

Fact and Opinion

SAMUEL SPIEGLER

Jewish, Black Parents Brought Together

A group of suburban Jewish parents met for the first time socially with inner city black parents, and learned at first hand about ghetto life, as an unanticipated dividend from a Jewish community center experimental enrichment program for pupils of the center's nursery school. At the Meyer Kaplan Jewish Community Center in Skokie, Ill., the parental meetings grew out of an exchange program with black children which the Jewish parents resisted when it was first proposed as part of regular nursery school activities but did accept as part of a "special" program.

The Jewish parents had been informed that the Center wanted them to determine the content of the proposed enrichment program for their twelve nursery school children.

Among the projects listed for their consideration were conversational Hebrew, parent study groups, "and the opportunity to have a shared program with children in a neighboring black community." After deliberation, the parents approved many parts of the suggested enrichment program, including "an exchange program with black children."

Early in the school year, a meeting was arranged with parents of a nearby Head Start group of children at which the Jewish and black parents agreed that the two classes should get together twice a month. Teachers of each class arranged, in advance of the first exchange visit, for exchanges of pictures of the pupils. Parents were encouraged to accompany the children. At the first gathering, the Head Start pupils greeted the Jewish visitors with name-tags for each.

The Jewish parents meanwhile had

coffee with the Head Start mothers at the regular "Girls' Talk" session at the Head Start school. The conversation centered on forthcoming mergers of community services, governmental food stamp programs and the problems of hunger in the ghetto. Black parents spoke about the indignities suffered in filling out some of the governmental forms and it was a great revelation to the Jewish parents to learn that what they had considered as distant inner city problems existed in a community only two or three miles from their homes.

The session at which the Head Start children came to the Jewish Center took place during Chanukah week. Before the return visit, the Jewish class sent a "thank you" letter to the Head Start pupils and invited them to participate in the center's Chanukah festivities. The Head Start teacher explained to the black pupils the meaning of some Chanukah symbols. Parents from both classes were invited to attend. On the day of the return visit, the Jewish parents helped to fry potato pancakes and to organize the program. Each Jewish child had brought two picnic lunches—one for themselves and one for a Head Start child. While the children were eating, the Jewish and black parents discussed plans for the next set of exchange visits.

Subsequently, many Jewish parents expressed dissatisfaction about the fact that the exchange program was limited to one class and asked for similiar programs for all of the pre-school classes at the center.

First International Israel Youth Festival

One hundred boys and girls fifteen to seventeen years of age from the United

States were among the 500 Jewish young people from this country, South America, South Africa, Israel and other countries participating in the first International Israel Youth Festival in Israel last July 15-August 5.

The event featured sport competitions, tours and visits to kibbutzim. Sports events included track and field, tennis, volleyball, table tennis, swimming, basketball, soccer and wrestling. However, the emphasis was not on competition. All participants received medals and no national total scores were computed.

Sponsoring the American participation were the National Jewish Welfare Board and the American Zionist Youth Foundation.

Students Demand Role in Planning Jewish Studies

The recent quinquennial meeting of the American Association for Jewish Education heard some monitory lectures by those who are usually listeners to lectures. Students, taking the lectern, told their mentors that they wanted to share in planning the curricula of Jewish education. Teachers and students together, they said, should discuss love, marriage, sex, among other student concerns, seeking guidance in applicable Jewish texts.

One fifteen-year-old young woman told the 500 educational leaders and teachers that the kids would continue to reject an "authoritarian know-it-all attitude." A sixteen-year-old young man warned of continuing "mass defections" from Jewish life if Jewish educators failed promptly to make radical changes and innovations.

The kids found support among the younger teachers present. Some of the oldsters appeared to be listening attentively.

Philip M. Klutznick of Chicago, a for-

mer president of B'nai B'rith, told the meeting that "we must especially pay attention to the revolt of our young people calling for a revision of our outmoded and outdated educational and cultural programs."

A "Jewish Free Theater"

A "Jewish Free Theater" at the University of Maryland is providing local audiences with a new approach to the dramatic art, with occasional help of audience members.

Howard Wasserman, Hillel program director there, and his wife, also on the Hillel staff, explained that the project was inspired by such modern experiments as street theater, guerrilla theater, living theater and the theater of confrontation. These terms are used to describe presentations in amorphous form and often improvisational, aimed at "freeing" the stage from standard limitations and to make it more responsive to contemporary problems.

The creators said "the troupe's performances consist of a collection of movements, actions and dialogues worked out beforehand by the group in long chaotic sessions. Movements are tied together by dialogue and activity initiated by audience members." The specific topic of each performance depends on the nature of each audience. The "repertory" includes Soviet Jewry, Jewish education, Israel, the American Jewish community and similar subjects.

In one recent performance, string-entwined cast members enacted a group of "robots" representing Jewish communal figures. "Rabbi Rabbi" urged prayer. "Harriet Hadassah" and "Larry Lox 'N' Bagels" entreated onlookers to "join, join" and "eat, eat." "Ronnie Radical" exclaimed "right on." The intent, the Wassermans said, was to impress on that particular audience "the

need to get our thing together," that is, to deal with Jewish problems as a Jewish community. For that presentation, the alternative to a communal approach was depicted by a cutting of the string and dispersal of the players by "Alice Assimilationist."

Responding to criticism that the "free theater" dramatizes issues but does not offer specific solutions, the Wassermans explained that "we are question-raisers, not answer-givers." They quoted Elie Wiesel as contending that "the essence of man is to be a question and the essence of the question is to be without answers." They added that the answers could come from "thinking and feeling Jews" struggling together "to explore new directions for a creative Jewish life." To further that goal, members of the troupe, who are mainly University of Maryland students, hold "intensive discussions" with audience members after each performance.

A Dour View of Abortion Reform

Of all the arguments against legalized abortion that have been advanced recently, the most outrageously bizarre to come to the attention of the editor of this department is that of an organization named Leading Families of America, Inc., headquartered in Fairfield, Conn.

"Abortion," asserts a recent release of LFA, "is creating a Nazi mentality similar to that of the stormtroopers who operated the gas chambers."

LFA is described in its release as a non-profit non-denominational association of families with four or more children, reaching over 160,000 such families with unspecified "economic benefits."

Its argument runs straight from the stipulation that human life begins at the moment of conception to the conclusion that legal abortion is murder and

that those who support abortion rely on the same principle as "that which underlay the Nazi extermination of the Jews. . . . that a human being can be killed if his existence is inconvenient or uncomfortable to others."

For good measure—and with less regard for logic—the LFA charged that what it delicately calls "the butcherly abortion drive" is aimed particularly at black Americans.

How to Win Votes and Influence the Establishment

An object lesson in social action was provided during the past year by a group of 37 determined members of the Houston section of the National Council of Jewish Women. They organized and led a year-long public pressure campaign to prevent closing of the only home for delinquent boys in Texas.

Three years ago, members of the section began serving (together with some 200 other volunteers from the area) as volunteer aides for the juvenile offenders, aged eight to fourteen, resident at the Harris County Boys Home.

Built 44 years ago, the facility was both dilapidated and overcrowded. A bond issue for new and expanded facilities was approved by referendum in 1965. But the County Commissioners, after protracted delays, voted to close the home and sell the property, which is on a now valuable site. This would have meant incarceration of the residents of the home in the state reform school.

The NCJW section reacted with vigor. Members circulated petitions enlisting the help of churches and organizations in the Houston area and obtained 3,500 signatures asking the commissioners to proceed with building a new facility. The commissioners were unmoved. The section members increased the pressure with a letter-writing campaign and en-

listed the support of local business and industry. A half dozen NCJW members attended every weekly meeting of the Commissioners Court to press for action. The commissioners remained immovable.

Section members then went to the newspapers and TV and radio stations to stimulate an editorial campaign. When that, too, failed to get action, the Jewish women organized a person-to-person telephone drive to urge defeat of a county flood control bond issue. "If you don't use bond funds to construct a new school, how do we know you will use flood control funds for flood control work?" they asked publicly of the Commission.

At that point, the commissioners finally voted for a new facility on a new site. Construction is now under way. The new building is expected to be ready for occupancy in about two years. The NCJW volunteers meanwhile are continuing their work with the young residents. Fifteen conduct classes in music, arts and crafts, typing, remedial reading and mathematics and foreign languages. Each teaching volunteer conducts one class for the entire school year, spending an hour each week in class. One NCJW member, a professional librarian, developed a library for the facility when she found it lacked one. She obtained books from business firms and civic and religious organizations. She contributes four hours a week of her time to operate the library. Husbands occasionally pitch in to coach football and other sports and sponsor a science club. A number of non-Jewish women pay dues to the Council because they want to work in the NCJW project at the boys home.

Independent Jewish Student Publications Said to Reach 130,000

More than 130,000 Jewish students are being reached by radical and other inde-

pendent Jewish student newspapers on various campuses, according to reports to a conference of editors of such newspapers held in New York in March.

The conference, which was sponsored by the American Zionist Youth Foundation, was told that despite differing attitudes toward Israel and the Jewish "establishment," the periodicals serve as a tool to shape a new activist Jewish ideology on the campus and contribute to presenting a positive image of Israel, its political problems and its social experience. A Foundation spokesman said also that the papers were instrumental in creating a greater understanding among its readers about Israel and in deepening the personal relevance of Israel to American Jewish students.

Reports at the conference indicated also that the circulation of the student newspapers had grown substantially during the past year. Boston's "Genesis II," has exceeded 30,000; "The Other Stand" at Montreal's McGill University is 22,000; "Ha-Orah" of the University of California at Los Angeles is 15,000; "The Flame" at City College of New York 15,000; Berkeley's "Jewish Radical" distributes 10,000 copies. The "Jewish Liberation Journal" of New York has a 10,000 circulation. York University's "Masada" in Toronto has 7,000 readers; the ACIID of Washington University in St. Louis has 4,000 distribution; Northeastern University in Boston is the home of "Ha'Peh," which has 3,000 circulation. The "House 4-Rum" at Michigan University has 3,000. Long Island University's "Pride" has 10,000 circulation and "The Source" at Hartford University has 5,000.

Conferees at the meeting decided to establish a special Jewish student news service to promote the exchange of ideas among more Jewish students and to provide coverage and translation of national and international news for the student

newspapers. The news service will also respond to requests for specific materials not available in a particular area, and to provide for publication of free lance contributions. Officials said the affiliation to the news service will be open to any independent Jewish student newspaper.

Danish Community Mobilizing to Assist Polish Newcomers

Through the generosity of the Danish government, nearly 1,400 Polish Jews had found refuge in Denmark by the end of 1969. This represents about 13 percent of the 11,000 Jews who had left Poland in successive waves since the Six-Day War, as a result of the government's anti-Semitic campaigns.

The majority came directly from Warsaw to Denmark. To leave Poland, a Jew must give up his Polish nationality and indicate that he is going to Israel (to give support to the government's claim that he was a "Zionist" all along). Once he has his exit permit, however, he can make his own decision.

The Danish government has backed up its humanitarian gesture with a full program of financial assistance to the Polish newcomers. This has substantially relieved the financial pressure on the local Jewish community, as well as on the international Jewish refugee agencies. (However, JDC is still providing care and maintenance for some 1,400 Polish and other East European refugees in Rome and Vienna while the United HIAS Service takes care of emigration technicalities—a time-consuming process which can take as long as six months.)

On arrival in Denmark, the Polish Jews receive food, shelter, and other services, including language instruction. They spend their first three or four weeks in a "floating hotel," the cruise ship *St. Lawrence*, while they are being processed

by the Danish Alien Police. On leaving the ship, they become the responsibility of the Danish Refugee Council which uses government funds to provide them with places to live while they learn the language, and, with the Council's assistance, find jobs and housing.

To cope with this influx, which no one ever expected would assume such proportions, the Danish Refugee Council has had to quickly expand its staff from eight to 88 people. It is still in the process of developing the systematic procedures necessary to find housing and jobs for so many newcomers.

The most difficult problem is presented by housing, of which there is a shortage in Denmark. Here the Jewish community has been able to help, by sending letters to Jewish doctors, lawyers and other professional people, through which living quarters have been found for some hundred families.

The main problem for the little Danish Jewish community—it has only 6,000 members—is that of integrating a group of refugees nearly one-fourth its own size into the community's cultural and Jewish life.

Another difficulty has been that there is a very visible element among the newcomers from Poland who were so assimilated into Polish life that they know very little about Judaism and whose ideas about Israel have been colored by the Communist "party line." This has raised the question in local people's minds as to whether they are really Jewish, even though it is clear that they were expelled from Poland because they were Jews.

Until recently, the community's activities on behalf of the newcomers have been relatively limited. The Jewish school has taken in 60 of the younger children. A canteen has been operating in the center on Tuesdays and Sundays which serves between 100 and 150 meals at a

nominal charge; on the same evenings a film or lecture is presented and there is dancing to recorded music,—these attract another hundred people.

An effort now is under way to develop a program of activities which will more nearly meet the newcomers' Jewish needs. A "liaison office," assisted by a Polish refugee who speaks Yiddish and Danish, plans to issue a regular bulletin and invite all Jewish refugees who are interested to visit the community center and join in activities planned for the future.

The community also plans to accept more children in the Jewish school and kindergarten, and to organize language classes in English and Hebrew. Since the community has already spent about \$10,000 and anticipates that \$30,000—or an increase amounting to a quarter of its present budget—will be needed in 1970, a special campaign is being conducted to raise funds in Copenhagen for these purposes.

Jewish Youth in College

The proportion of Jewish youth who go to college may be as high as 95 percent, or about twice the estimated national average. About 77 percent of Jewish young people obtain college degrees.

These are some of the findings of a study conducted during 1968-69 by the B'nai B'rith Vocational Service.

Other findings:

—Jewish youth, almost without exception, have gone into the occupations they had planned in high school. In the original sampling, the most popular choice among boys was engineering, followed by medicine, business and law; among girls, the preferred occupations were education, social work, fine arts, business and nursing.

—About half said they were influenced

"very little or not at all" by their parents in selecting a career.

—Some 30 percent were "considerably or moderately influenced" in their choice of college by the number of Jewish students or Jewish organizations on campus.

—About 10 percent said they had met "discrimination or unpleasantness" while in college because of their religious beliefs.

Of the 60 percent of the respondents who were married when questioned, slightly less than 10 percent had intermarried. Among the married, two out of three said they were members of a synagogue or temple and three out of four said they attended religious services.

Additionally, more than 14 percent of the total had continued some form of Jewish education beyond high school.

A Modern "Dybbuk" Exorcised

A Jewish event wholly ignored by the press and other media seems to this department to merit recording somewhere, even if only in these obscure columns, as an oddity, if nothing else.

The event, which took place in New York last February, was a ritual exorcism of the dybbuk that the Jewish radical activists conducting the rite contended took possession of Federal Judge Julius Hoffman while he presided over the conspiracy trial of the "Chicago seven."

Plans for the rite, organized originally by the Radical Jewish Union at Columbia University with the support of other Jewish radical groups, evoked dissension among the activist groups, leading the RJU to transfer it to Foley Square, across from the Federal courthouse in lower Manhattan, and to make it entirely an RJU project.

An estimated 300 spectators watched the rite, including members of the RJU and other Columbia University students. Members of the required "minyan,"

dressed in white gowns, and wearing prayershaws and skullcaps, were augmented by eight more radicals to make up 18 as the symbol for *Chai* or "life." After a statement was read for spectators and media representatives, explaining the reason and significance of the rite, the activists proceeded with a liturgy prepared by RJU members to exorcise the alleged demon.

After the hour-long ceremony was completed, sharp arguments broke out among spectators, some of them calling the rite a "hillul Ha-Shem" (desecration of the Divinity) and others giving strong verbal support to it. An RJU spokesman said it was his impression that most of the spectators favored the demonstration. He said some spectators approached the minyan members and extended a "Mazel Tov" after the rite.

Some Observations on Hippie Culture

The hippie culture may be already declining, as some observers contend, but in 1967 a research team had no trouble locating 51 hippies in New York's East Village and doing a pilot study of them. Some of the findings, recently released, are still interesting.

Of the 51, one-third were Jews—47 percent of the males and 20 percent of the females.

Most of the 51 had attended college and ten percent had been graduated. The majority were between eighteen and 25 years of age. The males were, on the average, three years older than the girls. Most came from fairly well-to-do families, with annual incomes of fathers reported as between \$10,000 and \$15,000. Five percent of the hippies came from atheistic backgrounds and sixteen from "mixed" religious backgrounds, suggesting that the actual number of Jews in the group might be closer to 40 percent than the indicated one-third proportion.

The hippies said they believed that their parents had treated them in "a relatively consistent manner." This was reported to be "particularly true among Jewish respondents."

Penn State Hillel Gives Uninhibited Radio Programs

A group of Hillel members at Penn State University are providing a lively blend of Jewish comedy, music, history, discussion and drama on the university's student radio station every Sunday night in formats limited only to the ingenuity of the students.

"When we began, the station's program director said there was to be no sex, comedy, music or religion," the students said, but in fact they have been putting on the program whatever they choose, without hindrance from university officials. A Hillel students committee provides ideas on which the two student program directors draw for programs.

Programming is highly informal. For a discussion-type program, the students simply start out with some questions. Some programs are prepared specifically for Jewish holidays. As one of the musical offerings, the students mentioned "The World Keeps Rolling," written by Gordon Kingsley for a rock Sabbath service. They have also presented a discussion on "The Fine Art of Yiddish Cursing" and are planning discussions on such issues as "Is There Such a Thing as a Kosher Girl?" and "Jewish People in the Arts."

The program which attracted the widest attention was a two-part broadcast on Zionism and dual allegiance. On the first part, there was an unrehearsed debate involving a "radical" Zionist, a Hillel member and a Jewishly-apathetic student. The discussion became so intense that the moderator had trouble ending it.

**National Jewish Population
Study Advances**

Interviewing has been completed, at this printing, in the National Jewish Population Study being conducted under the auspices of the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds.

The approximately 10,000 Jewish households reached in the interview program is a larger number than most national samples selected for the entire country. The sample was designed to provide reliable data on relatively small segments of the Jewish community: the

aged, the intermarried, college youth, as examples.

Interviewing was by professional interviewers, following a specially formulated manual of instructions.

Preliminary data from the study are expected to be available late this year or early in 1971. Later, groups of experts in various fields will prepare detailed analyses by subject matter. These analyses will be distributed to Federations as they become available. Subsequently a book for more general use will be prepared.

Six Poems

by DAVID WEISS

Dream Interpretation

Time has its rhythm
And paradigm;
Joseph transposing Pharoah's dreams;
Sigmund exposing Dora's schemes.
Potiphar's wife plotting her lust,
Pleasure and pain entail mistrust.
Time makes its own paradigm:
Joseph—Sigmund in rhythm.

The Four Seasons

The four seasons of my every day
Are eternity enough for me:
The morn of sunrise leap;
The noon of busy disarray,
Filling afternoon's granary,
And night's antarctic sleep.
The cycle of these seasons every day
Mean many appointments I must keep,
And many encounters I must reap—
Before the long and lasting sleep.

Closing Entry

From the files
Comes the voice:
Is there really
Client choice?

From the records
Comes the thought:
How is ego strength
Wrought?
From the milieu
Comes the cry:
How is social
Blent with I?
The worker asks
Did he enough?
Is help
Made of love?

"Remember Us Unto Life"

From the Temple of His sky
Fall engendering drops of rain
Pell-mell to toss, to course awry,
Gathering currents, tides of pain.
Into the mainstream of my life,
From piny uplands of the North,
Flow tributaries of succor and strife,
To palmy southlands of drouth.
Surging, surging, boiling, roiling
Between canyons and meadow ranks,
My stream straining, lapping, moiling
Against transfigured days, shadow
banks.
Nourished the necessitous plain,

Dammed downstream, my forces wary,
 Laden with silt, assuaged of pain
 Before I empty into His Estuary.
 Each mississippi ends its course,
 The tributaries quelled of doubt.
 O, Fisherman, reel in 'neath the moss,
 Fish that glide in undulant rout!

Teach Us Interpersonal Mach

miniaturization,
 reductio ad electronic:
 beyond absurdity, into space.
 lonely crowd, heavy thy flanks
 into subway stockyards:
 freeways squirming to exurbia:
 motivated consumers, producers
 distributors of family roles.
 complimenting, complementing
 organization.
 hosannah!
 interplanetary travel, orbit the star
 with mighty mach force
 engendered in integrated data,
 programmed univacs.

fly right! fly straight!
 prufrock eliot; bloom joyce,
 sole astronauts rising above
 the losing pride.
 oh univac, oh miniaturized grid,
 teach us interpersonal mach—
 grounded, unencountered,
 the crowd consumes, produces,
 procreates:
 wastelands in gardens; cases in deserts.
 stalled in self; pinioned on paper,
 seek interstellar frontiers,
 sky-loose, lonely,
 univaced.

Mirage

In the desolate desert of despair
 An oasis dances thru the air.
 A shadow falls over my thirst,
 Is this oasis blessed or cursed?
 Whose gourd wets my hope,
 (Whose history do I interlope)?
 Ripe with everyman, Laban's daughter,
 Gaily at her well, offers me water.