District Court Judge Abraham D. Sofaer with three questions to answer, the jury on Jan. 16 answered only the first, finding *Time* had defamed Sharon because in its article of Feb. 21, 1983, it indicated he had "consciously intended," to have the Phalangists commit acts of revenge by killing Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatilla camps. The jury did not find that the *Time* article had indicated that Sharon had "actively encouraged" the massacre.

Whatever the final jury verdict may turn out to be, we wish immediately to call attention to the unconscionable way in which Sharon, in full arrogance, has sought to parade before the U.S. media as one who, by his suit, is defending the Jewish people everywhere against what he has brazenly called "a blood libel" against him. The honor and integrity of the Jewish people and of Israel have been defended ably, definitively and historically by the Kahan Commission report on that massacre and its finding that Israeli government figures, notably then Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon, bore "indirect responsibility" for the Phalangist massacre. In fact in his letter to the U.S. Court, former Israeli Chief Justice Yitzhak Kahan, wrote: "The conclusions from the documents [examined at the request of the U.S. court] regarding Sharon's knowledge of the massacre in the sense of anticipating that this might happen were dealt with in detail in the commission's report which was published...I have nothing to add or clarify regarding these conclusions."

What were these conclusions? In the

section on "Indirect Responsibility" and "Personal Responsibility," the commission declared: "It is our view that responsibility is to be imputed to the Minister of Defense for having disregarded the danger of acts of vengeance and bloodshed by the Phalangists against the population of the refugee camps, and having failed to take this danger into account when he decided to have the Phalangists enter the camps. In addition, responsibility is to be imputed to the Minister of Defense for not ordering appropriate measures for preventing or reducing the danger of massacre as a condition for the Phalangists' entry into the camps. These blunders constitute the non-fulfillment of a duty with which the Defense Minister was charged." (*The Beirut Massacre, The Complete Kahan Commission Report*, Karz-Kohl Publishing, 320 W. 105 St., N.Y., 10025, 159 pages, \$14.95, p. 73; also see pages 56, 60, 61, 63, 72-3 for more on Sharon's responsibility.)

In sum, official government inquiry into that massacre concluded that Sharon should have anticipated there would be a massacre and was therefore duty-bound to try to prevent it—which he did not do. As a result, he was forced to resign as Defense Minister but did not have the grace to remove himself from the political arena. Instead, his bluster and braggadocio, and his appeal to the chauvinism of part of the Israeli electorate, have landed him a cabinet post as Minister of Industry and Commerce in the unity government. But, whatever the jury here may have decided, the brand affixed to Sharon by the Kahan Commission is ineradicable. It is supreme demagoguery for Sharon to pose as a defender of Jewish honor.

NYC Coalition of Black and Jewish Leaders Issue "Agenda" for Cooperation

Dec. 12, 1984

We are a diverse group of Americans—educators, lawyers and public officials, writers and religious leaders, people from business, politics, labor, media and the arts—who are drawn together by a shared goal: to revitalize the historic relationship between Blacks and Jews in our city and our nation in order to continue our mutual struggle against discrimination and bigotry. Because of our collective history we have a moral responsibility to speak out on racism, anti-Semitism and oppression of others.

Our aim is to disavow rhetoric that divides the Black and Jewish communities, and to focus on our mutual concerns and emphasize our many experiences of mutual support and assistance.

Over the past 10 years, the supportive relations between Blacks and Jews have suffered grievous strains. While there are some valid reasons for these recent tensions, we believe that the stress on differences between Blacks and Jews has caused many people to overlook the important factors that bind the two groups together. Blacks and Jews are still victimized by discrimination and bigotry.

Although Blacks experience raw bigotry to a greater extent than Jews do in contemporary America, Jews also continue to encounter barriers to full involvement in American society. We both share a pride in our distinctive cultures and a deep resentment at serving as convenient scapegoats for society's longstanding problems. We are especially alert to recent efforts to exploit the needs and fears of our two peoples. We refuse to

let anyone manipulate us for political gain. We refuse to be used.

Our city and nation need no further polarization. We call upon the press and public figures to stop using Blacks and Jews as pawns in political campaigns. Repeated emphasis on differences between us diverts attention from the important challenges that face our communities today—nuclear war, peace, economic revival, rebuilding our cities, civil liberties, education, women's equality, and honesty and integrity in government.

We pledge ourselves to help defuse tensions when they erupt. We also pledge to take steps in our community to meet the valid concerns of each group.

We will sponsor forums, cultural events, speakers and other activities to enhance cooperation and understanding between Blacks and Jews.

We believe Blacks and Jews should work together to develop constructive solutions to poor education, hunger, urban decay, crime, inadequate housing and health care.

We have come together to bring these powerful, coalition-building issues to the attention of the press and public, and to help create a climate in which responsible Black and Jewish leaders can speak out for our common human agenda—a compassionate, economically viable, humane city, state and nation.

We urge all citizens of good will to support us in this effort.

Following are the members of the coalition:

Kenneth Anderson, Office of the Queens Borough President

Arthur H. Barnes, president, New York Urban Coalition
 Martin S. Begun, dean, New York University Medical Center and chairman of the city's Mental Health Board
 Jacob Bender, playwright and producer
 Amelia Betanzos, Wildcat Service Corporation
 William Booth, president, National Coalition of 100 Black Men
 Rabbi Balfour Brickner, Stephen Wise Free Synagogue
 George M. Brooker, president, Webb & Brooker Inc.
 Jeffrey Brooker, Webb & Brooker Inc.
 Dr. Joyce F. Brown, director of testing, Manhattan Community College
 Dr. Roscoe Brown, Bronx Community College
 Sharnia Buford, president, Freedom National Bank
 Audrey Bynoe, staff director for Assemblyman Albert Vann
 Ellen Chesler, Columbia University
 Dr. Kenneth B. Clark, author and professor emeritus of psychology at City College
 Ruth Clark, president, Clark Unlimited Personnel
 Audrey Cohen, president, College for Human Services
 Richard Cohen, public relations consultant
 Cynthia Darrison, Metropolitan Lithographers Association
 Gordon J. Davis, lawyer and former City Parks and Recreation Commissioner
 Lloyd Dickens, realtor
 David N. Dinkins, New York City Clerk
 Hazel Dukes, president, New York State chapter, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.
 Barry Feinstein, Local 237, International Brotherhood of Teamsters
 Rev. Carl E. Flemister, executive minister, American Baptist Churches of Metropolitan New York
 Barbara J. Fife, urban planner
 Catherine Gay, Center for Communication
 Albert Gaynes, Gaynes Enterprises Inc.
 Paul Gibson, American Airlines
 Simeon Golar, lawyer and real-estate executive
 Bertram H. Gold, American Jewish Committee
 Neil B. Goldstein, New York Metropolitan Council, American Jewish Council
 Joel Golovensky, Rains & Pogrebin
 Vera Golovensky, Israeli Consulate
 Richard T. Green, president, Carver Federal Savings and Loan Association
 Jack Greenberg, vice dean, Columbia University Law School
 Beverly Gross, District Council 37, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees
 Rev. James E. Gunther, Transfiguration Lutheran Church
 Malcolm Hoenlein, executive director, Jewish Community Relations Council of New York
 Carolyn Jones, Mingo Jones Advertising
 David R. Jones, executive director, City Youth Board
 Farrel Jones, Blue Cross-Blue Shield
 Robert Jones, real-estate developer and appraiser
 Jack M. Jordan, president, Housing Authority
 Patrolmen's Benevolent Association
 William Kahn, executive vice president, Federation of Jewish Philanthropies
 Dr. Flora Kaplan, New York University Museum Studies Program
 Theodore W. Kheel, labor mediator
 Victor Kovner, lawyer
 Sara Kovner, civic leader
 Kathleen Lane, M.J. Zink Productions
 Haskell Lazere, American Jewish Committee
 Mildred Robbins Leet, Trickle-Up Program Inc.
 Carol Lister, director, New York chapter Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith
 Stanley H. Lowell, lawyer and former Deputy Mayor
 Hugh Marius, State Liquor Authority
 Jewell Jackson McCabe, National Coalition of 100 Black Women
 Eugene McCabe, president, North General Hospital
 H. Carl McCall, former New York State Human Rights Commissioner
 G. McGriff, Clark Unlimited Personnel
 Harriet Michel, New York Urban League
 Dr. Thomas Minter, former Deputy Chancellor, New York City Board of Education
 Lorraine Monroe, educator
 Rose Morgan, House of Beauty
 Horace Morris, United Way of Greater New York
 Joseph Murphy, Chancellor, City University of New York
 Jack Newfield, writer
 Jack Oppenheim, lawyer
 Maurice Paprin, vice chairman, Associated Builders and Owners of Greater New York
 Basil A. Paterson, lawyer with Suozzi, English & Cianciulli, former Deputy Mayor of New York City and former New York Secretary of State
 Ann Phillips, civic leader
 Bert Pogrebin, Rains & Pogrebin
 Letty Cottin Pogrebin, writer and editor
 Bernice F. Powell, Coalition of 100 Black Women
 Rev. Calvin Pressley, New York City Mission Society
 Dr. Harold Proshansky, president, City University Graduate School
 Douglas Pugh, Unemployment Insurance Appeal Board

Lillian Roberts, New York State Labor Commissioner
Isaiah E. Robinson Jr., director of university and corporate affairs, New York City Board of Education
Nina Rosenwald, American Jewish Committee
Dr. Phyllis Harrison Ross, psychiatrist
William Ruder, lawyer, Ruder, Finn & Rotman
Lewis Rudin, chairman of Rudin Management and chairman of the Association for a Better New York
Bayard Rustin, chairman of A. Phillip Randolph Institute and chairman of Social Democrats U.S.A.
Frank Savage, vice president investment, Equitable Life Assurance Society
Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president, Union of American Hebrew Congregations
Stanley S. Scott, vice president, Philip Morris Inc.
Daniel S. Shapiro, president, Federation of Jewish Philanthropies
Kenneth Sherwood, Satra Corporation

Martin Singerman, president, News Group Communications
Ellen Straus, president, WMCA-AM Radio
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Eugene H. Webb, president, Webb & Brooker Inc.
Franklin Williams, president, Phelps-Stokes Fund
Douglas H. White, New York State Commissioner of Human Rights

SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY AND CONSULATES PICKETED

By Jan. 3 those arrested for picketing the South African Embassy in Washington, D.C. numbered 114 (see also p. 46 within), including 20 members of the House of Representatives, and picketing continues there and at South African consulates in 14 other cities....In New York Jan. 3 the Metropolitan Council of American Jewish Congress had some 20 members on a picket line. Council Vice-President William Shneyer, interviewed on the line by WBAI, denounced apartheid and promised the picketing would continue as long as necessary....Blacks, Hispanics, academics and trade unionists have been stepping up activities....Rabbi Henry D. Michelman, executive vice-president, Synagogue Council of America (representing lay and rabbinic organizations of Orthodox, Conservative and Reform Jews), pointed out in a letter in the *N.Y. Times* Dec. 18, 1984 that all branches of Judaism are on record as opposing apartheid, and that the Synagogue Council, in 1976, condemned "the injustice of white supremacy in that country" and "the degrading policy of apartheid which denies blacks the vote and subjects them to a variety of disenfranchisement and repressions."...NYC Councillor Ruth W. Messinger (DL-Man.) issued a statement Dec. 6 at the South African Consulate: "As a Jew, I know that the fight against fascism must be fought over and over for every group. I know, too, that what went on in Germany under the Nazis would have stopped sooner if more people throughout the world had believed what they heard about the destruction of the Jews by Hitler....In South Africa the 4.5 million person white minority denies the 21 million person native black majority their rights as citizens and their dignity as human beings. It subjects them to ever more ugly repression and violence, imprisons their leaders and shuts them off from any access to power."...USA banks and investors have \$14.6 billion invested in South Africa.

URBAN LEAGUE ON STATUS OF BLACKS IN NEW YORK

Quality health care, enriching education, remunerative employment and affordable, adequate shelter elude many Black families in New York City," warned the National Urban League in a 35-page report on the status of Black citizens in New York, 1984, released July 31. "Since the family has long been the focal unit of society and the center for parenting, it is clear that existing conditions produce negative consequences for Black families"—consequences that the report illustrates on a borough-by-borough basis with grim statistics, maps and charts (N.Y. Urban League, 1500 Broadway, N.Y. 10038).

Though non-partisan in tone, the report speaks with an urgency that has been underlined by subsequent political events:

- The racist undertones of the Nov. presidential election, in which (as Bill Moyers of CBS commented on election night) the Republicans re-legitimated certain racist catchwords and sentiments of the past—e.g., states' rights, anti-welfare/anti-poor rhetoric, narrow definitions of civil rights, etc.—to encourage the "white backlash" that gave Pres. Reagan a solid electoral sweep despite an overwhelmingly pro-Mondale Black vote;
- The continuing antagonism between NYC's Black community and Mayor Edward I. Koch, whose anti-poor policies (particularly in the realm of real estate) have greatly increased Black suffering in New York. No doubt the reality portrayed in the Urban League's report will provide ammunition for anti-Koch forces in their attempt to defeat him at the polls in 1985.

Among the statistics in the report are these: 1/3 of Black families in NYC are economically poor; 72% of Black children do not complete high school (compared to an already appalling 45% overall dropout rate); the official unemployment rate for Black adults exceeds citywide rates by about 4-5%, with the rate for out-of-school Black teenagers varying from 40-60%, and with "The Hidden Unemployment index of the National Urban League indicat(ing) that the situation is more egregious"; Black couples separate at a rate five times higher than white couples. This and more add up, says the report, to "a period of social malaise unprecedented since the Great Depression," while "social services are adversely affected by shrinking governmental dollars, diminished social concern and the absence of coherent social policy."

The report makes concrete recommendations in the fields of health, education, employment, housing and social services, and offers profiles of Black community groups that are "models for change" that reveal "the resiliency of the community." In all, the report is statistically fascinating and socially upsetting, as it reveals a terribly hard-pressed and stigmatized population that comprises 25% of the population of New York, one of the wealthiest cities in the world.

L.B.

THE NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE 10th ANNIVERSARY EDITION of its annual survey, *The State of Black America 1985*, edited by James D. Williams, has just been published, 235 pages, \$17, from the National Urban League, 500 E. 62 St., New York, N.Y. 10021.

Black Jewish...

(Continued from Back Cover)

social change in this country voted solidly for Reagan and against Black interests. In such a context, the fact that Jews were the only section of white voters to vote against Reagan is convincing proof of the continued vitality of the political alliance between Blacks and Jews. (For further data see the Appendix.)

At the end of the first section of his article, Brenner gives a clear description of his view of Black-Jewish unity: "Jewish liberals tend to view Blacks as, first and foremost, a handle to the liberal ax: Blacks are to provide numbers at the polls for the Democratic Party. Naturally enough, not a few black Democrats are coming from a similar place; for them, the Jews are the handle, providing votes and, it is important to stress, campaign contributions for deserving black Democrats..."

"Within a broader view of politics, one that is concerned with the issue of society's fundamental reorganization,... the only real possibility that exists [is] an alliance between the broad *majority* of Blacks and other exploited groups and the Progressive *minority* of Jews."

This passage is misguided and confused. Let us begin with Brenner's conclusion. What is most disturbing here to me as a Black activist is the patronizing arrogance in the idea of a "coalition" between the broad majority of Blacks and the progressive minority of Jews. Coalitions are between equals, and it is absurd to equate the very limited potential influence of a small group of progressives among six million Jews with the vast potential power of the broad majority of 28 million Blacks. Moreover, it should be obvious that such a coalition would serve the interests only of the minority of progressive Jews. The only coalition that would serve the interests of Blacks is a coalition between the broad majority of Blacks and the broad majority of Jews. Fortunately, the overwhelming

majority of progressive Jews has always recognized this.

Brenner's concern with "the issue of society's fundamental reorganization" within the context of Black-Jewish unity betrays an extraordinary ignorance of class relations among Blacks and a lack of understanding of the priorities of the Black community. Today the overwhelming majority of Blacks want a fair share of present society's benefits and full participation in society. Society's fundamental reorganization is not yet on the practical agenda. Jesse Jackson's program does not include any such reorganization. In fact, the significance of the Jackson candidacy is that it brought large numbers of the Black poor into the electoral system.

Moreover, even if the "Rainbow Coalition" were to leave the Democratic Party and form the nucleus of a new party, the program of such a party would still be one of reforming the existing system. In this framework, Brenner's criticism of Jewish liberals and Black Democrats for supporting each other is absurd. It is both natural and desirable for Jewish liberals and the Black middle-class to unite on issues of common interest. And masses of Black voters in the urban areas consistently and wisely use their formidable voting power to elect liberal Jewish politicians who support legislation that benefits Blacks.

The second part of Brenner's article amounts to a totally one-sided and unrelieved condemnation of the majority of American Jews as one reactionary and bigoted mass. What is outrageous here is his crude and at times vicious revival of an entire arsenal of anti-Semitic stereotypes. He justifies this assault by a pseudo-class analysis of the Jewish community:

"To be sure, the myth of the 'all-powerful Jews' was a staple of European anti-Semitic propaganda. It is not surprising, therefore, that many liberals, and even many on the left, are squeamish

about having attention called to those economic changes which have converted a community, once unique in the United States for its mass radicalism, into a pillar of capitalism..."

Brenner is certainly not "squeamish." Using a mix of facts and statistics taken out of context, and unsubstantiated quotations from various sources, he goes on to construct a myth of the "all-powerful Jews" that is tailor-made to serve as a staple for U.S. anti-Semitic propaganda:

- o "...On an Ivy League campus, up to 30% of the instructors are likely to be Jews"...
- o "...Jews are now the most affluent group in America..."
- o "...80 of the 400 richest Americans are Jews..."
- o "...A majority of white families residing outside the South with full-time servants are Jewish, and 40 to 60% of middle-class Jewish families have their black cleaning lady."
- o "Members of this small ethnoreligious group are so active politically that they normally donate more than half the large gifts of national Democratic campaigns..."
- o "On the level of local politics, the *quid pro quo* is likely to be more tangible than on a national scale...Jews have tended to be active in such instances of bribery...; their types of livelihoods—real estate, for instance—have been like those of the Mafia, entrepreneurial and speculative..."

Space does not permit a discussion of these biased quotations, but their pronounced anti-Semitic tone and content are in my opinion self-evident. However, I do want to make two observations. First, according to virtually all political observers, those Jews who are among the "most affluent" tend not to vote their affluence but their social conscience and social responsibility. Secondly, from my perspective as a Black American, it is obvious that those Jews today in a position to employ workers are usually more likely than other whites to implement a fair employment policy. As for Brenner's "Black cleaning lad[ies]," I know that

many a Black domestic worker would prefer to work for a Jewish "missus" than for a non-Jewish white woman.

In this same section of his article Brenner also reveals his hopeless sectarianism when he states that "...Those people, Black and Jewish, who are advocating a mass Black/Jewish bloc fail to notice that the interests of a predominantly affluent group and a predominantly working-class and poor group are not, and cannot be, the same."

First, no segment of either Black or Jewish leadership is advocating a "mass Black/Jewish bloc." What is solidly in place is a coalition of Blacks and Jews based on mutual interests and common enemies. The "Black-Jewish Agenda" developed recently in New York City by a broad-cross section of Black and Jewish leaders [see text and signatures on pages 4-5], as well as the strong solidarity between Black and Jewish organizations across the country in the recent demonstrations against the racist South African regime are two of many manifestations of the continued strength of this coalition.

Secondly, Brenner entirely ignores the fact that there has been a powerful expansion of the Black middle class in the past two decades. It is this middle class which today is almost totally dominant among the most visible Black leaders. Moreover, the goals of both the Black working class and the Black poor are at present largely middle-class goals. Brenner appears to believe that the 1980s are a repetition of the 1930s.

Brenner ends his article with a section titled "The Needs of the Times," in which he advocates a new coalition: "A coalition between progressive Blacks, Jews and others would transcend the confines of conventional politics, including conventional 'racial' politics. Not only would Jews be called upon to break with the reactionaries of 'organized Jewry,' but Blacks would have to move away from the notion that some variant of storefront

nationalism, or the Democratic Party, or a synthesis of the two, can solve the catastrophic crisis burdening the black community..."

What is extraordinary here is Brenner's failure to understand that it is the non-Jewish electorate that is the problem in U.S. politics. White progressives, including Jews, must reach out to the white Protestant majority to influence decisive sections of it to move towards more liberal positions on issues. It is that majority that has imposed "conventional racial politics" on the nation. In that context, the needed broad coalition is between Blacks, Jews and Catholics. The statistics for the election results show that

white Catholics voted for Reagan in fewer numbers than white Protestants. Moreover, about a third of Catholic voters are Hispanic and Black, forming a bridge between Catholics as a whole and the Black-Hispanic coalition. Taken together, Blacks, Hispanics, Jews and White Catholics account for 33% of the total vote. If such a coalition has a progressive program and leadership it can reach out to the progressive section of the Protestant majority of form a coalition that can win national elections.

To conclude, it is not the search for Black-Jewish unity that, as Brenner would have it, is "misguided" but Brenner himself.

APPENDIX

The fact that Jews were the only white segment to vote against Reagan stands out even more clearly if we examine the 1984 Presidential election results by race and religion.

The *N.Y. Times* of Nov. 8, 1984 (page A19) published an extensive statistical analysis of the election results. The voting by race and religion was cited as follows:

% of 1984 Total	Voter Category	% Reagan	% Mondale
86	Whites	66	34
10	Blacks	9	90
3	Hispanics	33	65
51	White Protestant	73	26
26	Catholic	55	44
3	Jewish	32	66
15	White Born- Again Christian	80	20

These figures reveal that the main source of Reagan's support came from huge majorities among white Protestants and white born-again Christians. Together, these two groups make up 66% of the total vote and 78% of the white vote. They gave Reagan 49% of the total vote

and 74% of the vote he received. And it was these groups that Blacks, Jews and Hispanics perceived as a common threat. It is against this background of racial-religious politics dominated by white Protestants and the religious right that Black-Jewish unity should be viewed. ■

Self-Portrait by LeRoi Jones

From nationalism to "Marxism"

By MARK NAISON

The Autobiography of LeRoi Jones, by Amiri Baraka. Freundlich Books, N.Y., 1984, 329 pages, indexed, \$16.95.

Few intellectuals, Black or white, have had a more controversial career than LeRoi Jones. A brilliant figure in Greenwich Village cultural circles in the late fifties and early sixties, as a poet, playwright and music critic, Jones violently repudiated his white co-workers and friends (including his Jewish wife), and became a leader of the nationalist "Black Arts" movement. As a nationalist, Jones (now Amiri Baraka) became the guru of the "hate whitey" aesthetic, glorifying separatism, anti-Semitism and Black revolutionary violence. An organizer as well as an artist, he founded theatre companies in Newark and Harlem, chaired several Black Power conferences and helped engineer the election of Newark mayor Kenneth Gibson. In the mid 1970s, Jones' career took yet another turn when he declared himself a Maoist and repudiated the separatist stance he had previously espoused. In the last few years, he has been out of the spotlight (except for a controversial arrest for alleged wife-beating of his Black spouse) and has taught Africana Studies at the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

PROF. MARK NAISON of the *Afro-American Studies Department at Fordham University*, last appeared here with a review of *Thomas Sowell's Ethnic America in Sept., 1983*. Naison's own book, *Communists in Harlem during the Depression*, was reviewed here in *July-Aug. and Sept., 1984*.

The Autobiography of LeRoi Jones represents Baraka's effort to "take stock" of this tumultuous life, but it will win Baraka few friends in mainstream or progressive circles. The book is often brilliant and insightful, but is so full of hostility and posturing that it casts doubts on the author's emotional stability as well as his claims to political leadership. Baraka claims he is a Marxist and an internationalist, but his venomous hostility to the Black middle class and the white intelligentsia marks him as an exponent of the politics of marginality. Baraka, the Don Rickles of the Black left, seems to think that insult and vulgarity are the best way to make a political point, but the main thing they do is emphasize the eccentricity of their exponent. The best thing any serious activist will say about the political arguments in this book are: "Oh well, the author's a poet."

Baraka's writing style represents a real obstacle to serious communication, even when he's talking about serious issues. The book begins in a stream-of-consciousness style, filled with ghetto argot, four letter words, and poetic allusions. Baraka seems compelled to show he's "hip," that he's not bound by the rules of "western logic." But after 10 pages, Baraka switches to a narrative style relatively free of affectation and spins out a fascinating portrait of his boyhood and education. Throughout the rest of the book, Baraka continually shifts voices between straightforward narrative and "jive talk." At its best, the writing is clear, reflective and self-critical. Baraka is surprisingly kindly, in retrospect, towards his Jewish first wife, whom he had publicly denounced during the mid-sixties, and is critical of some of the extreme

white-baiting and Jew baiting he engaged in during his nationalist period. He is an astute, perceptive commentator on the Village "beat scene" and a very sharp critic of the Black nationalist milieu that idolized him in the late sixties and early seventies. He talks movingly of the heroic battle Black women waged against the rampant sexism of the nationalist movement (he, like many other nationalist leaders, practiced polygamy) and writes with great respect of his second wife, Amina, who helped him assume a more humane and internationalist posture.

But just when Baraka begins to win the reader's respect as a sober responsible person, he goes on an expletive-filled rampage that undermines his credibility. Here, for example, is Baraka on Howard University in the 1950s, which he attended and dropped out of:

"All we were being readied for was to get in, to be a part of the big ugly which was that ugly because it would never admit us in the first motherfucking place! We were being taught integration and nothing of the kind existed. If so, why were we here in the second motherfucking place? We were readied for a lie as lie. We were readied for yellow and the best of us were black and brown. We were readied for utopia and that is bullshit in the third motherfucking place. Only craziness could be the result."

Unresolved issues of personal and political identity plague this book. Baraka, at times, tries to tame his explosive hatred of white America and the Black middle class with the discipline of Marxist thinking: he tries to see the world in class as well as race terms, condemns sexism as well as racism, and tries to describe the experience of non-black peoples with empathy and respect. But he just can't pull it off! Inevitably, white-baiting of the most obscene kind creeps in. Witness the following attack on writers who challenged Baraka's behavior when he broke with the interracial Village scene:

"There are certain petty bourgeois

intellectuals and poseurs and soi-disant artists, most of whom, in the U.S. are white, who cannot understand that most people do not envy, respect, or want to be near them. Who think they are unattractive and weird. Who do not like their washed out limp hair and slightly open mouth with just a string of saliva, in sunlight, who think they are silly-looking, square, bizarre, irrelevant, not with it, corny, mediocre. But because they are in charge of the world, they think, figure, you would quit them or their buddies only under duress."

What is so tragic about such passages is that they undermine the impact of the genuine self-criticism Jones engages in. Just 50 pages earlier, Jones took himself to task for attacking Mickey Schwerner and Andrew Goodman at a forum at the Village Gate in the mid-sixties:

"Orly people not really serious about making revolution can dismiss serious allies. But in my fury, which had no scientific framework, I would only thrash out at any white person...I told the woman...'Those white boys were only seeking to assuage their own leaking consciences.' And in the last outrageous diatribe, I was confusing Schwerner and Goodman with the young white poseur liberals who sashayed through the streets of Greenwich Village, the behind the lines bleeding hearts. When, on the real side, if I could have stood some hard truth, Schwerner and Goodman were out there on the front lines more than I was!"

Baraka comes off in this book as a person still at war with himself, unable to exercise the self-control required to give his views weight in either the Black or white intelligentsia. For example, he is critical of the anti-Semitic language that filled many of his plays and essays from the late '60s and early '70s but regards this as an unfortunate byproduct of his turn to nationalism rather than as an offense to be corrected and repudiated in subsequent editions of his books and productions of

his books. This failure to assume full responsibility for the injury he has caused others—either individuals or groups—does serious damage to Baraka's claim to political or cultural leadership.

Perhaps the most bizarre portion of the book is its final chapter, "Summing Up," in which Baraka tries to persuade his audience (and perhaps himself) that he isn't crazy. Baraka seems to be extraordinarily bitter that he has lost his position of former prominence in the literary establishment and Black cultural circles and that his major foray into the public eye has been a highly publicized arrest for "wife beating." Baraka, in the following passage, tries to say he's alive and well:

"And even though you left New York, runned away and built a paper house of nigger mediocre domestic Mobutus as the postdoctoral study for the black masses, and yourself—the fact of Amina is herself confirmation that I have not been all the way crazy, not all the way full of shit...even when they attack me, these agents of slowness and primitivism. Even while they try to hide pictures of me smiling or word that I am alive and well and still not crazy or pessimistic. Or hide the reality of my marriage or the identity of my wife...I can get happy, happy, in spite of the frustration and racism and attempts to kill us all. Even while they try to make it seem that I am a wife beater and madman and stopped writing or stopped breathing."

One reads such passages, indeed much of the book, more in sorrow than in anger. Here is someone with so much talent, so much energy, so much insight, who is so poisoned by hatred that he can't think clearly enough to advance his own political objectives or control his self-destructive impulses. Yet as Baraka asserts, the game isn't over yet. Perhaps with continuous struggle and growth will come a voice that is more measured and consistent, more at ease with the strivings and concerns of the mass of Black Americans, and more able to accept the

MAPAM IN NICARAGUA

The first Israelis to visit Nicaragua as official guests of the Sandinista government were a delegation from Mapam: Haika Grossman, political secretary, Dr. Avraham Rosenkier, international secretary, Avi Ben-Cror, political representative in Latin America, and Meir Orkin, Mapam Central Committee member.

For three days in mid-Oct., the Mapam delegation met with Sandinista government leaders, seeking to convey to them that there is "A sympathetic Israel which opposes arms sales to military dictatorships; an Israel which stands for cooperation and socialist development and for the right of nations to determine their own destiny without foreign interference."

Meetings were held with Jose Leon Talavera Salinas, deputy foreign minister; Herty Lewites, a Jew, minister of tourism; Alba Luz Ramos Vanegas, deputy justice minister; and Jose Pasos Marciaq, director of international relations for the FSLN (Sandinista party). Mapam was assured the synagogue, which had been turned into a children's center, would be returned to Nicaraguan Jews as soon as they agree to maintain it.

frustrations of political work in a nation where revolution is not "right around the corner." If that happens, Baraka would find the respect and recognition he would deserve. ■

4 KLANSMEN SENTENCED

Atlanta Federal District Court Judge Charles Moye Dec. 18, 1984 sentenced four Klansmen to maximum sentences totaling 85 years in prison and \$40,000 in fines for beating Warren Cokley, a Black man married to a white woman, and Peggy Jo French, a white woman associating with Blacks.



ISRAEL

About the National Unity Government ... In the over 100 days since becoming Labor Prime Minister, Shimon Peres has turned out to be unexpectedly very popular, swamping Likud Deputy Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir in a Nov. preference poll of 42% for Peres to 11% for Shamir. He appears to have stopped the settlements, for economic reasons; he made a successful fence-mending Dec. trip to France; he seems to have softened political rhetoric; and at a Christmas Eve reception in Bethlehem at the invitation of Palestinian Arab Mayor Elias M. Freij he uttered a greeting of peace to all who seek peace. This was the first visit to Bethlehem by an Israeli head of government since the city was occupied by Israel in 1967....For the first time ever the navies of the U.S. and Israel held a joint anti-submarine exercise in the Mediterranean beginning Dec. 11....A London report late in Nov. has it that Israel and China have clandestine relations and military sales are specifically mentioned. More recently Israel has been reported to be helping with remodeling Soviet-made tanks....Israel and Venezuela made agreements late in Dec. for agricultural aid to several Caribbean countries and for "greater ideological cooperation," according to an Israeli official participant. A new dovish lobby pledged to work actively for peace has formed within the Labor Party in Dec. but a variety of views on peace exists within the party as a whole....A dispute between the National Religious Party and Shas, the ultra-Orthodox Sephardi party, with four Knesset seats each, for a few days threatened to bring down the national unity regime, after Yosef Burg of the NRP was assigned the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Rabbi Yitzhak Peretz of Shas the Interior Ministry, and the Interior Ministry was shorn of some of its powers. The settlement Dec. 20 provided that the Shas minister, supported by the Shamir coalition, would control 60% of state religious funds, and Burg, supported by Labor, 40% of the funds. If Shas had withdrawn, Likud had threatened to join it, thus bringing down the government....When in mid-Dec. the right-wing Tehiya Party tried to get the Knesset to force the government to proceed immediately with six new promised settlements in the West Bank, the move was defeated. The Shamir coalition split its vote, with Herut, Tehiya and NRP in favor of settlements but the liberals voted with the government....Former Education Minister Zevulun Hammer was early in Dec. elected secretary-general of the NRP....One encouraging economic note for 1984 was the fall by about one-third in the unfavorable trade balance. The rise in exports for the first 11 months of the year was 14%....As budget cuts are carried out, unemployment increases and the danger of labor action in some sectors grows. By Dec. Histadrut reported that unemployment was rising by one-third over average rate of the previous year and growing, perhaps to 100,000, or 7%, soon, from the present 85,000, or 5.9%.

Jewish-Arab relations ... A number of Golan Heights settlements are being dismantled and abandoned and new ones must be given up for lack of funds, it was reported in mid-Dec., because of the freeze and the budget cuts....1,380 dunams of land in three villages in the Ramallah area are being confiscated and declared state land, unless Arab owners can in court challenges show documented ownership....While granting that no material benefits can "erase the bitter taste of occupation," one Israeli writer details the enormous improvements in Arab material life under the occupation. Some of the contrasts on the West Bank with preoccupation figures: from unemployment to full employment; gross national product up by 3.8 times; 11 times the number of privately owned cars; number of tractors rose from 450 to 2,500; 87% increase in number of students, while population grew by 21%; establishment of six universities, forbidden under Jordan's Hussein to cut down political agitation; from no newspapers published on the West Bank to a numerous Palestinian-owned press today; greater political freedom than anywhere in the Arab world....A Jewish-Arab joint youth movement will be established to develop joint activities with groups near each other under a grant of \$120,000 from the Rockefeller Foundation to the town of Neve Shalom, established in 1970 to promote Jewish-Arab friendship and sponsor of training of about 5,000 youth of both groups.

The Palestinian National Council session held Nov. 22-29 in Amman after many postponements affirmed the leadership of Yasir Arafat after the pro-Arafat faction succeeded in achieving a quorum to legalize the meeting. Many PNC members, including a number from the West Bank and some from Lebanon who were forbidden passage by the Israelis across the borders to Jordan, and several radical groups in Damascus refused to attend. The meeting accepted cooperation with Jordan but rejected his suggestion to negotiate on the basis of UN Res. 242....An Arab Labor Knesset deputy, Abdel Wahab Darousha, was refused entrance to Jordan to carry out his intention of addressing the session. His action created a tumult in the Knesset by the extreme right.

News Briefs ... Reports circulated early in Dec. that a secret emergency airlift to Israel of Ethiopian Jews, or Falashas, was under way....On Dec. 25 the Knesset voted to lift racist Meir Kahane's parliamentary immunity from arrest if he went to Arab villages to cause a disturbance. The next day he was prevented from entering the Arab village of Taibe, where he intended to urge Jewish women married to Arab men to leave their husbands. No one paid much attention and Kahane went quietly away....Six members of the West German Green Party visited Israel in Dec. Although they had not intended to visit Yad Vashem but were persuaded to do so, they stayed more than three times as long as planned. One delegation member was excluded from Israel because of a terrorist past....After the Israeli-U.S. women's dialogue in 1984, a Women's Lobby with many of Israel's distinguished women as members has been formed....A study at Tel Aviv University shows that Israeli women do not believe themselves disadvantaged, but the study concludes that the self-image of working women in Israel is about like that of Blacks in the U.S. before the civil rights movement.

L.H.

Attention to Yiddish by Major Jewish Organizations

By NEIL SALZMAN

Yiddish at last began to get some of the attention it needs and deserves from major Jewish organizations. On Sunday, Dec. 9, 1984, over 100 people gathered at the offices of the New York Federation of Jewish Philanthropies for a day-long "Conference on Yiddish and the American Mainstream: Coming Home to Yiddish." Initiated by the Commission for Yiddish of the World Jewish Congress, the meeting featured a diverse array of activists in the struggle to achieve, if not a renaissance of the Yiddish language, then a reassertion of appreciation of Yiddish as a major element in Ashkenazi culture and a force of great potential value in clarification of Jewish identity in this era of enormous pressure toward assimilation.

Participants in the morning discussions included: Joseph Mlotek, acting chairman of the World Jewish Congress Commission on Yiddish; Rabbi Isaac Trainin, director of the Commission on Synagogue Relations, New York Federation of Jewish Philanthropies; Israel Singer, executive director of the World Jewish Congress; and the main address was given by the actor and acclaimed singer of Yiddish folksongs, Theodore Bikel.

One paradoxical aspect of such a conference was the question of whether or not a meeting devoted to reviving Yiddish should be conducted in English. It was clear that at least 80% of the audience was Yiddish-speaking; but what of those who were not? And while nearly every scheduled speaker demonstrated skills in conversational Yiddish, it was clear that several did not quite have the command of language to hold forth in an extem-

poraneous speech. The solution was a nearly even balance of English and Yiddish!

Israel Singer, who also heads the Jewish Studies Program at Brooklyn College, set the example that many followed by finding expression in folk wisdom for the solution to the problems of Yiddish in contemporary America.

"When the tailor asked the Baal Shem Tov whether Yiddishkeit was a religion, an ideology or a philosophy, the rebbe replied that, on the contrary, it was like the work of the tailor: he carefully attends to the mending of the old while at the same time he works on the new." We must nurture the values, traditions and cultural expression that we have inherited from our fathers while at the same time we build a vital culture for today and tomorrow.

Bikel, with his usual eloquence and charm, cautioned the stalwarts of Yiddish not to harp continuously on the question of Yiddish survival, which barely hides all the imagery of death and places a pall of the morbid on the reaffirmation of Yiddish. He suggested that we "tie the language to the idea of peoplehood itself" to generate the feeling, interest and identity that are so urgently needed in our alienated society today. He expressed his sorrow that while the Orthodox and the secularists are the two groups in American life today that are most dedicated to Yiddish, they are essentially antagonists. They have not found a way to unify their concern and love of Yiddish to produce a program of action for its support. Their antipathy hides their shared love.

Bikel addressed the broader question of assimilation and the place of the Jew in

contemporary American society. Unlike Blacks and Hispanics, Jews have been able to assimilate more or less at will into the mainstream of American life. We have therefore had the opportunity to choose to abandon our "greenhorn" ways and speech. "America was not meant to be a melting-pot; it was meant to be a kaleidoscope. Therein lies its beauty." And we as American Jews cannot nurture our own Jewishness, nor add our gems of color and contrast to the American kaleidoscope with a mere word or two of Yiddish expression, joke, or an ethnic mannerism. A language is a cultural framework, a state of awareness and distinct consciousness that offers an infinite flow of creative wealth. "It's too late for quick emergency measures. Yiddish should be read and spoken because it's there, not because if we don't it will die."

Representatives of more than 20 national and regional Jewish organizations attended the Conference, and that in itself suggested the scope of the new interest in Yiddish. Yugentruf, YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, The League for Yiddish, the Jewish Labor Committee, Hadassah, the Jewish National Fund, the Workman's Circle, and, significant in its inclusion among the invited participants, the YKUF, the Yiddisher Kultur Farband. It is only in the last two years that the significant contribution of the left-wing YKUF has begun to be publicly acknowledged by the mainstream of American religious and secular Yiddishist organizations.

A wonderful tale was told in Yiddish by Prof. Joseph C. Landis of Queens College, editor of the semi-annual learned journal *Yiddish*:

"In disbelief and wonder the hasidim approached their learned rebbe and pleaded with him to explain how it is that the train they were on moved forward without even a horse or an ox to pull it."

"When you were on the train," the Rabbi asked, "did you sing?"

"Oh yes," replied the hasidim.

"And did you enjoy yourself on the train?"

"Oh yes," replied the hasidim in chorus.

"And did you dance?" asked the Rabbi.

"But of course," replied the hasidim enthusiastically.

"And did you *tumul*?"

"Oh yes!" they all replied.

"Nu," said the Rabbi, "*fun tuml aleyn firt sich, rirt sich di bahn.*" (From the *tuml*—racket, din—itsself, the train moved.) Need the lesson for Yiddish be spelled out? If we, each of us, all of us, speak, sing, read and use Yiddish *vet sich rirt aleyn*—it will go on its own.

More than a dozen speakers participated in the part of the morning session devoted to comments from the floor. It reflected the diversity of the groups present as well as the wide scope of activities and projects designed to stimulate interest and involvement in Yiddish. The World Jewish Congress Commission on Yiddish is in the process of preparing a source book of the location and availability of materials on Yiddish. Perl Teitlboim described a project of dramatic productions specifically designed for small children undertaken by the Folksbiene, the oldest theatrical company in the country (now sponsored by the Workmen's Circle). Hannah Kliger, Instructor of Yiddish at the University of Pennsylvania and member of the International Organization of Yiddish Teachers, made a forceful plea for the development of courses in Yiddish for students majoring in Jewish Studies at major American universities. The old "jargon" prejudices which undermined the academic and popular acceptance of Yiddish as a distinct language still prevail in many institutions of higher learning in the United States.

After brief remarks by Prof. Arthur Hertzberg, Vice-President of the World Jewish Congress, a major address was made by Prof. Joshua Fishman, specialist in the field of the sociology of languages

under stress at Yeshiva University. In addition to his work in Yiddish studies, Prof. Fishman has examined parallel problems faced by Gaelic in Ireland, Catalan in Spain and Welsh in Wales. Jews are not alone in their struggle to nurture and be nurtured by their language-culture. Yiddish "is the culture that we created and that created us. It is more than an awareness. It is a continuity. In a personal sense it is the connection with my father. It is the language in which he shared himself and his legacy with me."

Prof. Fishman explored the phrase "kumen tsu sich," which can be loosely translated as "coming home to Yiddish." But it has two distinct meanings which must each be understood separately and then, only fully, when they are merged. It suggests "a return to one's nature" on the one hand and "a return to health," on the other. The return to Yiddish is therefore the full sense of health which results from being at one with one's nature.

In dramatic old-world rabbinic style, Dr. Moses Rosen, Chief Rabbi of Romania, addressed the group with passion and Biblical injunction. His thoughts raced far ahead of his Yiddish words, the last syllables of which were never pronounced. But his animation and powerful words left a deep impression: we must work for that enrichment of our lives which Yiddish alone can provide.

The afternoon workshops were divided between organizational concerns and "Yiddish and Youth." It was to the latter that I turned, primarily to hear what Aaron Lansky had to say. It was Lansky, still in his twenties, who four years ago came up with the idea of creating a National Yiddish Book Center. No one involved in any way with Yiddish language or culture during the past 20 years has been unaware of the fate of the Yiddish home libraries of the passing generations of Jews. Most of us have personally received the pleas of acquaintances or

friends who had found themselves in possession of Yiddish books and were, for one reason or another, on the brink of throwing them away. I remember my own treks to the Bronx and to the basement of a fine house in the Mohegan Colony in Westchester County in search of Yiddish books. And just last spring, walking to my neighborhood park, I came upon two volumes of the *Algemayne Entsiklopedia* (General Encyclopedia) in Yiddish, lying on top of a trash heap. This encyclopedia was published by the Dubnov Fund in Paris in 1940, but reprinted in New York by the Central Yiddish Culture Organization (CYCO) in 1948.

All who addressed the Conference infused passion into their words. One man was nearly overcome with his anger and frustration. But Lansky's energy and enthusiasm were fresh with the concrete *accomplishments* which accompanied his words. *Der Pakn Treger* (The Book Peddler), the Newsletter of the National Yiddish Book Center, Summer, 1984 issue, can now boast: "We have now the largest collection of available Yiddish books that has ever existed, [more than 250,000]. We are proud to have saved so much of our Yiddish heritage from destruction...And now...we have been able to launch the next phase of our work, the restoration of Yiddish literature to a new generation of readers. We are tremendously optimistic" (p. 14).

The Conference ended with the presentation of the following Declaration. May the optimism, dedication and success of Aaron Lansky and his co-workers meet each and every one of these proposals. ■

CORRECTION

- Jan. issue, p. 17, col. 1, line 9: we correct our own editing error: the term "primitive communism" was used by Manuel Azcarate, former top leader of the Spanish Communist Party, in an interview with Magil in 1980.

DECLARATION ADOPTED AT CONFERENCE FOR YIDDISH


We, the representatives of national and local Jewish organizations and institutions, having come together out of deep appreciation of a priceless heritage that has been created in Yiddish—not only in Eastern Europe but also in America—solemnly declare our determination to bend every effort to perpetuate its values in our own lives, in our organizations and in the American Jewish community at large.

To this end, we propose to undertake and support the following measures:

1. To set up a special sub-committee for Yiddish cultural and educational activities as an integral part of our overall educational, cultural or program committee.
2. To encourage the inclusion of Yiddish cultural programs as a regular part of the cultural and educational activity of our own organization or institution.
3. To dedicate at least one month a year for special emphasis on Yiddish programs.
4. To encourage our members to join Yiddish study or discussion groups, whether conducted by our own organization or by others.
5. To endeavor to encourage the children of our members who are college students to enroll in Yiddish courses in their respective institutions of higher learning.
6. To use our influence to obtain the inclusion of instruction in Yiddish in local Jewish educational institutions.
7. To join with others in sponsoring community-wide Yiddish lectures, concerts, dramatic presentations and film festivals.
8. To help in the placement of Yiddish books in local community center congregational, college and public libraries and to encourage our own constituents to buy, read and give Yiddish books.
9. To include in the publication of our own organization or institution a regular column or other feature in Yiddish.
10. To help disseminate and support the Yiddish press and periodical publications.

AUFBAU CELEBRATES ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

This weekly German-language newspaper, founded in 1934 by refugees who were members of the German-Jewish Club, celebrated its 50th anniversary with a luncheon at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York on Nov. 18, 1984. Beginning as a monthly, *Aufbau* became a weekly after a few years. In its issue of July 3, 1942, an article, "The Conspiracy of Silence," urged its readers, "do not turn away, listen to the cries of the Jews of Europe." For the Golden Anniversary, an exhibition of *Aufbau* materials was held at the Leo Baeck Institute in New York from Oct. 29 to Nov. 30, 1984.



The Editor's Diary

● *For Material on Black-Jewish Relations*

Would you want to know what opinions about Jews were expressed by Booker T. Washington, Edward Wilmot Blyden, W.E.B. DuBois, Malcolm X, Marcus Garvey, Martin Luther King Jr., Bayard Rustin, CORE, Eldridge Cleaver, James Baldwin, Leroi Jones (Baraka), Paul Robeson and many others? A fine guide to where you can find the answers to these and many similar questions is *Black-Jewish Relations in the United States, 1752-1984, A Selected Bibliography*, compiled by Winston-Salem State University History Prof. Lenwood G. Davis (Greenwood Press, Westport, CT, 1984, 145 pages, indexed, \$29.95). With so many people wanting to write, lecture, think and study about Black-Jewish relations, this veteran Black scholar and bibliographer's generally fair and thoughtful *selection* is timely and invaluable. As a youth in the 1950s in Beaufort, N.C., Prof. Davis tells us, he worked for one Sam Lippman in his home and his department store, and noticed that Lippman's and another Jewish-owned department store were "the only ones who would allow blacks to sit down or try on shoes and clothes." And for this Lippman was barely "tolerated by the white community." This early experience seems to have immunized him from conscious bias against Jews.

Prof. Davis has ranged far and wide in Black, Jewish and general publications to select the 1,241 items listed: 36 major books and pamphlets, 137 general works, 22 doctoral dissertations and theses, and 1,046 articles. He does not hesitate to record the existence of "Black Anti-Semitism," listing 106 items between 1903 and 1981, both in Black and Jewish publications. This number is outweighed by 226 items on "Black-Jewish Alliances" from 1933 to 1982, in such Black periodicals as the *N.Y. Amsterdam News* (21), the *Pittsburgh Courier* (5), *Crisis* (5), *Phylon*, *Jet*, *Chicago Defender* and *People's Voice* (2 each) and seven others. Of the 226 listings, 98 were published in the 1960s and 95 in the 1970s.

Have you wondered about the attitude of Blacks to Jews in the fight against Nazism? Prof. Davis lists 144 articles from 1931 to 1939 in a section, "Black-American Support of Jews against Hitler and Nazism," including 29 in the *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, 25 in the *Philadelphia Tribune*, 17 in the *Baltimore Afro-American*, 12 in *Crisis*, 11 in the *Washington Tribune*, and smaller numbers in 21 other Black publications. Examples: Kelly Miller, "Negro and Jew Partners in Distress," in the *Journal and Guide*, Nov. 5, 1938; or "Negroes Used as Bait to Fight Jews," in *Black Dispatch*, Aug. 20, 1938; or Beaunorus M. Tolson, "Keep That Chin Up, My Jewish Brother!" in *Washington Tribune*, March 11, 1939. On the other hand, such items as "Hitler Pried Above Roosevelt by Jesse Owens at G.O.P. Rally," *Philadelphia Tribune*, Oct.

29, 1936 are hardly examples of "Black-American Support of Jews against Hitler and Nazism."

This bibliography is helpfully arranged, with sections on the occupations of Jews as merchants, philanthropists, slave owners and slave traders (but not Jews as anti-slavery or abolitionists), and geographical sections: the South, NYC and Harlem, Atlanta, L.A., Philadelphia, New Jersey, Crown Heights in Brooklyn and East Bay, Calif.

Why does Prof. Davis begin in 1752? Because he mistakenly believes that "the first documented relationship [between Blacks and Jews] dat[es] back to 1752." Sad to say, the first documented relationship dates back to 1683, when Abraham Franckfoort, in Flatbush, Brooklyn, sold "a negro man" to Pieter Strijker. And between 1683 and 1752, the records show a distressing number of Jews involved with Blacks as slave-owner or slave-trader. It is not until late in the 18th century that Jews emerge as anti-slavery or emancipationist.

It is to Prof. Davis' credit that, although our publication is unfairly excluded from the *Index to Jewish Periodicals*, he found our materials. In fact, he cites JEWISH CURRENTS (and its earlier title, *Jewish Life*) 52 times, more than any other Jewish publication: *Commentary*, 31; *Congress Weekly*, *BiWeekly*, *Monthly*, 25; *Midstream*, 21; *Jewish Digest*, 19; *Reconstructionist*, 15; *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, 14; *American Jewish Historical Quarterly*, 14; *B'nai B'rith National Jewish Monthly*, 13, *Jewish Week and American Examiner*, 10—plus smaller numbers of citations from 48 other Jewish weeklies, monthlies and quarterlies.

The Jews most frequently listed are: Irving Spiegel, the *N.Y. Times* reporter assigned to Jewish affairs, and Your Editor, M. U. S., 12 each; Harry L. Golden and Murray Friedman, 9 each; Nathan Glazer, Jacob Rader Marcus and Albert Vorspan, 6 each; Howard M. Brotz, Leonard Dinnerstein, Nat Hentoff, Bertram W. Korn and Robert G. Weisbord, 5 each. The Blacks most frequently cited are Bayard Rustin, 15 times; Kelly Miller, 13; Matthew M. Gardner, 10; Kenneth S. Clark and Ben A. Richardson, 9 each; James Baldwin and Vernon E. Jordan Jr., 8 each; W.E.B. DuBois and Martin Luther King Jr., 7 each; Tony Brown, Adam Clayton Powell and George S. Schuyler, 5 each.

Every public, college, and Black or Jewish institutional library needs this bibliography.

● Fried's "The Second Beginning"

December 5

With Fred Pasamanick to the Writer's Theater (133 Second Ave.) to see Emanuel Fried's play. Having relished his collection, *Meshugah and Other Stories* about Jews in Buffalo (see "Diary," June, 1984), I was eager to see this latest of his 10 plays. Set in NYC in 1959, the conflict centers on Rose's desire to return to the socio-political fray, a "second beginning" from which Bert tries to keep her. When they married in the '40's, both were activists. Then, Rose says to Bert, "when it was started, it was sex and leaflets." Bert wants Rose now to choose "sex or the leaflets." Their relatives Mike and Ellen (Rose's younger sister) try to delay the confrontation. Rose yearns to demonstrate, to picket: "Down with anything!" Bert, cynical, taunts: "Zeroes of the world, unite—you have nothing to lose but your nothings." To him, American workers are like the

German workers under Hitler; Rose has more faith in them. To Bert, those who fight back do so for psychological self-satisfaction, but he needs no such satisfaction. Rose insists that activists make a choice on issues. For Bert sex is enough. There can be only one result: they break up, deciding to go their own ways. Tautly directed by Richard E. Hughes and well acted by an Equity cast, the play held me by its surface tension. Yet the characters are one-dimensional (there is no ethnic identity) and the denouement too pat.

● *"The Theater of Peretz"*

December 8

Having seen the original long-run production of Isaiah Sheffer's montage of I.L. Peretz (1851-1915) in 1963 ("Diary," June, 1963), I ambled down to the Congregation Rodeph Sholom to see its Players put on the first of its three performances. Considerably re-written and expanded, the work now consists of 18 items from the pen of Peretz, skillfully woven together to convey both his breadth and his bite. With Jonathan Levi directing an uneven company of 11 and with four Klezmer providing apt accompaniments, the production was lively and effective. I liked particularly "If Not Higher," "A Man's Gotta Pray," "Death of a Musician," "The Din-Torah," "A Domestic Idyll," "All for a Pinch of Snuff"—and "The Pious Pussycat," in which Joyce Abdun-Nabi presented a sly, sexy, venomous cat that could coolly swallow any canary and outstare any possible suspicion of her guilt. With "Ivan the Sabbath Handyman," a satire on rabbis who explain away any and all anti-Semitism, the staging really hit hard.

● *Award to Sholem Aleichem House*

December 9

Enjoyed my table at the Roosevelt Hotel at the annual dinner of the Zhitlovsky Foundation for Secular Jewish Education, being seated with three Yiddish poets, Martin Birnbaum, Hyam Plotkin and Sh. Bunin, an Israeli Yiddish writer, N. Kroshnitz and his wife, Stan David of WNYC and Prof. Tom Bird, a former colleague at Queens College. With Prof. Itche Goldberg presiding, the proceedings moved apace: there were Yiddish songs by Susan Goldberg and Peter Schlosser (Moishe Rauch at the piano), Gedalia Sandler did his annual stint with a fund appeal, and Prof. Yoni Fein, presenting the Award to the Sholem Aleichem House in Tel Aviv, discoursed learnedly and at length on Sholem Aleichem's humor. Accepting the award was a grandson of Sholem Aleichem, Mitchell Waife (Executive Vice-President of the Jewish Home and Hospital for the Aged on W. 106 St. in Manhattan). He remarked that it was ironic that Sholem Aleichem's largest audience is in English (and, we may add, in Soviet Russian translation).

● *At Jewish Student Press Service*

December 25

Into the crowded agenda of the Dec. 23-25 annual conference of the JSPS, which services over 40 Jewish student newspapers on college campuses throughout the country, I was squeezed for a lunch-break talk on "City College

in the '30's." Present were some 15 editors from the University of California at Berkeley to State University of New York at New Paltz, and points in between. I tried, first, to convey how different was the depression of the '30's, without social welfare programs, from the recent one, with many built-in cushions won by mass struggles in the '30's, and secondly the quality of militant activism on the City College campus, then a tuition-free institution with a student body largely Jewish and coming from working-class and lower middle class homes. I pointed to the impact of Hitler and Coughlinist anti-Semitism here on the level of Jewish consciousness among the students. Sheldon Ranz introduced me and presided.

● *"Messiah"*

December 30

With Jesse Mintus to the Manhattan Theater Club at City Center Theater to see this play by Martin Sherman about the false Messiah, Sabbatai Zvi (1626-1676), who, after the Hmelnitzki Ukrainian uprising against the Poles, during which hundreds of thousands of Jews were slaughtered, swept the Jews of Europe into a hysteria by announcing he was the Messiah—and then was forced by the Turkish Sultan to convert to Islam (see "Diary," July, 1983 for comment on *False Messiah*, an opera by Bruce Adolphe and Mel Gordon). Sherman being the author of *Bent*, a play about homosexuals in the Nazi holocaust (see review by Jonathan Boyarin here July-Aug., 1980), I looked for some fresh angle on the ancient tale. Set in 1665 in a Polish village, the play conveys little of the historic situation. Focus is on an ugly Jewish girl, Rachel, whose mother was struck mute during the pogroms. Rachel talks much to God, opening the play with, "God, keep the Cossacks away—God, let the Messiah come," and closing it with, "Oh, God, I don't know." In between, Rachel marries a garrulous old fool, learns about the Messiah from handsome Asher who teaches her about sex, the mute mother regains her voice—and Zvi's conversion devastates them. David Leveaux's direction and staging, and competent acting, are superior to the play.

● *Voice of Moyshe Oysher (1907-1958)*

For his 25th anniversary in 1983, a recording was reissued of the 1944 Town Hall Concert by the splendid cantor Moyshe Oysher for Bessarabian War Relief; copies have now fortunately been made available by his sister, Fraydele Oysher (303 W. 66 St., N.Y. 10023, \$10 per record). Because it was a war relief concert, there are three songs reflecting the Red Army by Itzik Feffer, T.S. Solodar and one Bunim. Oysher's ringing voice is at its best in cantorial caroling, a style he carries over, somewhat not too happily, to music to poems by Itzik Manger and Zion Weiner. Oysher was one of the great popular cantors of his time, and to have his style and quality on this recording is a pleasure and an education.

M.U.S.

TWO POEMS

By OSCAR FISHTEIN

MILK WAGON

I discovered the dim unsuspected dawn hours
as I watched by the open window,
timid of the night and drawn into its secrets—together.
A-wing on tapestried tales yet fixed-fast here,
I learned my own paradoxes
and gloried in my complexity.

The first bird-twitters came virgin to my ears
as I strained for the distant clip-clop,
fearful of omission and oblivion.
Would they remember?
Again I watched the sky for the fabled first light,
weariest of Auroras and Apollos
and prayed for the music of milk-bottles clinking,
the clatter of footfalls, the muted wheels on the pavement,
the clip-clop of hooves, the flip calls of camaraderie.

Would they remember?

And then—the sounds and sights together
and the lifetime of waiting.
I rush downstairs and away
to meet
my ship
in the first light.

Abie, captain, greets me.
Lowest among peers,
I learn the dodges;
how to glide past the gate,
allay the dog,
how to feel the stairways
how to replace the empty with the full bottle,
return to home base,
fill the cases with empties,
deftly cull the full ones,
often by twos,
white, gleaming, paper-stoppered,

OSCAR FISHTEIN, a new contributor, has been teaching in the English Department of Union College in Cranford, N.J. since 1960 and has been published in the quarterly, Union.

palms welcoming the cool wet of the glass,
joying in the swift sweep
of my young thighs
up the stairs,
through the gates.

I breathe the ghetto-smells
sweetened by dawn—
fish and dank stairways
garbage and sweat.

Rare petals here and there greening freshly
as forgotten laundry sways in the sweet breeze.

Withal the young light
newly tinting the stale artifacts
kissing the form and flesh
into day.

IN THE SYNAGOGUE

Days of awe
D sundered from the prosy turns,
bread-and-butter seasons
the common pence of being—
Strange days minted of timeless stuff
of cold, shadowless sunlight
of sounds not quite themselves.

On the walk beside the synagogue
we boys parade ungainly
in our new blue jackets
man-hands thrust deep in knickerbocker pockets,
learning to span the here and the then.
Our boy talk—Wat d'ye think, I heard, How d'ye like—
uncertain and lost as
B'Rosh Hashanah Yicosavun
V'Yom Kippur Yichosamun
float into the September ghetto
through the synagogue window.
And we are summoned.

Within, prayer-clothed men praying
incant the rolling syllables
sublimed into a runnel of sound
rising and falling as by the Cantor's call.
The air thickened by the host of close-pressed bodies
floats to the balconies
where sit the women.
Some grandmothers intoning
as their fingers follow in huge prayer books.

Equalized by time and the balcony,
young and old
keep a feminine faith
more nearly able to accommodate
the here and the then.
Girls next to mothers
coily play the fantasy game
peeping beyond prayer-book,
paying court to the pomp below.

From below the wailing orison rises
in classic antiphony
between Cantor and penitents.
Who will live
how many will pass
who will die by fire
Mi Ba Aish
Mi Ba Mayim
but Penitence, Prayer, Charity
can avert the evil decree.

Pa stands bent,
Shawl tenting the prayer-book
in holy privacy.
I am touched and terrified
I stammer the words
believing beyond the senses
but all the same agnostic
as to how the sound will pierce the roof
heavenward.
I sit with God in wonderment
at the eternal entreaty.

I must not look but I do
at the strange shawled triangle
of thumb and forefingers
of the Cohanim facing us,
at the altar
in syrupy half-light of candles
and dim electric lamps.
Brocaded drapes hang heavily.
Piercing voices of the Cohanim
incanting the fearsome syllables
to live or not to live
who by plague
who by flood.

On the walk home
Pa touches me
and fixes forever
the rare moment.

FELLOWSHIP

Brownsville remembered

By **KHAVER PAVER**

[Gershon Einbinder (Khaver Paver—1900-1964), was born in Bershad, Bessarabia. In 1923 he emigrated to the U.S.A., where he lived in New York and Los Angeles. His first stories were written for children. In an interview in Yiddische Kultur (Feb., 1961), he explains why he took his pen name:

"In Kishinev, I became a teacher in a school for refugees. I had always loved to tell stories to children...so I wrote down my first Yiddish story and the children in the kindergarten loved it. And that was when I took the name of Khaver Paver. I thought: anybody who writes for children should have a playful name, one that will itself make the children smile. I remembered a ditty I used to sing as a child which started with those two words—khaver paver—so that became my pen-name."

Gershon in America was published by Yiddish Buch, Warsaw, in 1963. He typically writes of himself in the third person. The chapter reprinted here was translated by Max Rosenfeld.]

Most difficult for Gershon in Brownsville was the time when he was without friends. But that didn't last long.

At a lecture by Moyshe Leyb Halpern in the Workers Club, a young fellow smiled at him. Gershon smiled back. Each of them said his name, what country he came from, where he was working—and soon they were talking. His name was David. He was a sturdy young fellow from Bessarabia, not very tall; but with his broad shoulders, his big chest, his ruddy face, his sparkling brown eyes, his thick, wavy black hair, his strong forehead—well, he was a picture of health and vigor.

David worked in a printshop, wrote poems without boring others with them, read them only to Gershon. Gershon, in turn, read David his stories, and both of them dreamed of one day being famous Yiddish writers.

Then Itka appeared. Who was Itka? Born in Brownsville, she spoke Yiddish

"like a native," with all its Hebraisms and Slavisms. When she smiled, her nose wrinkled up charmingly. With her olive complexion, her bright and playful dark eyes, her black silky hair, her slender, willowy, buoyant body, she looked like a Gypsy girl.

This Itka gave David and Gershon and other young fellows and girls a home, so to speak, a place to meet, sing, play kissing-games, argue about literature and all the "isms," eat herring-and-potatoes and drink it down with hot tea from a real samovar.

And there were such cold wintry days in Brownsville! Outdoors the wind almost blew you away, and at Itka's it wasn't too warm either in that big room with the Victrola and all the colorfully embroidered little pillows, but the camaraderie warmed us up.

Itka's mother and father would make themselves scarce in the kitchen somewhere, leaving the house free for their daughter and her friends. What was it that

drew this American-born Itka to these greenhorns? Her maternal feelings, probably. American-born fellows were not as lonely, not as nostalgic as these greenhorns.

Good fellowship like this is better than the rarest wine! It gladdens the human heart—and makes it stronger. These friendships sometimes led to marriage. David eventually married Itka. A good many couples first met at Itka's. But before those marriages started taking place, there were a few summers and winters when this tightly knit group of close friends "traveled together" to dances, to literary evenings, to picnics in the park, to excursions on the Hudson. They loaned each other money in time of need, they visited each other when they were sick.

And there were many such groups in Brownsville. They arose spontaneously, without any planning, and they provided a sense of greater security and strength in the new country than did their own families.

Itka's group was an idealistic one—people who were interested in the best of Yiddish literature and theater, people who later helped build Yiddish schools, choruses, trade unions, fraternal orders, who helped Yiddish writers publish their books.

Never will Gershon forget the evening when the whole group went to hear a lecture by Kalman Marmor (1879-1956) at the Labor Lyceum. Groups like this, when they went to such an event, saw to it that they all sat together. There were about a thousand people at this particular lecture, a thousand young Jews from Brownsville. The large audience itself, faces flushed and eyes shining, was tremendously exhilarating.

It was a Sunday afternoon. People came from their dreary flats all dressed up in their finest. Many of them were lonely "boarders" who lived in drab "single rooms." They came with a feeling of insecurity in their limbs, a feeling which greenhorns could not shake off for years and years. They came from a dark,

blustery outdoors into a hall where it was warm and bright. But even brighter than the lamps on the walls and ceiling were the glowing, youthful faces. And the best part of the program was: people meeting each other, looking at one another, fellows at the girls, girls at the fellows, hearts beating excitedly, the blood running hot. Such festivity, such festivity! It was intoxicating. Who gave a damn about the gloomy bedrooms, who gave a hoot about tomorrow? Here we all felt strong.

Many, many years later, when most of them were already grandmothers and grandfathers, and lived in comfortable homes scattered through non-Jewish neighborhoods, they loved to come to some such event at least once or twice a year, where former greenhorns could meet and relive those feelings of exhilaration and security. Again the most important part of the program was getting together, greeting one another, chatting with one another...

Yes, that evening in the Brownsville Labor Lyceum, whenever the thousand young people applauded, it sounded like thunder in springtime. And they applauded Kalman Marmor as soon as he walked onto the platform. A man of slight stature, who looked even smaller with his stooped-over shoulders, he seemed lost on that vast stage in the presence of so many people. He raised his clear-seeing eyes toward the ceiling, ran his hand across his high forehead—the forehead of a sage—and began to speak. He spoke a peculiar Lithuanian Yiddish, but his voice was lyrically strong, with a fatherly warmth. He spoke softly, almost in a whisper, but he could be heard everywhere in the hall, even in the last row. Maybe they heard him everywhere because they wanted so much to hear him; their ears opened wide and nobody stirred, as if they were holding their breath.

The theme of his lecture was "The Meaning of Life." And Kalman Marmor had purposefully chosen that theme. In his



THE RABBI'S GIRLS by Johanna Hurwitz, Illus. by Pamela Johnson, Morrow, N.Y., 1982, 158 pages, \$8.50.

Rabbi Levin, his wife and six daughters live in Lorain, Ohio in 1923-24. This story describes everyday events and shows how much the household is involved in the work of this kindly rabbi, loving to his family and devoted to his congregation. Weddings and prayers often take place in his house, congregational busybodies visit, Board members intrude and judge. The rabbi is expected to be available for his flock no matter what the state of his health or his problems at home. When his new baby almost dies of pneumonia and in desperation he turns to a gentile doctor, he jeopardizes his position.

The family is individualized in a superficial way. The oldest girl, a high school student, has a crush on the too proper son of a Board member; the next is a religious rebel who secretly breaks the Sabbath rule; the narrator is Carrie, a fifth grader who faces anti-Semitism and a friendship problem, etc. Mama is kindly, exceedingly superstitious and very supportive of her husband.

wisdom, in his compassion, he understood that many of the young immigrants to whom he was speaking were bewildered. Lost. They had not yet adapted themselves to the new country. The work in the shops was difficult for them, they were lonely, they often grew melancholy. So they must be searching for the meaning of their lives. He therefore told them, did Kalman Marmor, what the meaning of life was. The meaning of life is work, creativity, comradeship, meeting together, enjoying things together, doing something for humanity—together.

After the lecture we went to Itka's to eat

This picture of a small religious Jewish community in a non-Jewish environment is truthful. Not all the Jews are shown as likable; some of the non-Jews are bigoted, and some are kindly human beings. It is a good recreation of the life of an Orthodox rabbinical family with hints of the children's growing awareness of its limiting ideology. The illustrations seem drab and too old-fashioned.

o

BUBBY, ME AND MEMORIES by Barbara Pomerantz, photos by Leon Lurie, Union of American Hebrew Congregations, N.Y., 1983, unpagged, \$6.95.

One cannot wish for a more sensitive, honest way to allow death to come into a child's experience than through the simple words and the black and white photographs of this book.

A little girl, whose soul is captured in these photographs, remembers the pleasant times she has had with her Bubby, who is realistically and lovingly photographed; she remembers her Bubby's death, her own sadness, her growing understanding that Bubby is never coming back, her family sitting Shivah, friends coming, her daddy saying Kaddish, and finally her own realization that it is the

(Continued on page 42)

herring-and-potatoes, to drink tea from a copper samovar. On colorful pillows scattered over the floor we sat and discussed Kalman Marmor's lecture and each one of us resolved that he or she would live with the meaning that the lecturer had propounded. We also talked about how good it would be if this group of people, no matter what happened later in life, would stay together.

Many years have passed since that evening, and whenever Gershon thinks about the people in that group, he doesn't even know where most of them are or what happened in their lives... ■

Jewish Women Now

Who Decides How Many Children?

By CAROL JOCHNOWITZ

About 10 years ago I read an article in a Jewish publication that had me slamming the door of the broom closet and snarling under my breath for a week. The author, who was worried about the rate at which Jews were reproducing, was very upset with my generation for having, as a general rule, no more than two children per family. There was no doubt in his mind as to why we were doing this; it was because we were spoiled. Our parents had given us every indulgence, and as a result we had grown up self-centered, sexually promiscuous and more interested in having an easy life than in doing our duty to Jewish survival. It was time, I think he said in conclusion, for Jewish young people to be taught their responsibility to have four children per family.

What made me so angry about this article wasn't so much the author's apparent belief that most people were going to consider the number of children they had anybody's business but their own. That, I was willing to let life and reality teach him. Rather it was an implied misrepresentation of his, the falsity of which, it seemed to me, should have been apparent to anyone taking a few moments' thought. The author was talking as if no one before my generation had ever thought of such a thing as having no more than two children. Now I was born in 1941. I don't think I've ever had a Jewish friend who had more than one or two siblings. Only children like myself may not have been common, but a *pair* of children was almost the universal rule—noticeably

more frequent than three. As for a family with more than four, I don't think I every heard of such a thing. I have the distinct impression it would have been considered outlandish.

And what about my parents' generation of Jews? My mother and father were born in this country to foreign-born people. My mother is an only child; my father was one of three. Among my parents' friends, too, I search with difficulty for anyone who came from a family of more than three or four children. The two-child pattern, then, far from being a selfish device of the me generation, was not invented by my generation or even my parents'. It was invented by my *grandparents*. As Prof. Calvin Goldscheider of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem commented in the Dec. 4, 1981 issue of the *Baltimore Jewish Times*, American Jewish families have had an average of two children apiece since 1920. That's over 60 years ago, or about three generations. It's also a date approximately one generation after Jewish immigrants started arriving here in force. In other words, as soon as it was technically and culturally feasible for these people to start limiting their families to that size—they did so. Indeed they never seem to have thought of doing otherwise.

They were within their rights, to say the least. But today we've gone beyond them, with consequences that redefine the situation drastically. According to an article in the July-Aug. 1981 issue of *Conservative Judaism*, the American Jewish birthrate is now down to about 1.5—significantly less than the 2.2 rate

demographers tell us a population needs to remain constant. It's become increasingly common for educated two-child couples to delay childbearing until they're in their thirties, and then have only one. And a growing minority is opting not to have any at all. And so, while there were about 5.7 million of us in 1982, there may be only three or four million Jews around to celebrate America's 300th birthday in 2076. If you extrapolate from those figures along straight lines, you know what you get.

As a result, the question of the Jewish birthrate has moved out of the private realm and onto the public agenda, up there with intermarriage and assimilation as a potential threat to our survival as a people. It is argued that we no longer have the right to declare the matter a personal one when the personal impulse at work portends our extinction. Thus we have Dr. Robert Gordis, a faculty member at the Jewish Theological Seminary and one of America's leading Conservative rabbis, asking his colleagues to preach from their pulpits that all Jewish couples should have three children. Simultaneously, more practical social planners are proposing inducement rather than injunction as the method of choice and are urging improved Jewish day-care facilities, tuition discounts for large families at day schools and the like.

And how does all this strike me? Do these pronouncements also fill me with dark emotions to be taken out on the kitchen furniture? Not quite. I acknowledge the likelihood at which that straightline extrapolation is pointed: a world without Jews. And it shatters me. When I try to imagine it, I find myself visualizing something like the physicists' nuclear winter: a frozen desolate earth, its sun obscured by a deadly, impenetrable cloud. And yet I'm not ready to allow any tampering with the separation between public need and personal right. I still refuse to agree that demands from the first can be legitimately imposed on the second.

CAROL JOCHNOWITZ

with this issue begins to write and conduct this column. First appearing here in March, 1974, she served as an Editorial Associate with us from Jan., 1975 to Jan., 1976, when she resigned to write a book, *Careers in Medicine for the New Woman*, published by Franklin Watts and reviewed here in July, 1978. She has also collaborated, with Edythe Lutzker, on a biography of Waldemar Mordecai Haffkine (1860-1930), which is looking for a publisher. In our Oct., 1980 issue, we published an article on Haffkine's school days, excerpted from the book. Carol Jochnowitz' article, "The Jewish Woman Today," was reprinted from our March, 1975 issue in *A Ten Year Harvest*, Third Decennial Jewish Currents Reader (available from us, paperback, \$3.75).



Born Sept. 19, 1941, she was graduated from Barnard College of Columbia University in 1963. She is married to Dr. George Jochnowitz, professor of linguistics at the College of Staten Island of CUNY. They have two daughters, Eve and Miriam, both in college. All four taught at the University of Hebei in China in the Spring of 1975.

I continue to insist that a couple's right to determine the size of its family is as inalienable as any of those other rights more commonly discussed. I believe the technology which made this freedom of choice possible is the greatest, most revolutionary gift science has ever given to human beings. I also, as I said before, don't believe that most people question their right to exercise it, which causes me to

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INSIDE THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

American Jewish Committee

● Dec. 10 the Committee called upon the South African government "to take the necessary steps, starting with the immediate release of trade union leaders, to end finally the gross violation of human rights inherent in apartheid." AJC president Howard I. Friedman stated that AJC reaffirmed "our abhorrence of apartheid, South Africa's system of legally entrenched racial discrimination" and called for its speedy elimination. He stated: "It is heartening to us that there has been a major escalation of public calls for such elimination of apartheid—including the use of dramatic non-violent civil disobedience which can contribute to peaceful change. It is especially heartening to find bipartisan support and participation in these recent declarations.

● *Jews in the Elections:* American Jews, though they seem to shift with current political moods, are still more liberal than their fellow Americans. Such is the conclusion of a poll of American Jews and an analysis of how they voted in the 1984 presidential election, both of them done by AJCommittee and made public Nov. 13. The findings were based on questions directed to 959 Jews nationwide between April and August, 1984.

Dr. Steven M. Cohen, who directed the survey, stated that among American Jews he found that "self-defined liberals" outnumbered conservatives by more than 3 to 2, with "middle-of-the-road Jews" about as numerous as the liberals. He concluded, "many more Jews than other Americans are liberal, and far fewer call themselves conservative." Milton

Himmelfarb of AJCommittee reported that, on the basis of exit polls, Jewish voters apparently gave two-to-one support to Walter F. Mondale, the Democratic candidate. Dr. Cohen concluded from the findings: "It seems the national political center has moved right after the last 15 years or so...and Jews moved accordingly. However, it still appears that the center of the Jewish political spectrum is as left of the national center as it has been for decades."

○ *On Women's Abortion Clinics:* Dec. 18 AJCommittee urged the U.S. Government to intensify its investigation of increasing acts of violence against women's health and abortion clinics. The Committee stated that "In the last year alone, there have been 24 reported arson and fire bombings of such health care facilities, many of which have also reported frequent harrassment of both patients and service providers...We call upon Administration officials to step up their investigations of these acts, and to bring the perpetrators to justice."

Ethiopian Jewish Youth Aided

The National Board of Hadassah Dec. 20, in emergency session, authorized a grant of an additional \$200,000 over and above its current level of support to Youth Aliyah to provide for absorption of Jewish youth from Ethiopia now arriving in Israel in record numbers. More than 8,000 Ethiopian Jews have been resettled in Israel already. Another 1,400 to 1,600 Ethiopian youth are expected over the next two months.

Hadassah also announced the

formation of its first chapter in Europe which was set up in Lausanne, Switzerland. Many additional groups in Switzerland and France are being organized.

American Jewish Congress Acts

The *N.Y. Amsterdam News* reported Dec. 8 that "Theodore H. Mann, president of the American Jewish Congress, scored official indifference to recent violent attacks on Black families that have moved into previously white neighborhoods in the Chicago area." The report cited an attack Nov. 7 by a crowd of whites against the apartment of a Black family that moved to Roosevelt Road, a street separating Chicago from the adjoining city of Cicero. Neither Chicago nor Cicero police intervened, "even though the attack took place over several hours."

Also, "on Nov. 19 a Molotov cocktail was hurled through the window of the home of the Sanders family, which had recently moved into the Southwest section of Chicago. No one has been apprehended in either case."

The news item stated: "A group of community organizations, including the Chicago regional office of the American Jewish Congress, is offering a \$2,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for the attack on the Goff family."

◦ *Church and State Separation*: Four organizations—American Jewish Congress, American Civil Liberties Union, National Education Association and the National Coalition for Public Education and Religious Liberty—in an amicus brief, Dec. 12 stated that government funds cannot be used for NYC programs that assign public school teachers to teach remedial reading on parochial school premises. The brief noted that the Supreme Court has repeatedly found public subsidization of on-premises teaching at religious schools to be unconstitutional. It also noted that the

Feb. 24—NEW YORK ATTENTION—Feb. 24

JEWISH CURRENTS PRESENTS

- Dr. Annette T. Rubinstein on "China—Which Way?"
 - Paul Robeson Jr. on "Misuse of the Socialist Concept" and AUDIENCE GIVE-AND-TAKE
Moderator—*Arnold Pedowitz*
also *Rita Falbel*—"Songs for Today"
- Contribution: \$6 Coffee "and" included

PRODUCERS:

Prof. Sylvia Aron	Rose Raynes
Jeanette Cohen	Doris Rosenblum
Goldie/Sam Eisenberg	Hedy Shneyer
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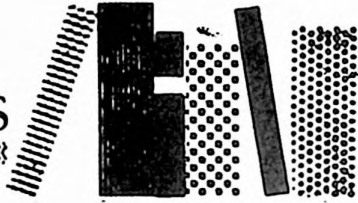
dispute is not over whether remedial educational services to economically and educationally deprived children attending parochial schools is permissible, but how and where the services are delivered.

Creches on Public Land

On Dec. 5, five national organizations—American Jewish Committee; Americans for Religious Liberty; Washington Office, Episcopal Church; Office of Governmental Affairs, Lutheran council, USA; and Washington Office, Unitarian Universalist Association—jointly urged Secretary of the Interior William P. Clark to rescind the decision by the National Park Service to erect a Creche on public park land, the Ellipse, in Washington. The appeal was turned down, but from various actions by different organizations in the country it is clear that the struggle to halt the blurring of the constitutional separation of church and state will continue with growing strength. Among Jewish organizations continuing this vital defense of the constitution are the American Jewish Congress, American Jewish Committee, Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, Union of American Hebrew Congregations (Reform).

S.P.

BOOK REVIEWS



A Soviet Jewish Lawyer

By **MARC MARGOLIUS**

Final Judgment: My Life as a Soviet Defense Attorney, by Dina Kaminskaya, Tr. by Michael Glenny. Simon and Schuster, N.Y., 1982, 348 pages, \$14.95.

What should a criminal defense lawyer do when an innocent client is found guilty and sentenced before trial by someone outside the judicial system? Is the ethical response to refuse to participate in a sham trial in order to deny the legitimacy of the process? Should she defend her client as well as possible, hoping to expose the trial as a fraud? Or does such participation render one an accomplice to the perpetuation of a corrupt system?

Such is the moral dilemma confronting Soviet criminal defense lawyers in deciding whether to defend political and religious dissidents. The exploration of this dilemma constitutes the core of this remarkable volume of memoirs by a Soviet Jewish defense attorney whose distinguished 37-year career ended in 1977. Then, because of her frequent

representation of dissidents and her husband's "anti-Soviet" writings, the pair were effectively expelled. Kaminskaya argues forcefully that the proper response to the quandary is to grapple directly with the unjust system and to reveal its hypocrisy at every turn. Her book documents her courageous and perhaps successful personal struggle against the Soviet government's use of the criminal system for political ends.

These memoirs succeed on various levels: as a gripping account of Kaminskaya's most significant trials; as a lucid overview of the Soviet criminal justice system; and as a polemic regarding the political role of criminal lawyers generally and in the Soviet Union specifically. Despite several substantive gaps in her account, Kaminskaya manages to portray vividly her life in the Soviet criminal justice system. Throughout, she describes the work of the defense lawyer with contagious passion and pride.

Kaminskaya's Jewishness is, however, a subject left uncomfortably vague. While in the Soviet Union, her personal experience with official and unofficial anti-Semitism taught her that she was Jewish. Once outside the country, however, she became unsure of her identity and defined herself as essentially Russian. Although she sought, unsuccessfully, to obtain access to represent Anatoly Scharansky, she also notes with apparently deliberate vagueness her willingness to represent

MARC MARGOLIUS, a new contributor, was a legal services lawyer in Hartford, CT, specializing in civil rights law, and a member of the Steering Committee of the New Haven chapter of *New Jewish Agenda*. He is now attending the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in Philadelphia.

dissidents whose "chauvinistic and nationalistic beliefs" were anathema to her. She is conspicuously silent regarding her own views on Israel and Zionism generally, and their impact on Soviet Jews.

Kaminskaya's depiction of the criminal justice system reveals it to be, in non-political cases, more protective of defendants than one might suppose from popular accounts in these New Cold War days. Accused persons are entitled to select an advocate (defense lawyer) of their choice. Advocates, supported directly by client's fees (which are carefully regulated), are generally independent of government or Party influence.

Pre-trial detention is limited to a generally-observed nine-month maximum. Cases are tried by panels composed of one judge and two lay "people's assessors," with verdicts determined by majority vote. Defense counsel may request the production of relevant materials and witnesses excluded from the prosecution's case. Investigators are held to strict standards in the conduct of their inquiries, which are kept secret until trial. Convicted defendants are entitled to appeals; innocent defendants can be and are acquitted despite adverse public opinion. Despite Kaminskaya's concerns about the devaluation of defense counsel and defendants' rights, she believes that generally the Soviet criminal justice system is fair and effective.

Beneath this veneer of objectivity, however, Kaminskaya reveals an infrastructure which enables the state and Party to direct the outcome of criminal cases, while evading procedural devices which shelter defendants from arbitrary or abusive use of the criminal process. Kaminskaya notes, for example, that while judges are freely elected, candidates must be Party members and be screened by Party officials. The Party carefully monitors the performance of judges to ensure conformity with official penal policy.

Judicial salaries are low and bribery is endemic; Kaminskaya describes how the system breeds a corrupt and cynical judiciary with contempt for objectivity and the legal process. Accused persons can be held in isolation before trial without contact with friends, family or counsel until the investigation is completed. Advocates' right to additional time, witnesses and evidence is often unjustifiably denied. The peoples' assessors on each panel, intended to serve the function of a jury, are actually wholly subordinate to the judge's influence. While advocates are theoretically free to accept cases anywhere in the country, only a relatively few Party-approved advocates may represent defendants in "political" or KGB-investigated cases. Consequently, the vast majority of advocates are barred from the most significant class of cases. Kaminskaya herself was stripped of her "access" privileges after developing a reputation for defending dissidents.

The system Kaminskaya portrays with bittersweet affection is designed to appear politically insulated, while a subtle system of rewards and punishments allow the state to manipulate it as an instrument of political control. Sometimes this tension is resolved in favor of defendants. Kaminskaya devotes a long and riveting chapter to a case in which she successfully defended two teenage boys falsely charged with rape, after intense public pressure forced the Party to produce a perpetrator. The case was especially significant because the defendants were acquitted despite having confessed before trial. (Confessions are usually a central aspect of convictions under Soviet law.) Kaminskaya uses this case brilliantly as a pedagogical means of conveying how the Soviet legal system can and does protect individuals from the arbitrary exercise of state power, even against great odds.

Kaminskaya portrays herself as the consummate legal professional, dedicated to the rule of law, for whom the goal of advocacy is to prevent the state from

flouting its own rules. She claims to have been bothered less by the material deprivations of those who suffered under the abuses of Stalinism than by the "hypocrisy and lies" of that era. Her disdain for official mendacity led her in the 1960s and 1970s to become involved in the "defense of legality" movement, an attempt to make the government conform to its own laws. She began then her defense of political dissidents.

In each of these political trials, Kaminskaya faced a situation in which her client's guilt had been predetermined. Rather than avoid such cases, Kaminskaya contends that an advocate is ethically bound to participate in such trials to expose their blatant illegality. These trials afforded her the opportunity to "develop a respect for the law among the Soviet people," and such opportunities were not to be squandered.

Kaminskaya appears less sympathetic towards those advocates who elect not to defend dissidents, implying that fear rather than principle motivates their choice. She is convinced that advocates who have defended dissidents in political cases have usually succeeded in exposing the fundamental illegality of the trials themselves and thereby discredited such use of the Soviet criminal justice system. While the courage of such advocates is indisputable, and Kaminskaya's representation was clearly appreciated by and helpful to her clients, she tends to minimize the propaganda value to the Soviet Union of being able to point to the able representation of dissidents by outstanding defense counsel like herself. She does not delve at length into the extent to which the very appearance of defense counsel at political trials counterbalances the advocate's exposure of the extra-legal nature of the proceedings. While Kaminskaya makes a persuasive case for her own choice to participate, one misses a more thorough discussion of the counter-argument.

In a broader sense, the moral dilemma

pervading this book provokes one to ponder whether a lawyer can ever play a progressive role in a state where the legal system is itself effectively an extension of the state. Kaminskaya argues that the defense lawyer's political function is to teach "respect for the law."

As a result, she defended only dissidents struggling "within the law" to achieve legally-allowed goals, and not "terrorists or extremists." She limited her defense arguments to claiming that the evidence did not support a conviction under the criminal statutes, rather than attacking the validity of the law or law-making process itself. She accepted the constraints of a legal system in which courts cannot declare laws unconstitutional, effectively rendering the constitution void.

On the one hand, the role Kaminskaya envisions is designed to extract "fairness" from the state and adherence to established procedures and standards. Alternatively, it could detract from the work of activists who reject the legitimacy of a legal system which is inherently arbitrary and vulnerable to political manipulation.

One reconciles with difficulty the contradiction between Kaminskaya's loyalty to the legal system and her bitter acknowledgment of the state's unfettered capacity to control that system. Although she elected advocacy as a career because of its ostensible political autonomy, there is irony in the reality that as an attorney she owed allegiance to a system thoroughly though subtly controlled by the state, and was ultimately denied access to political cases because of her activities on behalf of dissidents. One senses Kaminskaya's discomfort with this contradiction in her explanation of how her work as an advocate complemented the activities of dissidents whose political goals may have included a fundamental alteration of the legal system.

Primarily, however, this book is a testament to Kaminskaya's passion for the law. Acknowledging the constraints of her

letters



FROM READERS

Opinions expressed in letters are not necessarily those of the magazine. Letters will not be published unless accompanied by the name and address of the writer. Names will be withheld from publication on request. — Ed.

Moved to Contribute

I am enclosing a check for \$50. After receiving the last letter from Morris Schappes I was quite moved and wrote my check.

NORMA LEVITT

New York, July 14, 1984

Here is a \$10 contribution. Please don't thank me personally. You need the postage—your magazine is thanks enough.

ROBERTA HORNER

Springfield, Mich., July 27

Received your letter of June 22 with a variety of *tsuris*, here they are: *Gehakte tsuris*, *Gebreente*, *Gebrokti*, *Bitiri*.

It seemed like you're in business, and you're trying to make a sale, Thanks. We don't want any of them, may they be the best *tsuris*.

I would suggest that you send them to Ronald Reagan as a contribution for his election campaign. As for myself, I'll settle

role, she movingly describes her struggle to use her skills on behalf of those who stood with her for the freedom to express themselves in Soviet society. Her important testimony will inspire progressive lawyers and non-lawyers with similar aspirations, and challenge them to examine anew the advantages and limitations of law as an agent of social change. ■

for *Gehakti Leber* (Liver). (This is only for laughs.)

There is only one (1) remedy for your *tsuris*, which means our *tsuris*. You'll find it enclosed (\$50) in the envelope.

SAM and SALLY REITMAN

Bronx, N.Y., July 25

Enclosed is my \$100 check. I thought about the appeal in your June 22 letter—for a couple of minutes. And concluded that your specific contribution—the contribution of JEWISH CURRENTS on the left, is much too valuable to permit a disruption that can be prevented.

San Francisco, July 29 OSCAR RODES

Not only do you break my heart, but also my checking account. The reference to Sholom Aleichem did it! Enclosed is our \$100 donation.

ISIDORE and RUBY GOLDSTEIN

New York, July 30

I returned to Seattle just a few days ago after nearly six weeks away and found your letter concerning the summer emergency drive. I hope that by now the emergency is past, but please add my contribution (\$25 and \$10 sustainer per month) to the total.

JEWISH CURRENTS continues to be the most useful publication I receive. I very frequently go back though my collection of several years and reread articles or look for informatin on topics of current interest to me. It's an interesting process of trying

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Philadelphia, Pa., Dec. 6 HANNAH KLIGER/RAKHMIEL PELTZ

to fill in some of the gaping holes in my Jewish background. Anyway, as you suggest in your letter, my life would be much the poorer if JEWISH CURRENTS weren't in it.

ELLIE KELLMAN

Seattle, Wash., Aug. 1

Soviet Yiddish Theater

This is to tell you that I especially liked your July-Aug. issue, the articles on Feuchtwanger, Mikhoels, the Peace Trip on the Volga and on Sherling's Theater are all subjects which are of particular interest to yours truly.

I remember Paul Novick from the thirties when I used to live in New York and I am glad that he is still "going strong." I am pleasantly surprised that he is taking such a positive stand on Jewish culture and the Yiddish language and theatre in the Soviet Union. When I visited the theatres in Moscow in the late sixties and asked some of the officials there why the Yiddish theatre has been eliminated in Moscow the reply was, "Why do you need a Yiddish theatre here? You have a theatre in Israel."

Enclosed is a \$30 donation.

HERSHEL ZOHN

Las Cruces, N.M., July 25

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From Israeli Defense Archives

We acknowledge with thanks the receipt of the material that you were so kind to forward to our Archives.

The above material will be added to the collection on the Jewish Fighter in World Armies in our Archives, and will assist researchers dealing with the relating period.

Thanking you again, we are,

Yours sincerely,
DR. Z. OSTFELD
Deputy Director
Military (I.D.F.)
and Defense Estab-
lishment Archives

Tel Aviv, Aug. 15

[On receiving a request for Albert Prago's pamphlet reprint, *Jews in the International Brigades in Spain* (available, \$1 postpaid), we sent that work and related articles and reviews by Saul Wellman and Irving Weissman, veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade.—Ed.]

From Richard Morford

I have been a regular reader of JEWISH CURRENTS through many years—cover to cover each month—the articles contributing to my understanding and sympathy even when there may be some

disagreement in some positions taken.

I was shamed, therefore, to open the Sept. issue today for I had not heeded your half dozen appeals to renew my subscription.

The more so when I saw your reproduction of the Jesse Jackson statement at the Democratic Convention. Even more when I read your statement, "Secular Jews and Social Action," in accepting the award from the Leadership Conference, correctly relating the Hebrew prophets to ongoing history and culture of

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CORRECTION

- Dec. issue, p. 24, col. 2: the title of the book by Cedric Belfrage and James Aronson is *Something to Guard: The Stormy (not Story) Life of the National Guardian, 1948-1967.*

Hanuka Greetings

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which we are all a part—Christian and Jew, religious and secular. The concluding paragraphs of the second column, p. 17, are a glorious tribute to the social action stands taken by the prophets.

Here is the renewal. What with the requests to support the sanctuary movement in the churches, the campaign of Freeze Voter '84, etc., etc., etc. I cannot do better just now. Call upon me some more. Best regards,

RICHARD MORFORD

New York, Sept. 20, 1984

From Pete Seeger

Reading your article (Sept. issue) on p. 126, "Secular Jews and Social Action," it occurs to me to ask if it wouldn't be a good thing for secular Jews to examine a belief which is really a religious belief, but since it is accepted with some kind of gut feeling rather than truth, it should be considered a religious belief.

This is a belief common among most scientists in the world that an infinite increase in empirical knowledge is a good thing. There is, of course, no proof of it. As a matter of fact, there's considerable evidence that perhaps it's leading to the end of life on earth long before necessary.

The funny thing is that they don't really believe it as logically as they think they do, because they want an infinite increase of knowledge for themselves, but they know that a good deal of his knowledge is too dangerous now to be given not just to enemies but to any immature person or insane person.

The most common answer I have found is, "But you can't stop the human race from learning things. It's impossible." This seems to me as silly as saying you can't stop people from wanting to kill or murder or to cannibalize or steal or rape. If it is spread that something is a bad thing, we can start working and discussing how to eliminate this. The first thing is to agree that it is a bad thing.

This idea is not original with me but was

passed on to me by my father, who died at age 92 a few years ago, and in the last few years of his life had to laugh aloud at the thought that his ideas were leading to a very reactionary conclusion, namely that perhaps the Vatican committee which questioned Galileo was in the right, after all. Today, I joke that if I had been around when somebody was inventing the wheel, I would have said, "Don't."

My father was a member of the Pierre Degeyter Club in the early 1930s. He guided me when I was trying to learn music, and we were close friends to the end of his days. In 1986 he would have been 100 years old and hoped to get **Sing Out** magazine to reprint one of the articles in his only book, *Studies in Musicology*. In the recently published autobiography of Aaron Copland, there is a page or two on my father, discussing their relationship back in the 30's.

However, to get back to what I originally wrote to you about, I still do believe that it would be valuable for secular Jews (and everyone else) to disassociate themselves from this most dangerous belief aforementioned.

All best wishes,

PETE SEEGER

Beacon, N.Y., Oct. 10

On Advanced Democracy

In your July-Aug. editorial on Israeli politics, you close with the phrase "...Israel's more advanced democracy," a characterization prompted by the use there of proportional representation.

I question the word "advanced." I write for the sake of accuracy, not to denigrate Israel or unduly praise our own imperfect democracy. Having, since completing that issue's article on Brandeis, seen a better book that has not the faults of the one there discussed. I am impelled to quote the apt words of the new book's author, Prof. Phillipa Strum of City College, in her new *Brandeis: Justice for the People* (Harvard U. Press, 1984):

BESSIE IN CHINA

Lawrence Bush's novel *Bessie* was reviewed favorably in the Beijing literary monthly *Dushu* (Reading) in Nov., 1984. According to a translation supplied us by Ellen Klempler, the literary critic, Shen Shuang, noted that the Jewish and Chinese nationalities are similar in many ways: both possess ancient civilizations and traditions; both have undergone great suffering and have struggled strongly against oppression. Therefore the Chinese ought to increase their understanding of Jewish history and culture, particularly of the modern era. He declares it unfortunate that, when many people think of Jews, they associate them with Shylock or, at most, the Nazi concentration camps. Therefore *Bessie*, by the "American Jewish author, Lawrence Bush," is helpful in giving the reader a picture of "modern Jewish life and struggle." The reviewer sees the struggle against racism and the idea of not wavering in the face of adversity as major themes in the book. Interestingly enough, he quotes *Bessie* as saying she'd like to be able to talk to Lenin about why there is still anti-Semitism in the USSR.

The review appears in a regular monthly department dealing with new foreign books. Reviewed in the same issue was Saul Bellow's *Him with His Foot in His Mouth and Other Stories*. *Bessie*, priced at \$17.95, is available from JEWISH CURRENTS for only \$10 postpaid.

"Brandeis was too much of a civil libertarian to be sanguine about many aspects of the Israel of today; the enforcement of orthodox religious beliefs transformed into civil law; the systematic legalized mistreatment of Israeli Arabs; the inequality of women; the military

FROM NEW HAVEN, CT.,

we learn that Dec. 16 a Hanuka Brunch held by our Jewish Currents Group attracted 26 readers and friends to enjoy bagels and what goes with them. After a candle-lighting ceremony, there was a talk on the Yale strike scene by Sid Resnick, who, with his wife Arlene, are both among the strikers. He dwelled on the role of progressive Jews in organizing the Union among the clerical and office workers and non-teaching staff at Yale. A fund appeal by Joe Dimow netted \$166 plus two new subs for the magazine.

The Management Committee appreciates the continuing solidarity of this loyal JEWISH CURRENTS support group. (Other small communities please copy!)

expansionism and violation of the rights of captive populations."

While Reaganism strives to eliminate these points of superiority that our democracy has over Israel's, I think that as of now we have the more "advanced" democracy.

HOWARD N. MEYER

New York, Sept. 27

[Would ours not be still more advanced if we had proportional representation for election to office?—Ed.]

Prediction

However vainly—I can't resist commenting on today's momentous news. This day marks the inevitable demise of the Mythology of Marxism. Today, Communist China propagated its "Decision On Reform of the Economic Structure."

The soundness of the reasons for this soul-wrenching switch from religious stricture has long been painfully apparent. But old shibboleths die hard. I predict the mythologies of the JEWISH CURRENTS Editorial Board will pull their covered

wagons around them; they have little penchant for surrender.

ED LENDING

Boca Raton, FL, Oct. 24

So Impressed...

I was so impressed by the Sept. issue I felt I had to comment. Morris U. Schappes' handling of Tilewick's criticism [on the USSR and Mideast] was superb. It aint easy to defend anything the USSR does or says, but I'm glad to have that balance. Also, Schappes' article on secular Jews really was well done...

BEN GOLDSTEIN

Los Angeles, Sept. 29

Wolfsons—Attention

I am seeking relatives of my grandfather Izhak Wolfson, who was born in Kazimizovka, Byelorussia, in 1878 and died in Russia in 1957. His brothers and sisters were Sheel, Haim, Shmuel, Berel, Haya and Golda Wolfson. They came to America up to 1922 and lived in Chicago, New York and Los Angeles. If you have any pertinent information, please contact me at: Tal-El, Mobile Post, Upper Galilee, Israel, tel. (04) 961-006 or (052) 444-070.

DR. YAACOV EPSHTEIN

Nov. 16

Cover to Cover

...I read JEWISH CURRENTS each month cover to cover and I find it to be the most rational and fair expression of Jewish problems and what might be reasonably just approaches to their solutions that I know...

MOSES CAMMER

Larchmont, N.Y., Nov. 20

JEWISH WOMEN NOW

(Continued from page 31)

regard Rabbi Gordis' approach with more amusement than anything else.

Furthermore, I don't believe people *should* question that right. Children are just too important to be generated by any authority other than the people from whose bodies they will come and who will bear the hands-on responsibility for their lives and psyches. That's why I hesitate similarly at the tactics of those other persuaders who use the lure of providing additional practical and financial assistance. God knows the lack of adequate Jewish day care facilities was a *shondeh* for the Jewish community until very recently. But people shouldn't have children because they've been made more convenient or because they won't have to take as much care of them as they thought or because they'll cost less. They should have them because they want them. Whether they're Jewish or anything else.

BOOK NOTE

(Continued from page 29)

loving memories she has that will keep her Bubby alive.

Barbara Pomerantz set out to help parents help their children understand death and she has succeeded. This book allows children to acknowledge and express their feelings and she suggests a way to accept death. Secular Jewish parents certainly agree with these words in her Foreword, "Our immortality is in the memories we leave behind."

SELMA R. SIEGE

FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH THE 1985 THEME IS

"The Afric-American Family: Historical Strengths for the New Century," as defined by the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History, 1401 14th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005. A Kit (pamphlets, articles, pictures and posters) for \$42.50 is available.



In loving memory of
ABRAHAM JENOFSKY
died Feb. 17, 1976

Although it is nine years
since Abraham Jenofsky passed
into eternity, we will always
mourn his loss and cherish his
memory

Freida, Lenna, Martin and
four grandchildren
New York California

The Children and Grandchildren
mourn the loss of
ANNA STEINHART
died Nov. 21, 1984
and honor the memory of
AARON STEINHART
died Jan. 13, 1970

Both worked for a world free from
war and anti-Semitism, a world with
freedom and justice for all.

Irving, Ruth, Paul and Julie Willner
Los Angeles
Larry, Bobbi, Rachel and Daniel
Steinhart, Berkeley, CA

OUR RAFFLE PRIZE WINNERS

The drawing for our Jewish Currents Raffle was made at our annual Hanuka Party for the office volunteers, Friday, Dec. 28, with Office Manager Tess Swerdlow officiating. The lots were drawn by the youngest person present, David Hacker, our Indexer.

- *1st Prize*, a drawing by Abram Tromka, was won by Myron and Elinor Weintraub of New City, N.Y.
- *2nd Prize*, a water-color by Varvara Vasiliev, was won by Lina Brodsky, New York.
- *3rd Prize*, a hand-made woman's stole, was won by Trude Specter, Van Nuys, Calif.
- *4th Prize*, a \$25 U.S. Bond, was won by Prof. Edith Blicksilver, Atlanta, Ga.
- *5th Prize*, an art book, was won by Ann Smith, Long Beach, Calif.
- *6th Prize*, an art book, was won by Adele Weiss, Bronx, N.Y.
- *7th Prize*, an art book, was won by Jack Nusan Porter of Newton, MA.
- *8th Prize*, a record, was won by Stanley Rosenberg, Seattle, Wash.
- *9th Prize*, a record, was won by Shelley Kasner, Deerfield Beach, FL.

The Management Committee congratulates the prize-winners, and thanks all those who bought raffles to support our magazine.

The Management Committee
mourns the death of
AARON KERTMAN
Dec. 23, 1984, aged 91
a leader of the progressive
Jewish movement in Los Angeles
and a Life Subscriber,
and condoles with the bereaved
son, daughter and grandchildren.

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The Management Committee congratulates on his 70th birthday Dec. 20, 1984
NAT COHEN
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generous supporter
and wishes him health and happiness with his wife Mary and their family
biz 120!*

SAMUEL KLOPMAN

In Memory
With Love

•
*Sister Tessie
and Family*

Rockville, Center, N.Y.

HONOR ROLL

(Final for 1984)

of tax deductible donations of \$25 or more for our 1984 Fund Drive

No. 9—through Dec. 31

Friends of Dora Chorover "in her memory" (\$170)

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Julia Meister, Brooklyn (\$28)
Joe Dimow, New Haven, CT
David Chernila, Millburn, N.J. (\$30)
Dr. Samuel D. Shrut, New York (\$100)

OUR GOALS

(Final for 1984)

Fund Drive -----	\$85,000
Received to Dec. 31 -----	71,041
New Subs Drive -----	700
New Subs to date -----	363

On Nov. 29, 1984 we lost
our dear friend
CHARLIE GRELLER
He was always a joy.
We will miss him.
*Bea and Red Bergen
Betty and Lou Czitrom*
Flushing, N.Y.

In loving memory of
our dear parents
**BENJAMIN and SARAH
LEINER**
fighters for
peace and justice
*Tessie Sam Marvin
Grandchildren and
Great-grandchildren*
Brooklyn

AROUND THE WORLD

AT HOME

More Nov. election update: Women:

all 20 members of the House and the one woman Senator were reelected; 65 women were nominated for the House, 10 for the Senate—26 more than in 1982. Of the 75 women candidates, 39 were Republicans, 36 Democrats. To state legislatures in 44 states, 939 women were elected, 28 more than in 1982; there are also 75 women in the 6 state legislatures that had no elections in 1984, and 44 women whose terms had not expired. Total: 1,063 women in state legislatures....*Trade unions:* AFL-CIO election night polls show 61% of its members voted for Mondale; among white members, 56% for Mondale; among Black members, 94% for Mondale....*Blacks:* 90% for Mondale. All 20 Blacks in the House were reelected. In state legislatures, 372 Blacks were elected, about the same as in 1982. Black registration increased by 2,000,000, totaling about 12,000,000. Jesse Jackson, according to Secret Service records, received 311 threats against his life; 9 people were arrested....*Arab voters:* the Arab population of 2-3 million is becoming a political factor. Of six Arab candidates, three were reelected: Mary Rose Oakar (D-OH) and Nick Joe Rahall (D-WV) to the House, and John Sununu as governor (R-NH). Oregon Gov. Victor Attyieh (R) remains, as do Senators James Abdnor (R-SD) and George J. Mitchell (D-ME). The Arab lobby also claims credit for the defeat of Rep. Clarence D. Long (D-MD), chair of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign

Affairs, who in his 11 terms had been a powerful backer of aid to Israel. In Mass., Republican candidate for U.S. Senate Ray Shamie was defeated 55% to 45%, but got 16% of the Jewish vote; a Jewish Alliance for Ray Shamie had a large ad in the Boston *Jewish Advocate* Nov. 1 signed by 122 Jews including two rabbis; the Shamie campaign committee's own full-page ad in the same issue quoted Shamie as "bitterly opposed to the PLO terrorists, and to any negotiations with them" and as supporting "Israel's 1982 Peace for Galilee operation, which drove the PLO out of southern Lebanon." Apparently an early association with the John Birch Society helped defeat him....*Splinter candidates:* Libertarian Party in 39 states—227,949 votes; Lyndon H. LaRouche—78,773; Citizens Party Sonia Johnson—72,153; Populist Party Bob Richards—62,371; Independent Alliance Dennis Serrette—47,209; Communist Party Gus Hall—35,361; Socialist Workers Party Mel Mason, 24,687; Workers World Larry Holmes, 15,220.

To aid British miners on strike since March 12, 1984 to protest government plans to close 20 mines and dismiss 30,000 workers, the American Friends of Striking British Miners was formed in mid-Dec., with an initiating committee of 15, including Barry Feinstein, N.Y. State Public Employees Conference; Henry Foner, Furriers Joint Board; NYC Councillor Ruth Messinger; Bill Nuchow, Teamsters Local 840; Seymour Posner, former Labor

Committee chair N.Y. State Assembly and attorney Philip Sipser. Funds may be sent to Miners Solidarity Fund, c/o Communications Trade Division—IBT, 111 Broadway, Suite 800, N.Y. 10006, 212-267-1374 (John Iozia)....The Workmen's Circle having protested British miners' alleged link with Libya, the NEC of the NUM declared "that the Union have no formal or informal links with Libya and at no times have we received any monies and at no time have we sought...any monies from the Libyan Government....The discussions with Trade Unionists [in other countries] in no way link this Union with either a system or a country...."

The South African Embassy in Washington, Consulates in other cities and stores selling South African Krugerrands continued to be the sites of anti-apartheid demonstrations at which Congressmen, state legislators, city councillors, Blacks, Jews, unionists and others were arrested. Jewish participation was heavy. Dec. 18, Kaufmann's Department Store in Pittsburgh, with 60 picketers outside the store, agreed to halt the sale of Krugerrands (gold coins minted in South Africa)....Dec. 19 the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith demonstrated the first day of Hanuka at the NYC South African Consulate, lighting a candle as a symbol of solidarity....Dec. 16 in Seattle 75 demonstrated at the Consulate, called by Kadima-New Jewish Agenda; Isaac Romano carried a placard in Yiddish....Dec. 17 the Jewish Community Council of Greater Washington brought Jews to a demonstration at the Embassy, joining the National Black Women's Political Caucus....Dec. 21 John Ranz, leading a picket line of The Generation After (the Holocaust) was arrested at the NYC Consulate, wearing his concentration camp uniform....In Seattle Jan. 20, 58 picketers were arrested at the Consulate, bringing the total arrested to 111.

ABROAD

UN at Geneva: Dec. 12, at a seminar on religious tolerance, a Saudi Arabian delegate, Dr. Al-Mawalibi, said, "Hitler must have had good reasons to want to exterminate Jews" and as one of the reasons stated that, according to the Talmud, Jewish doctors are allowed to treat non-Jews only for experimental purposes. When the Israeli delegate asked the President of that Seminar, Adam Lopatka of Poland, to disassociate the Seminar from this anti-Semitic attack, he declined to do so. Delegates from Costa Rica and the U.S. were the only ones protesting the Saudi Arabian anti-Semitism. In fact, of course, the Talmud declares: "Jews are required to support the poor of the non-Jews along with the Jewish poor...to take care of the sick of the non-Jews with the Jewish sick...and to provide burial for non-Jews equal to Jewish burial." (Arnold Fine, *Jewish Press*, Dec. 21, citing Gittin 61a; Rambam, *Matnas Aniyim*, Ch. 7; *Hilchose Avodazara*, Ch. 5; *Shulhan Aruch*, Yoreh Dayeh 151;12.)

Jordan: In Amman Dec. 29, Palestinian terrorists calling themselves "Black September" assassinated Fahad Kawasmeh, member of the executive of the PLO and former mayor of Hebron in the Israel-occupied West Bank. He had recently been appointed head of the PLO department in charge of affairs in Israel-occupied territory. He is the most important PLO official assassinated since the PLO split in May, 1983. Yasir Arafat blamed Syria for the killing....Dec. 28 the Jordanian Government approved death sentences for 15 persons, including two women, convicted of selling their property in Tulkam, Ramallah and Bethlehem to Israelis occupying the West Bank.

Austria: A Viennese High Court sentenced Bahij Younis, a PLO terrorist, to 20 years in prison in Dec. He was convicted of organizing the attack on a synagogue in

Vienna, in which two people were killed, in 1982....85% of Austria's population has anti-Semitic bias (25% strongly, 60% weak-to-medium), according to a study released early in Nov. by Dr. Hilde Weiss of the University of Vienna. Graduates of high school or college have less bias than those less well educated.

Canada: In Ottawa early in Nov. Solicitor General Elmer McKay was told by a delegation from the Simon Wiesenthal Center in L.A. that about 3,000 Nazi war criminals have found a haven in Canada, among them "Ukrainian SS men, Latvian police auxiliaries, Yugoslav Ustashi, Romanian Iron Guardists, Hungarian Cross and Arrow members and Slovak Hlinka Guardists." The Canadian government was urged to follow the U.S. example to uncover and deport them.

USSR: Soviet Jewish emigration in Dec., 1984 totaled 91 (in Dec., 1983—97; Dec., 1982—176; Dec., 1981—474). The total for 1984 was 896; for 1983, 1,315; for 1982, 2,688....The central government organ *Izvestia* Sept. 21, 1984 printed an anti-Israel, anti-Semitic cartoon captioned: "Israeli occupiers poisoned wells of drinking water in South Lebanon (from newspapers)," a revival of medieval libels that Jews poisoned the wells of Europe, causing the Black Death (bubonic plague). Depicted is a figure wearing a helmet labeled "Tel Aviv" pouring into a well from a bag marked with a skull and cross-bones and labeled "Poisonous substances."...Another anti-Semitic cartoon appears in a 112-page book, *The Poison of Zionism*, by Elena Dimitrievna Mozhinskaya (1910-1982) and Vladimir Fedorovich Lapsky, published in 1984 in 200,000 copies. The cartoon shows a spider spinning a web at the center of which is a Star of David, surrounded by the CIA, a bundle of \$100 bills, buildings marked "Bank" (in English) and the dome of the Capitol of Washington....*Literaturnaya Gazeta* Oct. 17, 1984 carries a 4,300

word article on the Oct. 12 press conference of the "Anti-Zionist Committee of the Soviet Public" held in the press center of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Moscow, and "devoted to exposing the Zionists' criminal collaboration with the Nazis, whose methods are being used by Israel's current rulers." One G.L. Bondarevsky, "Doctor of History and Russian Republic Honored Scientist," discourses on the well-known "Transfer Agreement," by which German Zionists were able to evacuate 60,000 German Jews to Palestine, allowing "...Nazi Germany [to earn] about \$50 million from the operation," while the Jews were permitted to take \$40 million with them to Palestine. Dr. Bondarevsky's historical imagination does not perceive that the Nazis were in a position to confiscate all Jewish property at will as well as to do away with these 60,000 Jews....Given to tourists in Kiev recently was a 64-page pamphlet in English published in Moscow, 1984 by Novosti, *Enemy of Peace and Progress* by Georgi Fyodorov, sub-titled, "On the criminal policy of Israel's Zionist regime"! The "enemy" is also "the Jewish financial bourgeoisie" as "Out of the 165 U.S. corporations manufacturing and selling arms, 158 are within the Zionist sphere of influence...Zionists also hold top managerial posts in the General Dynamics Corporation which makes the ICBMs, cruise missiles, nuclear submarines and bombers" (p. 13). On p. 21 Fyodorov falsifies the birth of Israel, whose defense against Arab invasion was then supported by the USSR. He brands as "mercenaries" the volunteers who came to Israel to help repel the invasion....In a Moscow bookstore another anti-Semitic booklet was on sale: *Zionism Counts on Terror*, by Sergei Sedov, 79 pages, Novosti, 1984. On the Sabra-Shatila massacre in Lebanon by Phalangists, Sedov (p. 6) writes: "The killers received their instructions from their Israeli masters," a falsehood.

M.U.S.

Black-Jewish Alliance Alive

Answering Lenni Brenner in Freedomways

By PAUL ROBESON JR.

A thoroughly misdirected and confused article by Lenni Brenner titled "The Misguided Search for Black/Jewish Unity" appeared in *Freedomways* (#2, 1984), a quarterly review of the Black Freedom Movement. The views Mr. Brenner expresses in that article are so sectarian and divorced from the reality of U.S. political life that normally they would not merit serious attention. What makes the article significant is that, although Brenner manages both to patronize Black Americans and to buttress crude anti-Semitic stereotypes, *Freedomways* chose to bestow a degree of legitimacy on Brenner's opinions by publishing them without any editorial comment.

At the outset Brenner states that "The main question being addressed is whether the potential exists for forging some kind of coalition between Afro-Americans and Jews."

The very manner in which Brenner poses "the main question being addressed" reveals how far he has departed from reality: the Black-Jewish alliance is alive and well. This is so for many reasons, the most fundamental of which is a clearly perceived common enemy—the religious ultra-right, which forms the backbone of

PAUL ROBESON JR. last appeared here in Dec., 1984 with a communication, "The Price of Stalinism," in the "Readers' Forum on Soviet Jewry." In Feb., 1984 we published his "The Reality of Black America." (For Louis Harap's critique of another work of Brenner's, see the article, "Zionist-Nazi Collaboration Refuted," in our May, 1984 issue.

Ronald Reagan's hard-core political constituency.

The 1984 Presidential elections underscored this point dramatically.

Reagan won the presidency with one of the largest popular majorities in U.S. history because the non-Jewish white electorate voted for him by a 65% to 32% margin. The Jewish electorate voted in exactly the opposite way: 66% to 32% against Reagan. Jewish voters were the most reliable political allies of the Black electorate (which voted 90% to 9% against Reagan); they provided a slightly higher anti-Reagan vote than Hispanic voters, who opposed Reagan by 65% to 33%.

It is noteworthy that Jews were the *only* part of the white population to vote against Reagan. Even the white poor (those with incomes under \$12,500) supported Reagan. The total vote of the poor was 53% to 46% against Reagan. However, by subtracting the Black and Hispanic voters in this income group from the total and assuming that their voting patterns were the same as the pattern for the total Black and Hispanic votes, I estimate that the white poor voted 61% to 39% for Reagan.

Similarly the 53% to 45% anti-Reagan vote of the total number of union households is misleading. If Black union households are subtracted from this total, we find that white union households voted for Reagan by a substantial margin. And white women voted 64% to 36% for Reagan.

Thus, white union households, the white poor, white women—groups that are essential to any meaningful coalition for the purpose of achieving fundamental

(Continued on page 8)