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THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date August 6, 1968**to** Bertram H. Gold**from** Nathan Perlmutter**subject**

Further to our last meeting and in anticipation of our next meeting on the subject of a consultation amongst staff in order to probe the question of Negro-Jewish relations: We discussed the following as participants: Gold, Hirsh, Yarmon, Perlmutter, Tanenbaum, Segal, Bookbinder, Himmelfarb, Birnbaum, Podhoretz, Levine, Samet, Lazere and Fleischman.

As the framework for the discussion started taking shape in our own conversation, it was something as follows: To date we have been pro-Negro aspirations and we have been supportive of Jewish interests. These aspirations and interests, however, are showing increasing signs of on occasions being in conflict. What, then, are the issues which lie ahead and which we ought be thinking through in order to determine our over-all strategy and the immediate effect of our execution of tactics. The effect on Negro-Jewish relationships; the effect on Jewish-liberal relationships; the effect on moderate Negroes; etc.

NP:ms

C. Gold

October 1, 1968

Marc Tanenbaum

Nathan Perlmutter

For your files, and for those of the others who were invited to the meeting we had with Lucius Walker and his group, I thought you should have this fact sheet which was prepared on Tom Karenga back last August.

It was prepared by Milton Ellerin.

HP:MRC

Encl.

cc

Seymour Samet
Haskell Lazere
Irving Levine
Harry Fleischman
Morton Yarmon
Bertram H. Gold ✓

August 1968

RON KARENGA

Ron Karenga was born Ronald McKinley Everett on July 14, 1941 in Parsonburg, Md., the fourteenth child in the family of a poor Baptist minister. (Karenga is Swahili for "keeper of the tradition"). Married, the father of three children, lives in a two-bedroom home in Los Angeles.

In 1959 Karenga enrolled in Los Angeles City College and was elected president of the student body in his senior year. He has an MA Degree in political science from the University of California and was a candidate for a Ph.D. in linguistics, specializing in African languages. Karenga teaches Swahili to his followers and at a local high school.

Karenga, as chairman, heads a Los Angeles based, militantly black nationalist organization known simply as US, which he organized in February 1966. As the Saturday Evening Post of July 16, 1966 observed, "US" is not an acronym. According to Karenga, "US is the black people," and quotes the US motto: anywhere we are US is. US leaders venerate the late Malcolm X as their patron saint. Members of US adopt African names and follow a traditionalist, self-created African religion called Kuwaida, which according to Karenga "is more functional than spiritual in working for the day-to-day good of black people."

The Los Angeles Free Press of September 2, 1966 characterized US as the most influential of all the many black nationalist organizations in Los Angeles. According to the New York Post of September 29, 1967, Karenga does not hide his intention of "trying to build a powerful nationalist organization that might one day opt for violent revolution."

The US organization utilizes military-like formations similar to those employed by the Black Muslims' elite guard - Fruit of Islam. Often when Karenga walks along the Watts' streets, he is inside a wedge formation made up of US members.

On May 27, 1966 the New York Times reported that four members of US were arrested in Los Angeles. Three were held in \$15,000 bail each on charges that included the carrying of a concealed weapon, resisting arrest, assault on a policeman and taking a prisoner from the police. Two of these men wore US T-shirts with a picture of the late Malcolm X on the front. The police have reported persons wearing such shirts participating in racial violence.

Karenga holds weekly lectures which are segregated "soul sessions" on a broad range of subjects, including his concept of pre-emptive self-defense (the concept holds that if you think you are about to be hit - hit first). These sessions are always well attended, attracting from 200-400 people at each session.

When Karenga is asked by a white interviewer about his views on the use of force, or to discuss in detail his concept of self-defense, he "politely but firmly" refuses to do so. Instead he discusses his philosophy of revolution. In his "Quotable Karenga" he summarizes that philosophy by saying "you must have a cultural revolution before the violent revolution." Ron Karenga says his philosophy is built upon "the chosen people idea." But he emphasizes the ultimate goal is neither to force black ideas on whites, nor for Negroes to withdraw into an isolated separate society. Karenga explaining "The racist view of the chosen people concept" says, "we're better than anyone else." "But we take the nationalist view. It says, what we have is better for us, but not necessarily better for others."

Karenga is said to be, by people who know him, a shrewd politician who works behind the scenes as a lobbyist for Black Nationalism. After the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Karenga had a private interview with Governor Ronald Reagan in Sacramento at the Governor's invitation. About the same time he also met with Los Angeles Police Chief Thomas Reddin. It is felt by some that while rioting erupted in many other cities, after the Dr. King assassination, Los Angeles remained quiet because of the key role played by Karenga. According to one source "he controls the military troops." However, The Wall St. Journal 7/26/68 points out "some observers wonder how long Mr. Karenga can retain his militant following without resorting to violence." The article continues "Mr. Karenga avoids a direct response to this question, but, speaking of his role in preventing rioting in Los Angeles, he says 'the capacity to use power often eliminates the need to use it.'"

Karenga has become personally involved with a broad spectrum of the Negro power structures, thereby gaining the respect of both Negroes and whites. He played a key role in the formation in Los Angeles of the Black Congress, an umbrella organization whose member groups range from militant bodies like US, to moderate organizations like the NAACP. His prestige also rose after his open participation in an "Operational Steering Committee" formed by the Black Congress only hours after Dr. King's death. Its main purpose was to prevent Negro riots.

The New York Times of July 21, 1967, on the various groups attending the much publicized Black Power Conference then meeting in Newark, N. J., stated that: "His [Karenga] organization is said to recruit and train Negroes for a revolution which, according to one

timetable, will take place in 1972."

KARENGA'S ANTI-SEMITISM

In the Hearings before the House Un-American Activities Committee of the Ninetieth Congress, First Session, seeking to determine the subversive influences in riots, looting and burning in the Watts area of Los Angeles, William A. Wheeler, west coast investigator for the Committee, was asked by Committee General Counsel Chester D. Smith as to the attitude of US towards Jews. Wheeler testified that the House Committee investigative staff considered US to be an anti-Semitic organization. In support of this conclusion Wheeler testified that Allen Jamal, Vice Chairman of US and a close confidant of Karenga, was interviewed by a "law enforcement agency" in March 1966. Wheeler testified that Jamal was quoted in the report as having said "all whites are bad, Jews are worse and the police...are the worst of all."

Wheeler further testified that later in March 1966 Karenga was interviewed by the same agency and quoted the following from the Police Department's intelligence report:

"Karenga asked if either one of us were jewish. When we replied in the negative he stated that was good as it would make it easier to talk to us. He expressed the anti-semitic statements previously espoused by Jamal and claimed that the business and store burnings in the Watts and colored areas were directed against jewish owners and that if any 'Anglos' were victims it was because the people had found it difficult to differentiate."

QUOTES

In a small handbook issued to his followers, the "Quotable Karenga," he sets forth the philosophy of US, which, in reality, is his own.

The Seven-fold path of the Blackness is to Think Black, Talk Black, Act Black, Create Black, Buy Black, Vote Black, and Live Black.

* * * * *

The revolution being fought now is a revolution to win the minds of our people. If we fail to win this we cannot wage the violent one.

* * * * *

You can't fight a revolution on a local level. It has to be fought through a national struggle.

* * * * *

We must believe in our cause and be willing to die for it and we should stop reading other peoples literature and write our own and stop pretending revolution and make it.

* * * * *

The only thing that will make us invincible is for us to fight-to fight for our freedom and not our personal selves-to fight to get back the freedom we lost in 1565.

* * * * *

Blacks live right in the heart of America. That is why we are best able to cripple this man. And once you understand your role you won't talk revolution, but you'll make it.

* * * * *

When the word is given we'll see how tough you are. When it's "burn," let's see how much you burn. When it's "kill," let's see how much you kill. When it's "blow up," let's see how much you blow up. And when it's "take that white girl's head too," we'll really see how tough you are.

* * * * *

We must gear the money going from the church to the support of the revolution. Revolution cannot succeed without finance.

* * * * *

No revolt is isolated. When Blacks revolt in any section of the country it is an expression of the entire nation of Afro-America.

* * * * *

Talking general truisms is necessary but not sufficient. To say the white man is the devil is not enough. What are you going to do about it?

* * * * *

It is no longer a question of being an American but of being free-and legislation will never make us free.

* * * * *

The Christian is our worst enemy. Quiet as it's kept it was a Christian who enslaved us. Quiet as it's kept it's the Christian that burns us. Quiet as it's kept it's a Christian that beats us down on the street; and quiet as it's kept, when the thing goes down it'll be a Christian that's shooting us down. You have to face the fact that if the Christian is doing all

this there must be something wrong with Christianity.

* * * * *

Jesus said, "My blood will wash you white as snow." Who wants to be white but sick "Negroes," or worse yet-washed that way by the blood of a dead Jew. You know if Nadinola bleaching cream couldn't do it, no dead Jew's blood is going to do it.

October 22, 1968

Nathan Perlmutter

Milton Ellerin

Responsive to your request that I record my recollections of Thursday's meeting with Mrs. Mary Obolu, there follows hereinafter the highlights of the meeting.

First, however, by way of background, newspaper reports on the third National Black Power Conference held in Philadelphia over the Labor Day weekend in the New York Times and the Philadelphia papers did not indicate any pro-Arab resolutions or expressions of anti-Semitism by the conferees.

We were rather surprised then, to receive information on October 3rd from AJC chapter member Tanya Corbin that a friend of hers who attended the Conference reported that three important Nigerian diplomats attended the Conference and whipped through resolutions which in substance called for the elimination of "Zionism."

As it subsequently developed the friend of Mrs. Corbin was Mrs. Mary Obolu, an American married to a Nigerian, and who has just returned to the United States after spending eleven years in Nigeria. Mrs. Obolu, a self-confessed militant black, who decries what she describes as the pervasiveness of anti-Semitism among the Black Militants, attended all sessions of the Philadelphia Black Power Conference.

Mrs. Obolu reported that over her protest several Nigerian diplomats present whipped through without noticeable dissent, a resolution calling for the elimination of Israel and the wiping out of Zionism. The resolution was apparently favorably received in one of the conference committees. More significantly, I think, was her observation that there were six "Arabs," none of whom she could identify, in attendance and freely circulating throughout the Conference. The implication was clear that the Arabs were responsible for the Nigerian resolution.

On the day of our October 17th meeting, the New York Post reported that some Negroes tended to see the Nigeria-Biafra civil war as a plot by Israel to take over Africa. The story then went on to relate that similar sentiments were expressed at the National Conference on Black Power, which were verified by conference vice-chairman C. Sumner Stone and attributed by him to the "growing Negro anti-Semitism."

Nathan Perlmutter

October 22, 1968

In our conversation with Mrs. Obolu she ventured the opinion that the Arabs are actively agitating among Blacks all over the world, including the United States. She believes that in most Black African countries, and to a lesser degree in the Black communities in the United States, the Arabs are gaining a sympathetic foothold by virtue of the growing acceptance of the Mohammedan religion by Blacks, and that the Arabs are effectively using religion as a propaganda device.

NE/lk

cc: Harry Fleischman
Haskell Lazere
Bertram Gold ✓
Selma Hirsh
Seymour Samet

DRAFT

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

STATEMENT ON NEGRO-JEWISH RELATIONS
October 26, 1968

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We have reason to be alarmed by the ferocity of recent confrontations, by the rising tide of anti-Semitism at home and abroad, by the rending conflicts all around us which appear to be rapidly hardening into bitter hatred. We have reason to be profoundly disturbed as we see our old rules of behavior frequently comprised into futility. We have reason to feel concern over the fact that violence has become a routine of our daily lives and that it is glorified, or at least rationalized, by so many today, as the only technique for achieving change. But if we are distressed by all of these manifestations in our society today, we must also be greatly disturbed by the slowness with which we appear to be tackling basic causal problems of injustice, poverty, ignorance and despair despite the many official proclamations and expressions (including our own) of good faith and fine ^{IN} ~~at~~tentions.

There are signs that large numbers of Jews are beginning to feel that their national leadership is more concerned with bettering intergroup relations than with protecting the interests of the Jewish community. Many Jews feel that they are the particular targets of the tensions and conflicts of the urban-racial conflicts. The social disorganization of the black slums and changing neighborhoods has directly affected the merchants, small businessmen,

social workers, civil service employees, teachers, cab drivers, doctors and others who provide services in these areas. And there is a rising demand within the Jewish community for Jewish organizations to withdraw from the civil-rights struggle and to serve as a counterforce against rising black militancy.

~~However,~~ We will not be fulfilling our leadership function if we were to ignore the legitimate fears and apprehensions of Jews who are victimized by violence and affected by the demands for greater power by the Negro community at the expense of hard-won gains made by many individual Jews.

We most fully function as leaders when, in the great accommodations that American society has to make to meet legitimate Negro needs, we express our concern for both Negro and Jew. We fulfill our leadership role in its most creative way when we honestly examine each issue which produces tension and conflict between us and the black community and make deliberate choices -- sometimes in open disagreement with black groups, sometimes trading and at other times making necessary compromises, and at all times seeking solutions pointing to the greatest good.

While Negro revolt had been sparked by a feeling of powerlessness, we must recognize that many of the ethnic groups in lower middle class white America also feel that they can no longer control their own destiny -- that they too are powerless.

We must develop a strategy to convince those groups that alliance and cooperation would yield constructive results for them as well as for Negroes. We must push for an economic and social program that will bring lower middle class and poor whites and poor blacks into the mainstream of American society.

Equal opportunity for all cannot be achieved unless we have full as well as fair employment, housing and education Our nation must put such a program into practice.

October 30, 1968

Seymour Samet

Harry Fleischman

Enclosed is a copy of Whitney Young's reply to my letter dealing with his column on "The Myth of Black Anti-Semitism" which I sent to you recently. I think that following up on such columns helps to keep our black friends sensitized to the problem.

HF:la

Encl.

cc: B. Gold ✓
M. Yarmon
N. Perlmutter
I. Levine
A. Wolfe
H. Lazere
H. Bookbinder

JUL 31 1968

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Memorandum

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date 29 July 1968
to Bertram Gold
from Hyman Bookbinder
subject Whitney Young's CORE Speech

I recently asked the Washington Representative of the Urban League, Mrs. Cenoria Johnson, for the text, if available, of Whitney's CORE speech. This morning, I received the enclosed, which I find of great interest -- especially the cover memo!

The prepared remarks are really quite unobjectionable -- as a matter of fact, very commendable in some places. It's interesting and revealing what happened to Whitney's rhetoric once he got in front of the group...

C'est la vie.... c'est la guerre...



National Urban League, Inc.

Washington Bureau

777 14TH STREET, N.W., WASHINGTON, D. C. 20005 • AREA CODE 202-393-0124

July
Twenty-fifth
1968

MEMORANDUM

TO: Hyman Bookbinder

FROM: Charles W. Sharpe
Program Information Specialist

SUBJ: Whitney Young's Speech at the CORE Convention

The speech made at the July 8 CORE Convention by Whitney M. Young has received widespread attention both verbally and in the press. Because press accounts did not indicate the complete rationale of Mr. Young's talk, we are sending you a copy of his prepared remarks.

If we can assist in further interpretation of the Urban League's "Bold New Thrust" please do not hesitate to call on us.

CWS/bjs

Points covered by
WHITNEY M. YOUNG, JR.
Executive Director
NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE
at the
1968 CORE CONVENTION
Columbus, Ohio
Saturday, July 6, 1968

Brothers and Sisters:

Your invitation to address this luncheon was given high priority for several reasons.

One, my long time friendship and respect for Floyd Mc Kissick - we have on most issues agreed, but when we in rare instances did not we never questioned the motives or the personal honesty of each other - our entire families have warm affection for each other.

Two, the tragic events of recent months involving those who sought change and the crucial issues and challenges before us in this election year makes necessary the highest possible degree of unity which can be achieved among those seeking equal opportunity and equal results for all Americans.

7
Robinson
One cannot help but view with dismay that for the most part in America it is only the good men seeking reform and change who are assassinated, Lincoln, Malcolm X, the two Kennedys, Martin Luther King, Jr. The reactionaries, the racists, the Klansmen, all seeking to reverse progress in human relations are apparently safe in the U.S.A.

As to unity I come to this convention believing that the goals and objectives we have in common are far greater than those on

which we may differ and unity does not require uniformity. In fact, in a war, and we are in a war against racism and injustice, it would be the height of folly to have only a single method of attack - only one branch of the service and all doing the same thing. What is important is that each do his thing well understanding fully his dependence on the other. It has often been a CORE frontal direct attack on a problem that has made a negotiable or a legislative solution by the Urban League or the NAACP possible. Here we have much to learn from the labor movement for timing is important and when to use what method by whom is crucial. To negotiate across the table, or to engage in political activity, is sometimes more militant and effective than continuing to picket. But the important thing to remember is that no war is ever won unless there is an intelligent division of labor with each respecting the other.

Of equal importance to unity and effectiveness during this period is the necessity to distinguish rhetoric from relevance or symbols from substance.

Too many people believe we can shout, sing or shoot our way into power. Let me assure you now that the real enemy of the black man in America is not remotely concerned about our lung power or our fire power. In fact he welcomes it as a justification for further suppression and indiscriminate use of his superior fire power. Net results - mainly black people killed - black communities damaged or destroyed. What is feared most is our brain power - our political power - our economic

power. This comes from what we continue to develop namely a new sense of pride, of dignity, of destiny, as well as roots. And most of all a new sense of unity of community. No longer can we afford the luxury of blacks fighting and killing blacks. Neither can we fall in the same trick bag as white people have done in generalizing about all black people. You and I must know that no race has a monopoly on vice or virtue.

Most black people have been beautiful, but some black men killed Malcolm X, your associate director, Roy Innis' son and daily exploit their people either as employers, landlords or merchants. Most white people, as the Kerner Commission report pointed out, are racist but some are not. Particularly among young people do we witness an attempt to rid themselves of the disease of prejudice and a willingness to challenge the institution and the systems which have perpetuated racism. Significantly, an increasing number of top corporate leaders and public officials have demonstrated a flexibility and a desire for change. These must not be ignored and we and our children must be prepared to capitalize on these breakthroughs and relationships. We must continue to fight and reject those white racists, and ideologically revolutionists who would send us back to Africa or establish a more formal American apartheid.

The Urban League does not apologize for its past contribution to our black brothers. We were for many years the only resource to which black citizens could turn for jobs, welfare, housing, educa-

tion, and recreation. Given the limits of law - public attitude and our small resources - we achieved miracles. But what we did yesterday, and the way we did it, is not good enough for today. So we have changed some of our focus and are continuing even more.

Recently we announced a New Thrust which included a shift from our role as honest power broker to that of providing technical assistance to the ghetto to help it organize, document its needs, select its own leadership and arrange for creative confrontations with appropriate officials. In addition, we have, or are planning programs, for middle class black people. Programs to reduce white racism, expand leadership development, create black ownership of businesses - ICBO, program for black campus leaders, program for ghetto youth groups -- all involving the Mission Rebels, Real Great Society, Thugs, Inc., Blackstone Rangers and Pride Inc.

This does not mean we will not continue our present programs of job development placement and training, nor our work to improve the quantity and quality of housing, education, and health and welfare resources. But the reality of today's situation demands that our major thrust be, in the ghetto developing and stimulating what we call ghetto power which the system must be responsive to.

Brothers and sisters let me make it clear. The Urban League believes strongly in that interpretation of black power which emphasizes self determination - pride - self respect - participation and control of ones destiny and community affairs.

We support as legitimate and historically consistent a minority's mobilization of its economic and political power to reward its friends and punish its enemies (others have done this but did not chant). We do not believe in cultural absorbtion but rather cultural exchange. We believe black people have in the past given much to America which we insist all our educational systems must record and teach for both blacks and whites. We believe blacks are giving much to the present society and will contribute even more to the future if there is to be a future for America or mankind.

We believe, therefore, that black Americans should have the same options and choices as white Americans when it comes to choosing a job, a home, educational institutions, or a religion. We are, therefore, opposed to enforced segregation as historically advocated by white southern racists or practiced in South Africa. On the other hand, we believe that those who choose segregated living (as other ethnic groups have done for a period) should not suffer inferior services or facilities. We must have black capitalists, black economic stability - black doctors - biologists, etc. But there is not and can never be in America, black capitalism, a black economy, black medicine, black biology. Our seeking of power must assure us of a more major role in the responsibilities and rewards of the main stream, not a way to escape it with the token handouts granted always to those on the reservations.

Finally, may I repeat my pleasure at the receipt of your invitation and commend CORE and its leadership for its effort through this

conference to establish not only the symbol of black unity but also the substance. Whatever our differences, and this conference has proved they are small compared to our similarities, may we never forget we are black brothers who carry on our shoulders the responsibility as did our forefathers for thousands of our brothers who still exist in the midnight of poverty and despair; and more important, for yet unborn generations of black children who will have reason, I hope, to bless, rather than curse us.

May I close with the words of Brooke Benton's song "I AM A MAN."

I'm a Man and I just want to live like one.

Why must I fight for what I want?

I'm so weary and it is more than I can stand.

I'm a Man and I want to hold my head up high.

I'm flesh and blood and I've got pride.

Can't they see it? Won't they ever understand?

I'm a Man.

How do I hide the tears in my eyes

When I go to tell my son.

The things he's heard - they're no more than lies.

He's as good as anyone.

I'm a man.

And soon the day is goin' to come,

When I'll be free to live like one.

Then I'll stand tall and be seen for what I am.

I'm a Man... I'm a Man... I'm a Man.

November 12, 1968

Theodore Ellenoff, Edward Moldover, Bert Gold, Nate Perlmutter
Haskell Lazere

Meeting with Leadership Coalition - Black Ministers - November 8, 1968.

Marc Tanenbaum set up a meeting with Pastor William Jones, and others of the Black Leadership Coalition about which we have talked previously. Present at the meeting in addition to several black ministers, most all of whom were Baptists, were Marc Tanenbaum, Rabbi Halpern, Harry Fleischman and me. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss what they could do with us about Black anti-Semitism.

The meeting which was scheduled for 11:30 A.M., in Reverend Jones' church didn't get under way until almost noon. Marc explained the purpose of the meeting and explained it very clearly in terms of our concern about Black anti-Semitism, whether it be real or imagined at this point in history.

Instead of talking about the issue Marc had posed, the group took on Shanker, and blamed Shanker for everything that was happening, said directly and indirectly to us on a number of occasions during the course of the meeting that since Shanker was Jewish and we were Jewish, we had a responsibility of getting rid of him and/or of changing his mind on the current school strike. They blamed Shanker for all of the racism and they blamed us for permitting him to operate in the fashion that he has. They kept saying things like "how do we know that you're sincere in dealing with us unless you can show some kind of action in connection with Shanker."

It soon became apparent from the discussions that these were politically unsophisticated leaders. They were extremely emotional and kept reciting the number of discriminatory practices which had afflicted Negroes as Negroes, kept saying that things have got to change, and they had the responsibility of taking the lead in accomplishing the changes and that not to do that would mean an abdication of their leadership role and destroy their effectiveness with their own people.

When we talked about Poynter to them, Reverend Jones pulled out the UFT reproduction of the Poynter article and said, "you see, this is what Shanker is doing." Then he asked us did we know who Poynter was, because most of the people in the Negro community did not.

It also came through that these leaders really do not have any feeling for the benefits that they might get from a labor union - all they can think about are the unions which discriminate against Negroes. Most of the ministers who were present are involved now in Operation Breadbasket, and they are chanting a bit to initiate through Operation Breadbasket a massive boycott of white stores by people throughout the Negro community. What they're really talking about is organizing the boycott to prevent any Christmas buying from any stores which are white owned.

One of the ministers, whose name I don't recall, but who comes from the Ocean Hill area, and works very closely with Reverend Oliver and Rhody McCoy, at one point got impatient and wanted to walk out of the meeting because we didn't seem to be getting anywhere. He wanted to go into his pulpit this Sunday, and start telling the people to initiate the boycott. He

and others of the ministers who were present alleged that they had on several occasions issued statements about anti-Semitism, condemning it, but the papers hadn't picked up any of their references. They complained that what the papers were doing is playing up the extremists within the Black community and giving the impression that these are the people who really represent the Black community. They claim that this is certainly not a fact and they are stunned by the backlash.

Both Harry and Marc went through the whole abc's of how bad it is to generalize, and the difference between being against an exploiter, be he black, white, Jewish or Christian, and being against an individual because he is of a particular race or a religion. They saw the difference but kept coming back to Shanker. At one point in the discussion, Rabbi Halpern indicated that even if Shanker was no longer the head of the teachers' union, and somebody else was, that the situation would be the same even if the guy's name was O'Brien. Again they said, well, but that it doesn't change anything because most of the teachers are Jewish anyhow. In any statement that comes out they expect that we have to be critical of the teachers' union, and particularly Shanker.

At another point, in the discussion I talked to them in terms of the matter of practical politics, and suggested that the way to deal with Shanker is to put him on the spot by giving him everything that he wants with McCoy and Oliver underscoring the genuineness of their offer by saying that if what they promise - getting the teachers back into the schools and giving them classroom assignments and not only that, but using the teachers according to their specialties to help the kids in the school - keeping outside agitators out - promising to discipline anybody who threatens physically or otherwise any of the teachers, etc., etc., - to say if it doesn't work, we're out, and that Shanker then would have no place to go because McCoy and Oliver had offered to put their jobs on the line if what they offered didn't work. It would also mean that Oliver and McCoy would become community heroes, because they would make the sacrifice on the basis of what was in the best interest of the total city, not just Ocean Hill. As I talked there was a nodding of the heads, but 30 seconds later the conversation once again turned back to what we had to do with Shanker.

The meeting adjourned with the consensus that a statement on our part condemning racism and on their part condemning anti-semitism had to be issued, and issued jointly. We had talked about convening a news conference and we had offered to help them to place some of the statements they alleged had not gotten publicity if they would give us copies of what had been said. No-one was able to produce any written statements at the moment.

It became apparent to Harry and Marc and me, that to convene a joint news conference with any of the ministers might be rather risky, because it could occur at any time during the news conference so that they could use the platform for a frontal attack on Shanker, as Shanker, not just as head of the union. We've pretty well decided that the thing we have to do is draft a statement from our point of view and let them proceed and then meet again on Monday or Tuesday. I seem to recall that we have a tentative meeting sometime Monday, but it's subject to confirmation by Marc Tanenbaum.

I think we have to proceed with great caution with this or any other group which insists on having just a narrow interest in the issues - their own group only. Maintaining communication with these ministers is vital, but I think that we are operating on almost entirely different levels, which is going to require prolonged and frequent discussions until we can get back to the point of some inter-personal relationships instead of continuing on inter-group. They see decentralization as the primary issue here as well as the protection of the Negro community, and they expect us to give a strong endorsement to decentralization in our statement as well. I wonder how they would feel if they knew that Rosemary Gunning was the one who wrote the original legislation about decentralization when she was helping Senator Brydges.

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date December 6, 1968
to Bert Gold
from Selma Hirsh
subject BOARD OF GOVERNORS FOLLOW UP

1. I have asked Lee Billig to put together the wording suggested by Messrs. Slawson, Sher and Goldberg as a basis for the preparation of a revised Statement on Negro-Jewish Relations. (See attached)

I would suggest that on the basis of this material perhaps Seymour would be willing to try his hand with a revision which we might then send to an editorial committee, perhaps consisting of David Sher, John Slawson, Harvey Spear and Mervin Riseman.

What do you think?

2. It was agreed that a policy committee should be appointed to consider the establishment of task forces, and perhaps this could be discussed at our strategy meeting on Tuesday in terms of personnel--lay and staff--to serve this committee, and procedures to be followed.

SH:hr

cc: Lee Billig

Remarks by David Sher on the subject of a statement on Negro-Jewish Relations at the December 4, 1968 Board of Governors Meeting

AJC's constituency and Jews throughout the United States are looking to us for guidance, in this highly inflamed situation, and they are especially looking to us for a sense of responsibility. One of the emotions that is raging through the American Jewish community and throughout the United States as a result of the explosions of anti-Semitism is the feeling on the part of many Jews that: "I'm through as far as any participation in the help of the Negro is concerned. They can go to hell!"

One thing that seems to supersede the importance of anything that has been said here tonight is that that should not be the course followed by Jews individually or by the American Jewish community. And I think we owe it as a duty to make that clear, to make our views clear, to try to illuminate the thinking of the American Jewish community.

Now it has not been decided whether this statement is to be put into the New York Times or whether it is to be circulated among our chapters or our members. First we have to decide if this is the position of the American Jewish Committee. When we have decided that then we can decide what to do with it. I have no pride of authorship. I wrote only a very small part of it. And if it is to be edited, if there is to be a deletion here and there then let's do it.

But let us not shrink from the exercise of this responsibility. And let us not say "de-escalate, cool it, you'll add fuel." Where

an issue of anti-Semitism has been raised which has aroused the whole American Jewish community, how can the AJC be silent to its membership at least, and perhaps to the Jewish community at large.

Remarks by John Slawson

I agree with David Sher's view as to the substance of the statement. I must also agree with those who criticize the statement.

To be very definite, the AJC must take a public position with the Jewish Community and outside of the Jewish community but on a different basis. In other words, a different kind of statement is needed. A statement that I think would be helpful and constructive is one that would indicate that, of course, we take sides. We take sides with decency against anti-Semitism but nevertheless we do not intend to reduce our efforts for human equality--black or white. That is an important reason for issuing a statement, because of the very things David Sher has said.

Jewish backlash is coming to the fore. Now we've got to issue a statement condemning anti-Semitism by Negroes or whites but at the same time saying that we are not reducing but as a matter of fact are accelerating and increasing our efforts for human equality--black and white. That is the kind of statement we should have had--a brief one without reference to any organization by category. A simple statement.

We owe it to the Jewish community because of the fact that

some of them believe some of us are too soft on the whole thing or we should wash our hands of the whole civil rights problem. So I urge that we should have a statement, but a different kind of statement.

EXCERPTS - PRESIDENTIAL REPORT TO THE
- 2 - BOARD OF GOVS

They are the important officials of our government and it is DFC 4
important for them to be informed as to the viewpoints of this
important American organization. And I would hope also that you
would have the leaders of the Congress on both sides so that they
both can have the benefit of hearing what you and the ^{what}
representatives of the organization will have to say.

Now, perhaps I am under an illusion, but this organization
has not remained entirely silent about the subject of the statement
that was very sincerely and, I think, very well discussed a few
minutes ago. I do not think that the American Jewish Committee
can remain silent about the issue of Negro relations with the
Jewish community or, indeed, the much larger question of the whole
problem that confronts our country as a result of the developments
with respect to the black community. But we haven't been very
reticent on the subject. Indeed, in Atlanta I made a statement
about it as your president. I'm not aware that it aroused any
^{substantial} ~~strong~~ dissent in the organization. And I ^{could} would like to recapitulate
in a very brief ^{way what I had to say.} I assumed and
^{unless in} ~~corrected~~
I shall continue to assume that it commands the support of the

board and the membership. It does not seem to me that the issue is terribly complicated, and it does not seem to me that we have to rely *upon the Negro community or Negro organizations* to state the viewpoint of the American Jewish Committee. The American Jewish Committee is against extremism in any form, whether it's black or white extremism. The American Jewish Committee is against any manifestation of anti-Semitism, whether it comes from black or white extremists, and we'll combat any manifestation of anti-Semitism with all of the force at its command. The American Jewish Committee does not believe that the manifestations of anti-Semitism on the part of black extremists represent the opinion of the great body of the Negro community of the United States; nor does it believe that the manifestations of anti-Semitism by the white extremists represent the viewpoint of the overwhelming population of the United States. The fact that there have been manifestations of anti-Semitism in both the white -- among the white and black extremists *me* should intensify rather than deter the efforts of the American Jewish Committee to bring justice and equality to all Americans, black or white. An organization such as this, which

has been founded on the concept that human relations must be the keystone of a democracy should not, at this date, relinquish its commitment to that great ideal. And, therefore, the problems which have arisen in this area should lead us to intensify our programs and not diminish them. It seems to me ~~that~~ these are very simple statements; it seems to me ~~that~~ ~~any~~ they represent our common point of view: they can be simply stated and they can represent the credo of an organization which fundamentally believes in this point of view. We must not on one hand denigrate the dangers of any manifestations of anti-Semitism, nor must we add to or exaggerate *those which arise in the Jewish community* because there are some manifestations of anti-Semitism. And to give you a case in point, just within the last few days,

~~We~~ ought not to be reluctant to point out that just as there is a danger in overlooking manifestations of anti-Semitism, there is a danger in exaggerating manifestations when they occur. For example, we have had the despicable and deplorable incidents in New York where some of our Jewish synagogues have been desecrated.

This
~~That~~ is a monstrous act which, of course, carries with it every

condemnation *that any decent human being* Jewish or non-Jewish can express. At the same time I must say in all frankness that when I saw some of our rabbis in New York compare this with the terrible night ~~when~~ *during the* Hitlerite period when Jewish synagogues were burned down with the approval and under the sanction of the German authorities, that that analogy is pretty far-fetched, indeed. The authorities of this city are doing everything within their power to find those responsible and to bring them to punishment. And we must always remember that there is a great difference between governmentally sanctioned intolerance and intolerance which comes out of ~~the~~ *the* prejudice and hatred of individuals. The two things are not analagous, they cannot be appropriately compared, and they must never be allowed to stand on the same footing; and a responsible organization, responsible to the American community and responsible to the Jewish community must not hesitate to say that. Because we have the task, — an enlightened organization—which has been *condemned very much by our British colleagues - we have the task of bringing* and good judgment into these problems. And we have the task also *and* of educating our own Jewish community which, understandably, because *reason*

of the holocaust, *reacts* sometimes over-reacts
to manifestations of this type when they occur. So I believe,
members of the board, it will not be very difficult to make a
very simple and a very dignified statement in which we express
what I know is the shared view of *every* everyone here about this problem,
and that *shared view can make a* contribution to public enlightenment and to the
enlightenment of the Jewish community in this very troublesome
our and difficult area. I commend the staff for the restraint with
which they have approached this terrible problem which rose out
of the New York school situation. There, too, we would be burying
our heads in the sand, if we did not realize that there are rights
on both sides of this *controversy* conflict and what we have witnessed is not
a situation which can be easily appraised. We have witnessed the
collision of two rights, which very often causes the greatest
difficulty in solving and it is not yet solved, and that there
are racial undertones and overtones, *to what has occurred, is*
and who is familiar obvious to everyone who reads
the papers, with the situation in New York. I am very anxious --
and the reason I spoke up in support of Bert's proposal for an
in-depth study -- I am very anxious that the American Jewish

Committee contribute something substantive in the area of the principal racial problem we have in the United States and that is the evil and sickness of racial discrimination against the black population. We bring to it unique resources: we have been the greatest victims of racial discrimination in the world and, as I have said many *times, we ought to bring to it the compassion, the understanding,* the sympathy and the feeling that no other group can bring to the problems of the Negro community. And I would hope if the committee which deals with panels is constituted -- recommends a panel, we will have a really wide, wide-spread and prestigious panel address itself to this problem, a very difficult one for our country, and *that* we will make a contribution to public understanding of this grave issue, the key to the solution of which we have not yet found *in* Americans and perhaps we can make a unique contribution in this area.

Now, I don't know whether you had the opportunity this morning to read this provocative *speech* that George Kennon (?) gave to the assembly in Princeton which is now going on - people from all over the world. It's been called an intellectual assembly. Sometimes that word spoils any possible good results

*Center
G W*

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

Suggested Statement for
Consideration by the
Board of Governors
Wednesday, December 4, 1968

Recently the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People published in its journal, CRISIS, an admirable statement underscoring its belief in the democratic process and assailing those who, in their pursuit of social change, appeal to extremism, racism, prejudice and anti-Semitism. Addressed primarily to Negroes, the statement denounced those extremists whose program for the black community is rooted in hatred of whites, social disorganization and a withdrawal from the goals of an integrated social order.

The American Jewish Committee hails this action by the NAACP. It is vital at this time for Americans to be reminded of what the majority of black Americans believe. Too often in recent months we have been exposed to the intemperate views and the raucous voices of a small, unrepresentative portion of the Negro community. Too quickly, many white Americans have concluded that these latter were the true representatives of Negroes on whose behalf they presumed to speak.

needs for all

The American Jewish Committee ~~believes differently. It~~
~~believe that blacks want what most other Americans want and deserve.~~
Jobs with equal opportunities for advancement, decent housing,

a good education for their children, security against attacks on their persons and their property, and an open society in which they can move freely with dignity--these are the goals of black men as they are of whites.

The American Jewish Committee has
We ourselves have actively pursued these goals to improve the quality of the lives of American Jews and we have consistently been in the vanguard of ~~this~~ *the* continuing struggle ~~on the part of~~ *for justice and equality* all groups. ~~Un~~ *citizens in our democracy* fortunately, at this moment this struggle is being ~~looked upon~~ *characterized by some* as a major power conflict between black and white rather than as an American quest for human decency and economic adequacy. An unhappy by-product is the exploitation of anti-Semitism on the part of ~~some black extremist groups~~ *a small minority* who ~~deliberately~~ *intentionally* seek to provoke confrontation between Negroes and Jews. ~~We condemn any manifestation of anti-semitism~~ *however*. It would be tragic to permit this to weaken our historic alliance in the pursuit of justice at a time when joint efforts toward this end are essential.

Anti-semitism
One important quality of an effective coalition is the recognition that it brings together diverse forces which do not always agree on all matters before them. In this process ~~we~~ *all who are involved* must honestly examine the issues which produce tension and conflict among us and strive for solutions that will lead to the kind of accommodation and compromise that is essential to progressive change in our pluralistic society.

Just as we will not be intimidated from struggling for our own rights by anti-Semitism from any source, white or black, we will not be deflected by ~~black~~ extremism from our purpose of helping black people achieve their full role in American society. We shall do more, not less, to attain this end. We shall move forward in that pursuit without a chip on our shoulder or a mask on our face.

The late Martin Luther King, Jr. sounded the keynote for our time: "We must live together as brothers, or perish together as fools."

DEC 5 1968

memorandum

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date December 6, 1968

to Bert Gold

from Seymour Samet

subject Board of Governors' Action on Negro-Jewish Statement

I told you I had some concerns about the Negro-Jewish statement which you asked me to prepare for the December 4th meeting of the Board of Governors!!

The decision made by the Board for yet another rewrite does not bother me. The reasons given, however, depress me! My concerns include:

1. We have criticized the black community for not speaking out against anti-Semitism. One finally did speak out and we admit they appear to be without public expressions of support. Conclusion? Play it safe and don't indicate support. Do exactly what we criticized the others for doing - avoid becoming unpopular even if you feel that justice demands support for a statement of moderation.
2. There is no question that the extremists would not like a statement such as the one we proposed. Since when are we committed to popularity among anti-Semites? What "common cause" with extremists who appeal to violence could we possibly harm?
3. The question of "who speaks for the Negro" is a straw man. No one organization does. But we do know from all of the recent polls that the majority of Negroes espouse a moderation most articulately expressed by groups like the NAACP. It is interesting to note how concerned some voices are for the loud voices of splinter organizations but continue to ignore, belittle or deride the NAACP - the largest Negro organization in the U.S.

Finally, I am concerned about using meetings of lay boards to air staff disagreements. (The recommendation by Marc that the statement not be accepted is a case in point.) I am not suggesting that we must or should have staff ideological conformity, but I am strongly urging that these differences be debated outside of the arena of lay deliberations. To date, I personally have observed what I thought was appropriate professional discipline in avoiding such debate. If I misunderstand the ground rules along these lines, then I would like to be set straight so that I can plan accordingly.

SS:eak

cc: Nathan Perlmutter, Selma Hirsh

December 16, 1968

Will Katz

Lee J. Price

Southwide Conference of Black Elected Officials

Atlanta, Georgia -- December 11 - 14, 1968

Sponsored by the Voter Education Project of the Southern Regional Council

A unique and historic conference of some 250 black officials, chosen in local, county, and state elections, gathered in Atlanta on December 11 - 14 for the first Southwide Conference of Black Elected Officials. The attendance represented a majority of some 385 elected Negro officials now holding office in the South. The Voter Education Project contributed enormously to the historic achievement. Negro registration in the 13 Southern states today is approximately 3 1/4 million, and its impact is demonstrated by comparison with 1965, when there were only 70 Negro office holders in the region.

General sessions included the Wednesday opening dinner speech by Julian Bond, a public forum addressed by Mayor Richard C. Hatcher, of Gary, Indiana, Thursday evening at Clark College, the Friday dinner address by Attorney General Ramsey Clark, and the closing Saturday luncheon address by Mrs. Shirley Chisholm, the Congresswoman elect from New York. There were 3 workshop sessions (Thursday and Friday afternoons, and Saturday morning), divided into 6 categories: school board members, city officials, county officials (which were sub-divided into a special session for Mississippi election commissioners, since they have no other county governmental responsibilities), law enforcement officials, and state legislators.

I was asked to act as recorder for the city officials workshop sessions, of which John Feild, of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, was the convener.

My presence, I feel, was useful to the agency. I was identified there as AJC staff, which gave tangible evidence of our continued support for the legitimate aspirations of black people, and I made contacts which I think should be helpful to our other area directors in the region. For this reason, they are being furnished a copy of this report, together with the names and addresses of black office holders in their area.

AJC's new bibliography, "Negro History and Literature," was called to the attention of the participants in the workshop for school board members. In this connection, I just received a phone call from a Southern Regional Council staff member, who indicated she was placing an order for 300 copies with New York. Another AJC publication, "Police on the Urban Frontier," was called to the attention of participants in the law enforcement and city officials workshops, and I think this may well result in some orders.

Will Katz

- 2 -

December 16, 1968

I was very impressed with the dedication and high qualifications of the vast majority of those participating. As far as I could determine, they unanimously rejected black separatism and, while very conscious of their special responsibility to their black constituency, they seem to be sincerely determined to seek ways to be an instrument of racial reconciliation, and are attempting to communicate with and serve their white constituents, with special concern for the plight of poor whites. I was the only Jewish professional participating in the Conference due, no doubt, to the close relationship we enjoy with the Southern Regional Council and the Voter Education Project.

Best regards.

Jack

LJP:lf

cc: ✓ Nathan Perlmutter
Seymour Samet
Harry Fleischman
Irving Levine
Isaiah Terman
Charles F. Wittenstein
Brant Coopersmith
Gustave Falk
Milton Feiner
Walter Zand

Milton Ellerin

*distributed by Black members
at Atlanta
Public Forum at Clark College
These were Richard & Hatcher
and as speaker*

12/12/68

AN OPEN LETTER TO ALL OF THE BLACK ELECTED OFFICIALS MEETING
IN ATLANTA.

BLACK AFRICAN BROTHERS:

The Black Peoples Alliance, an organization of students working to unite, politically, with our brothers in the community has already begun to do what you, our political representatives should have already done: namely building an African Political Party.

During the past November election members of the Black Peoples Alliance passed out the attached leaflet to the African community in Atlanta. It explained why we should admit that we are Africans and therefore we should form our own African Party for self-determination. Since you are our elected representatives we are passing out this same information to you, the black elected officials of this conference knowing that you have the power (if not the will) to form an African Party here and now. And because of the danger of genocide to us as a people, we urge you to form a party for the liberation of Africans in America and through out the world just as the Jews support the aggression against the Arabs in the Middle East that they call liberation for Israel.

Now of course we expect both the Caucasians and the Jews attending this conference to brand us as black separatists (i.e. True Black Power!) as they always do when Africans in America move toward liberation and self-determination. We know their charges will be made to conceal their own white racism and to cover up the fact that they know the adverse effect that their white presence have on setting either an Uncle Tom tone for Black political meetings, or providing a forum in the meeting where militants threaten the whites rather than address their black brothers. The net effect in either case is that black people leave the meeting not seeing the need for an autonomous political institution. Let it be said here that we are not dismayed by charges of black separatism coming from white people for it is none of their business how we decide to organize in our own self interest. We are, however, concerned that some of our African brothers attending this conference might misunderstand our purpose; and therefore in order to avoid such misunderstanding, we are making available one of our representatives to be allowed, if requested, to address the conference in order to more fully explain the position of the young Africans in America that you are supposed to be the spokesman for. We will explain our position on one condition: That NO WHITES be present at the time we speak about black politics. If you do not have the courage to accept us, your youth, then perhaps it is best that we do not attempt to speak at this time. In any event whether we are requested to speak (and we would like to) or not we will continue our plans for the building of our African Party; however, we are leaving the door open for you to enter at a later date. We are painfully aware that you need us as much as we need you for divided we are niggers and united we are Africans. We have no time to quarrel.

IT IS FOOLISH FOR CHICKENS TO FIGHT WHILE THE HAWK IS WATCHING!!!

ARE BLACK PEOPLE AMERICANS?

In order to end the fruitless debate over who is blackest in America, in order to end the competitive and divisive and almost self-destructive childlike game of trying to out-black each other by falsely stating, "I am better than you because I am blacker than you". We have come up with a proposal to end, once and for all, the debate over "blackness" by removing the color Black as an issue and replacing it with a much deeper cultural issue-- that of Africa.

Thus, the issue will no longer be whether we accept that we are black or not, it will be whether we accept that we are African or not.

The Blackest people in the world are the ones who are in Africa or are of Africa and affirm who they are, rather than denying who they are. Thus, in America the question of who is blackest ends when we announce that we now accept with pride the fact that we are Black Africans-- for the most part.

The question of who is blackest is settled by our acceptance that we are Black Africans, and once we have said that, it's time to work, not talk.

~~Black will not be a badge to distinguish you from the people~~
because Black "African" will be a bond that ties you to the people.
Black will not be a divider of African People because Africa will be a unifier of all Black people.

Please help us, Black People's Alliance, in our efforts to change the Atlanta University Center into an all Black University which relates to our homeland -- Africa.

Memorandum

Greeley Father Andrew
* AD/PUB/1
[Newsletter]
Perlmutter
Comment

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date December 30, 1968
to Bertram H. Gold, Nathan Perlmutter
from George Salomon
subject AJC Newsletter, Vol. 4, No. 5

In accordance with Bert's suggestion, we have tried to get Father Andrew M. Greeley's approval for a Newsletter lead article adapted from his forthcoming AJC pamphlet.

Unfortunately, we haven't been able to get through to him during the Christmas season. To keep things moving, we have meanwhile compiled the article. Here it is.

May we have your reactions as soon as possible, please? If you are satisfied with what we have here, we will call Father Greeley again -- preferably on Tuesday morning -- and get clearance from him.

Perlmutter

Beyond the Epithets: Why Jews and Blacks Disagree

By Andrew M. Greeley

These excerpts from a study of immigrant and in-migrant groups and their conflicts in American life preview a publication scheduled by AJC's Institute of Human Relations Press for the spring of 1969, and tentatively entitled "The Differences That Divide Us."

Father Greeley has written widely on the sociology of religion. He is Program Director of the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago.

The causes of the New York School strike are many and complex. But one way of looking at the conflict is to see it as a struggle between trade unionists, mostly but not entirely Jewish, determined to defend the traditional rights of union members won through many hard decades of strikes and collective bargaining, and black militant leaders and followers, determined to control what is taught in the schools their children attend and who teaches in these schools.

The conflict in Brooklyn is cast in the mold of typical American inter-ethnic conflict. These conflicts are part of the history of American society, and show no signs of ending. [Many if not most of the group conflicts that occur in the United States can be interpreted as a struggle between immigrant groups for what they think is their fair share. These groups may also be racial or religious groups, but it seems to me that at the root of ethnic conflicts is the struggle of immigrant groups for political and social power.

There is no pair of ethnic groups which cannot, given the proper circumstances, look horns with each other. Thus, American Jews, easily the most liberal and progressive ethnic group in the country, find themselves faced with the possibility of fierce combat with another ethnic group on whose side they have been in many other controversies. The Jew could fight the Irishman (and vice versa) with

something of a clear conscience, but to fight the black is something else again. And Jewish leaders discover that there is more racism latent in their communities than they would have thought, while some black leaders who could scarcely have been unaware of the anti-Semitism of their followers may find it convenient to appeal indirectly to these feelings.

* * *

Intensive study of American ethnic groups is long overdue. First of all, the wandering of nations which has produced the United States is one of the most extraordinary social phenomena in the whole history of mankind. Ethnic interaction and ethnic conflict in American society can tell us many things about human relationships that we are only beginning dimly to understand.

Secondly, the immediate social problems our society faces cannot be solved unless we understand more about how ethnic groups relate with one another.

Finally, it might be easier to understand the problems of the new immigrant groups if we were more aware of how older immigrant groups coped with their problem when they were at a similar state. I certainly do not subscribe to any interpretation of American racial problems which says that the blacks' problems will be solved in the same way. The Irish, the Slovaks, the Italians, the Jews were at least not brought as slaves, nor kept in slavery or near slavery for hundreds of years. Nor are their skins a

different color from that of other Americans. Nevertheless, there are certain similarities in the process through which all immigrant groups must pass.

For example, there is, to my knowledge, not a single accusation made against blacks that was not previously made against my Irish ancestors. The only basic difference I can determine is that when the Irish rioted, they really did so in a big way, and that nothing the blacks have yet done will compare with--let us say--the anti-draft riots of 1863 in New York.

* * *

A number of social scientists have argued that social conflict is a safety valve mechanism. In this context, the present phase of black militancy can be seen as a highly constructive experience, because it is forcing the larger society to concede to the blacks' positions, prestige, power, control and responsibility appropriate for them. If there was not social conflict to force this restructuring of society, then there might be an eruption which would tear the structure apart. But it is still necessary to say that there are two kinds of social conflict--that which leads to restructuring and that which leads to destruction.

Most of the conflicts between ethnic groups and religious ethnic groups currently going on in American society are well within the rules of the game. Violence may occasionally break out, but given the size, complexity and newness of American society, the astonishing phenomenon is that it is no more destructive than it is.

There is, first of all, political competition and conflict. ^{For example,} In New York there is the struggle between Jews and Catholics for control of the Democratic Party; and among the Catholics there is conflict between the Italians and the Irish.

The second focus for conflict is housing. The conflict between white and black has been so well publicized that we have perhaps forgotten that other ethnic groups have "battled" for neighborhoods and do even today.

Education provides another focus. Various white ethnic groups have fought for control of public school systems. Catholics have generally supported religious activities in public schools; Protestants are divided on the issue, and most Jews are for rigorous separation of church and state.

Ethnic battles also rage in the trade unions where leadership, once German or Irish or Jewish, has shifted toward the Italians and the Slavic immigrant groups. In the business world, particularly the world of the small entrepreneur, such as the construction contractor, vigorous, not to say vicious, competition can exist along ethnic lines.

Some of the conflict situations are purely ethnic; other conflicts are ethnic and racial or religious. But it is not merely religious theory that keeps Catholics and Jews suspicious of each other. It is not racism that is the issue in Brooklyn, save very indirectly. Even if these two factors could be drained out, the basic resentment toward strangers who are not "our kind of people," who are trying

to take or keep something from us that is rightfully ours, will make the conflict almost as serious as it is at the present time.

* * *

We must assume that competition among different groups for resources that are scarce or are presumed to be scarce is inevitable. The question is to what extent the competition can be prevented from turning into conflict.

We must, it seems to me, recognize that ethnic problems are likely to persist, and that it does no good to lament or moralize about them. We must be carefully aware of our own ethnic bias and not permit ourselves the luxury of adopting a superior attitude. We also must show great self-restraint in attacking the leadership of other groups, even though that leadership is very likely to leave itself open to such attacks.

If our reaction to the fears of black immigration is merely to condemn the prejudice of, say, Poles--and even worse, to describe it as "Polish prejudice"--then we might just as well keep our big mouths shut. It is easy enough for liberals, intellectuals and other upper middle-class types to dismiss the Slavic home owner's fears as being primitive and uneducated, but they are still very real fears and, up to a point, valid ones. Unless we can find ways to lessen these fears, there are no grounds for reasonable expectations that inner racial hatred will decline.