The Jewish Publication Society of America

COMBINED REPORT OF EIGHTY-FOURTH AND EIGHTY-FIFTH YEARS

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(Elected May 6, 1973)

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REPORT OF THE 84th JPS ANNUAL MEETING

Jerome J. Shestack, prominent Philadelphia lawyer and civic leader, was elected president of The Jewish Publication Society of America at the 84th annual membership meeting held at the Warwick Hotel on Sunday, April 30, 1972.

Shestack is the eleventh president of the Society, which has published more than 700 books for laymen and scholars during the course of its 84-year history. He succeeds William S. Fishman who served as president for three years.

Isaac L. Auerbach of Philadelphia was named to his second term as a Society vice-president and Myer Feldman of Washington, Mitchell E. Panzer of Philadelphia, Justice Samuel J. Roberts of Erie, Pa., and Philip D. Sang of Chicago were elected to initial one-year terms as vice-presidents.

Dr. Edward Shils of Philadelphia was elected secretary and Robert P. Abrams, also of Philadelphia, was named to his second term as treasurer.

Dr. Chaim Potok was elected to a seventh term as editor of the Society and Lesser Zussman was named to his 23rd term as executive vice president.

Retiring President Fishman, who was elected as a life trustee of the Society, reported a gain in membership in 1972, progress in the work of the Society’s Bible translation committees, and plans to publish the new translations of the Book of Psalms and the Book of Isaiah during the coming year.

Fishman also noted that Jewish Publication Society books and Bibles are in homes and libraries all over the world and have made a substantial contribution to the preservation of the Jewish religion.

Re-elected for three-year terms as Society trustees were Morris B. Abram and Harry Starr of New York; Myer Feldman and Philip Amram of Washington; Dr. Paul Sloane, Dr. Paul Mishkin, Isaac L. Auerbach, and Mitchell E. Panzer of Philadelphia; John J. Goldberg of San Francisco; Carl G. Koch of Seattle; Dr. Edward Levi of Chicago; Dr. Jacob R. Marcus of Cincinnati; Justice Samuel J. Roberts of Erie and Ben D. Zevin of Cleveland.

Dr. Gerson D. Cohen, noted historian and newly-elected president of The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, was guest speaker for the afternoon. Dr. Cohen spoke on “The Task of Jewish Literature in American Society.”

Mr. Bernard G. Segal, chairman of the Committee on By-Laws and Nominations, made a motion calling for changes in the Society’s By-Laws to establish the office of Executive Vice President to be held by a professional member of the staff, who, under the direction of, and responsible to, the President, will direct the administrative, fiscal,
and editorial affairs of the Society. This consolidation of staff responsibility was proposed after a careful and thorough study of practices of leading publishing institutions, and of the predictable needs of the Society in the years ahead. The motion was duly seconded and passed.

**JPS Publications**

In 1971 the JPS published ten new volumes, with titles, authors, quantities printed, and distribution as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Printed</th>
<th>Distributed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1971, Vol. 72</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>3,764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edited by Morris Fine and Milton Himmelfarb,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with Martha Jelenko as Associate Editor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(Co-published with American Jewish Committee)</td>
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<tr>
<td>BREAKDOWN AND BEREAVEMENT</td>
<td>2,956</td>
<td>2,025</td>
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<tr>
<td>By Yosef Chaim Brenner</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Co-published with Cornell University Press)</td>
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<tr>
<td>EMBATTLED JUSTICE (A Covenant Book)</td>
<td>4,057</td>
<td>2,426</td>
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<tr>
<td>By Ellen Norman Stern</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>IMMIGRANTS TO FREEDOM</td>
<td>2,520</td>
<td>1,989</td>
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<tr>
<td>By Joseph Brandes and Martin Douglas</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Co-published with Univ. of Pennsylvania Press)</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISRAELIS AND JEWS</td>
<td>4,785</td>
<td>3,234</td>
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<tr>
<td>By Simon N. Herman</td>
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<td>(Co-published with Random House)</td>
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<td>JEWISH WORSHIP</td>
<td>6,480</td>
<td>4,696</td>
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<td>By Abraham E. Millgram</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAKING OF AN AMERICAN JEWISH COMMUNITY</td>
<td>4,125</td>
<td>3,104</td>
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<tr>
<td>By Isaac M. Fine</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>STEELED BY ADVERSITY</td>
<td>5,400</td>
<td>2,946</td>
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<tr>
<td>By Salo W. Baron, Edited by by Jeannette M. Baron</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TULLY FILMUS: Selected Drawings</td>
<td>8,884</td>
<td>5,644</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction by Isaac B. Singer</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>YOM KIPPUR ANTHOLOGY</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>3,883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Philip Goodman</td>
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**Reprints**

During the year, the JPS reprinted nine volumes, with titles and quantities as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Reprinted</th>
<th>Total in print</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THE HOLY SCRIPTURES</td>
<td>45,000</td>
<td>1,308,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE TORAH: A New Translation</td>
<td>15,750</td>
<td>255,750</td>
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<tr>
<td>HISTORY OF THE JEWS OF CHRISTIAN SPAIN</td>
<td>2,231</td>
<td>9,231</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vol. I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>By Yitzhak Baer</td>
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Membership Statistics

Enrollment in 1971 was approximately 5 per cent ahead of 1970, with 12,979 compared with 12,365. Of these, 1,052 were new members, 3,665 were gifts, and 8,262 renewals. By category, we had 4,173 contributions of $7.50, 2,336 of $10.00, 4,282 of $15.00, 1,020 of $30.00 and 1,168 of $40.00 and higher.

Report of JPS Treasurer for 1971

Mr. Robert P. Abrams, Treasurer of the Society, reported as follows:

The year 1971 showed a decline in the Society's income from bookstore sales of Bibles and books. In this area, our experience matched that of commercial publishers, since the year was not a good one for the publishing industry in general. However, the communal aspect of the Society's activities held up very well, since our income from other sources showed an increase. Also, careful control over expenses kept our deficit within reasonable limits.

Specifically, our income from sales of books and Bibles dropped from $317,400 in 1970 to $271,100 in 1971—a decrease of 15 percent. Other income increased from $262,300 in 1970 to $272,700 in 1971—a gain of 4 percent. Included in this income was $203,800 in membership contributions for 1971 compared with $198,600 in 1970—an increase of 3 percent. Also included is a significant gain in welfare fund allocations, with $20,400 in 1971 compared with $15,900 in 1970 for a 23 percent increase. In summary, total income was $553,800 in 1971 compared with $579,700 in 1970—an overall decrease of 6 percent.

On the expenditure side, the total was $560,200 for 1971 compared with $577,800 for 1970—a decrease of 3 percent. Included were costs of book production and royalties of $307,500 for 1971 and $302,200 for 1970. Costs of distribution and administration amounted to $252,800 in 1971 and $275,600 in 1970.

Our over-all deficit for the year 1971 amounted to $61,500, of which $45,000 was made up from reserve funds, leaving a net deficit of $16,500. For 1970, the figures were $40,200 as the overall deficit with $42,200 from reserves, leaving a small operating gain of $2,000.

We are more optimistic for this coming year. Certainly we are in a sound fiscal position.
REPORT OF THE 85th JPS ANNUAL MEETING

At the 85th Annual Meeting of The Jewish Publication Society of America, held on Sunday, May 6, 1973, Mr. Jerome J. Shestack, prominent Philadelphia lawyer and civic leader, was re-elected President of the Society.

Other officers of JPS, including Vice Presidents Isaac L. Auerbach, Myer Feldman, Mitchell E. Panzer, Justice Samuel J. Roberts and Philip D. Sang were re-elected, as were Treasurer Robert P. Abrams and Secretary Dr. Edward B. Shils.

Dr. Chaim Potok was elected to an eighth term as Editor of the Society, and David C. Gross was named to his first full term as Executive Vice President succeeding Lesser Zussman, who is retiring after 23 years with the Society.

Eleven trustees of the Society, whose terms were expiring, were all re-elected, and four vacancies on the board were filled by the election of the following for three-year terms:

- Arlin M. Adams of Philadelphia, Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. He is on the Board of Governors of Hebrew Union College and is Chairman of the Fels Institute of State and Local Court of the University of Pennsylvania.
- Charles Feinberg of Detroit, civic leader and honorary consultant to the Library of Congress; Mr. Feinberg is a noted collector and donor of rare books and manuscripts, recipient of numerous honorary degrees from institutions of higher learning.
- Robert S. Rifkind of New York City, who has served in the office of the Solicitor General of the United States and is a partner in the New York law firm of Cravath, Swaine and Moore. He is the son of Judge Simon Rifkind.
- Edward E. Elson, of Atlanta, Georgia, one of the nation's leading distributors of books and periodicals and a member of the Board of Governors of the American Jewish Committee.
- Elie Wiesel, noted novelist, was guest speaker for the meeting. Mr. Wiesel spoke on "Dare We Forget."

From the annual report of JPS President Jerome J. Shestack (May 6, 1973)

Today's hard reality is that in most Jewish homes outside of Israel, Jewish books are sparsely found, if at all. Jewish college students who heavily populate our campuses have little to choose from, and that little at high prices. Numerous Jewish classics are no longer available and many have never even been translated. Jewish scholars find their subventions pitiful, their markets small, and their efforts unrecognized. Modern Jewish books, finely bound and artistically illustrated, are a rarity. Jewish children's books are few and seldom of striking quality.

And this poverty in Jewish book life exists at a time when non-Jewish publishing in America is fertile, when Jewish writers dominate the literary scene, when scholarly works and reference volumes abound, and when art and juvenile literature is prolific and often beautiful.

This, then, was not a time to be content with an annual list of eleven or twelve books, with some 13,000 members and with only one major scholarly project.
We have not been content—and I wish to report today on some of the exciting things we have begun to do and, more importantly, what we plan to do.

At the outset, I extend my appreciation to our officers and trustees. In a world of conflicting and confusing priorities, they have made unmistakable their regard for the importance of the Society’s work and have provided the imagination and energy that makes service as your President a delight, an education, and a heartwarming personal experience. I thank all of them.

Our first major decision this year was to expand our list of books. Until now, our list numbered from ten to fourteen books. We have more than doubled our list. This year more than thirty books will be available to our members. Members should be faced not with the choice of whether our list offers enough books to interest them, but how to choose among the many that do.

This enlargement means that initially we have to co-publish more books with other publishing houses. We must continue to do this until we can build up the list of authors and books that we publish alone. Our new catalogues reflect this decision.

To finance this enlargement, and the other projects I shall describe, we shall have to expend more this year than in the past, drawing upon our funds in an amount close to $100,000. But as our past President, William Fishman, has pointedly observed, our shareholders are the Jewish people at large and our dividends are our books. We raise funds only for the purpose of expending them to further Jewish learning. Hence, we regard these expenditures as prudent and in the Society’s interests.

Hopefully, our new catalogues will help us enlarge our membership. JPS membership for the past three years has been fairly constant around the 13,000 level. I do not disparage this number. I recall Dr. Solomon Grayzel, once quoting Henry James, that it mattered little to an author whether his work was bought by 500 or 500,000, provided that he could choose the 500, for the 500 would bring the message to the 500,000. We like to think that our 13,000 bring the message to thousands more. Nonetheless, our membership must not remain constant. With the Jewish population of this country numbering six million, can we be content with 13,000 members, or even 50,000? We have begun to see an increase as a result of our new lists and our new catalogues. But we have far to go. Our marketing and promotion and membership efforts must candidly be regarded as minimal compared to what they should—and hopefully will be.

Another major undertaking which the Board will initiate this year is a JPS Commentary on the Bible. Today there does not exist a modern English or Hebrew commentary on the entire Bible produced by Jewish scholars. The JPS will produce that commentary. At one of the most exciting meetings I have attended—our Board meeting in February—Dr. Potok and Dr. Yerushalmi presented the outline of the JPS Bible Commentary project. This project will take seven to ten years. Its scholarship will be of the highest quality and its impact should be monumental. We plan to have the Commentary done in Hebrew and in English, for the need for such a Commentary is as great in Israel as it is here.

The details of the Bible Commentary project are still being formed—the selection of the scholars, the guidelines of the work, and the determination of the format and scope. Dr. Nachum Sarna of Brandeis University is heading the planning committee which is formulating the details of the project, which we hope to announce shortly. As
one can imagine, this is not an area in which uniformity of thought exists. To forge the
details of an historic undertaking such as this is always difficult, often painful, and
sometimes even agonizing. But by the time of our next annual meeting, I hope we can
report that the scholarship is proceeding and that the Commentary is well under way.

As an indication of the importance attributed to this project, Dr. Chaim Potok will
assume major functions with respect to the Bible Commentary project. He is already
working closely with Dr. Sarna on the project. This may in the future necessitate the
appointment of a new Editor for our regular Book Division, with Dr. Potok serving as
Editor of our Special Projects.

A second major advance is in the quality of our publishing. A literary critic of the
17th Century once observed:

Books should to one of these four ends conduce,
For wisdom, piety, delight, or use.

How fortunate when books conduce to all four of these ends. Our new translation of
Isaiah, with a foreword by Professor H. L. Ginsberg and illustrated by Chaim Gross, is
such a book. It is a milestone for the JPS, showing that serious significant work can be
presented aesthetically.

A few days ago, Ed Wolf visited some friends and saw the Isaiah on the coffee table.
He remarked, "The JPS has finally made the coffee table." But even more important is
that Isaiah has made the coffee table!

You can look forward to other books of this quality—Jeremiah, Ezekiel, A
Retrospective of the Hagadah, and others. Isaiah marks the beginning of a journey,
not the end.

Tomorrow we celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the State of Israel, and it is
appropriate to announce that the JPS this past week has taken steps to open a subsidiary
in Israel.

There is a great need for this. We have often talked of the cultural and spiritual
bridge between Israel and the Diaspora. But bridges go both ways, and from the
richness of our scholarship we have much of value to offer Israel and its large English
reading audience.

At the International Book Fair in Jerusalem this past week, the JPS had a prominent
booth and attracted favorable attention. Our Executive Vice President, Mr. Gross,
attended the Fair and concluded details relating to our Israeli branch. Miss Shlomit
Finkler of Jerusalem is assisting us as resident staff. We look forward to many fruits
out of our increased presence in Israel.

You may be amused by an anecdote in connection with our Israel opening. While in
Israel last month, I presented the first copy of our Isaiah to reach Israel to Mrs. Golda
Meir. I noted that while there were many prophesies of Isaiah which we hoped would
be fulfilled, there was one that gave me pause. When asked by Mrs. Meir which one, I
pointed to Chapter 40, verse 2:

Speak tenderly . . .
and declare to her
That her term of service is over.

Mrs. Meir was much amused and also most gracious in welcoming the JPS to Israel.

Whatever may be the case with regard to Mrs. Meir's term of service, I am happy
that the term of service of the JPS in Israel has at last begun.
Another significant development of this past year concerns our distribution. In the past, we distributed books to our members, to schools, synagogues and other institutions. However, we had no organization to bring our books to the attention of this nation’s thousands of bookstores.

This year, at the instance of Mr. David Gross, we entered into a contract with one of the nation’s foremost publishers, Random House, to distribute our books through its distribution system. Random House salesmen now carry our lists, and we have high hopes for the increased distribution which will result. Look in your local bookstores. If JPS books aren’t there, ask why not.

There are many other exciting endeavors in the offing.

Item: A college series bringing the best of Jewish writing to the campus in paperbacks to sell at almost nominal amounts.

Item: A series of introductions by leading scholars on important areas of Jewish learning written for laymen.

Item: A retrospective of fine Hagadahs in Jewish history showing the extraordinary printing and illustrations with a text relating to our history.

Item: The enlargement of our juvenile series.

Item: The broadening of our membership base to Canada, Australia, England and South Africa, all of which have substantial Jewish communities.

I have called these “Items.” But they are not just items. They and others in the planning stages will prove advances and milestones in the expanding progress of this Society.

We shall not, of course, achieve our goals without travail. Our progress will tax our finances and our energies. New frontiers, whether geographical or literary, do not come by their security easily. But all of us are convinced that, as Rabbi Tarfon long ago said, we are not free to desist from the effort.

Tomorrow, in Israel, its armies will parade to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of Israel’s independence. Those armies are necessary for Israel’s survival. But something else is needed too. The Jewish people have been called “Am Hasefer”—“the people of the Book.” The words “Am Hasefer” can be read “Im Hasefer”—“With the Book.” The survival of Jewish values depends not only on our being the people of the Book as a matter of past tradition, but also with Jewish books as a matter of constant renewal. In that effort, may the Jewish Publication Society stand in the forefront.

Report of JPS Treasurer for 1972

From a variety of perspectives the fiscal position of The Jewish Publication Society in 1972, its 85th year of operations, can be viewed as definitely improved.

For instance, our income from sale of books and Bibles was $293,000 in 1972 compared with $271,000 in 1971, an increase of an encouraging 8 per cent.

For the same period we enjoyed an increase in income from membership to $213,200 in 1972 from $203,800 in 1971, an increase of 4 1/2 per cent. Welfare funds increased slightly from $20,400 in 1971 to $21,000 in 1972 but donations dropped from $3,500 in 1971 to $1,250 in 1972. However, income from special purpose funds increased during the year from $45,000 to $50,000.
Other income, that is all income other than sales of books and Bibles, jumped from $272,700 to $285,450, a rise of 4 per cent.

On the expenditure side, we were able to cut our expenses slightly, these dropping from $560,228 to $554,376. Included in these figures are costs of book production, royalties, distribution and administration.

With all of these factors taken into account JPS in 1972 showed an improvement over 1971 in reducing our deficit. Our fiscal position continues to be a sound one.

**JPS Publications**

In 1972 we published the following new volumes, with titles, authors, quantities printed, and distribution as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Printed</th>
<th>Distributed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THE BATTLE FOR JERUSALEM June 5-7, 1967</td>
<td>7,371</td>
<td>4,971</td>
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<tr>
<td>By Abraham Rabinovich</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>NOT FREE TO DESIST: The American Jewish Committee 1906–1966</td>
<td>4,191</td>
<td>1,639</td>
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<tr>
<td>By Naomi W. Cohen</td>
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<tr>
<td>LIVES AND VOICES: A Collection of American Jewish Memoirs</td>
<td>4,015</td>
<td>2,175</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edited by Stanley Chyet</td>
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<tr>
<td>TROTSKY AND THE JEWS</td>
<td>3,981</td>
<td>3,123</td>
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<tr>
<td>By Joseph Nedava</td>
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<tr>
<td>ORGANIZED JEWISH REACTIONS TO GERMAN ANTI-SEMITISM BEFORE THE FIRST WORLD WAR (Co-published with Columbia University Press)</td>
<td>2,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>By Ismar Schorsch</td>
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<tr>
<td>BERNARD REVEL: Builder of American Orthodox Jewry</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>1,657</td>
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<td>By Aaron Rothkoff</td>
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<td>REBIRTH: The Story of Eliezer Ben-Yehudah and the Modern Hebrew Language (A Covenant Book)</td>
<td>4,033</td>
<td>1,875</td>
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<tr>
<td>By Dvorah Omer</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, Volume 73</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>3,557</td>
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<tr>
<td>1972, Edited by Morris Fine &amp; Milton Himmelfarb</td>
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<tr>
<td>Martha Jelenko, Executive Editor</td>
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<td>(Co-published with American Jewish Committee)</td>
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**1972 Reprints**

During 1972 we reprinted the following books:

- THE AMERICAN JEW (O.I. Janowsky) 2,000;
- ANTHOLOGY OF HOLOCAUST LITERATURE (J. Glatstein, I. Knox, S. Margoshes, eds.) 1,500;
- BATTLE FOR JERUSALEM (Abraham Rabinovich) DON ISSAC ABRAVANEL (B. Netanyahu) 2,000;
- JEWISH WORSHIP (Abraham Millgram) 3,000;
- THE PROPHETS (Abraham J. Heschel) 3,000;