REPORT OF NINETY-FIFTH YEAR

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REPORT OF THE 95TH JPS ANNUAL MEETING

Dr. Muriel M. Berman, president, presided at the 95th annual meeting of the Jewish Publication Society on May 22, 1983, at the Bellevue Stratford Hotel in Philadelphia.

The report of the nominating committee was presented by the chairman, Bernard G. Segal. Mr. Segal proposed an amendment to the by-laws which provides for the election of fifty trustees (rather than forty-five), and this was approved by the membership.

The newly elected trustees were Irvin J. Borowsky of Philadelphia, president of North American Publishing Company and of the Jewish Exponent; Max Robert Schrayer, Chicago, chairman of the board of The Associated Agencies and former chairman of the Combined Jewish Appeal of Chicago; Dolores K. Sloviter, Philadelphia, judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals; Stephen Joel Trachtenberg, Hartford, president of the University of Hartford; and Marvin Wachman, Philadelphia, former president of Temple University.

Re-elected as trustees were Robert P. Abrams, Philadelphia; Burton Caine, Philadelphia; Libby G. Fishman, Philadelphia; Lawrence E. Irell, Los Angeles; Max M. Kampelman, Washington; Jay I. Kislak, Miami; Marlene F. Lachman, Philadelphia; Theodore R. Mann, Philadelphia; Joseph L. Mendelson, Washington; Norman Oler, Philadelphia; David
Reichert, Cincinnati; Julius Rosenwald II, Philadelphia; Jonas Salk, La Jolla; Morris W. Satinsky, Philadelphia; Daniel Segal, Philadelphia; Ruth Septee, Philadelphia; and Norma L. Shapiro, Philadelphia.

Dr. Muriel M. Berman, Allentown, was re-elected president. The following vice-presidents were re-elected: Stuart E. Eizenstat, Washington; Norma F. Furst, Philadelphia; Norman Oler, Philadelphia; Robert S. Rifkind, New York; and Charles R. Weiner, Philadelphia. Also re-elected were Marlene F. Lachman, Philadelphia, secretary; Robert P. Abrams, Philadelphia, chairman of the executive committee; Bernard I. Levinson, executive vice-president; and Maier Deshell, editor. Leon J. Perelman, Philadelphia, founder of the Perelman Antique Toy Museum, president of West Park Hospital and American Paper Products, Inc., was elected treasurer.

After the reports of the president, treasurer, publication committee, and executive vice-president, our editor introduced Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg who addressed the members on the topic "Is There an American Jewish Culture?"

From the Annual Report of JPS President Muriel M. Berman

My friends, sometimes I feel about our work at the Jewish Publication Society that, somehow or other, we must have a direct line with someone looking over us. Because in spite of the statements by eminent Jewish organizations that the Jewish community is imperiled by ignorance of its heritage and history, despite the supposed ignorance of Jewish literature and our Judaic civilization, and despite the supposed relaxation of Jewish moral values in the Western World—there is still a great interest in J.P.S. books, on Jewish scholarly thought, traditions, and especially the Holy Scriptures. Our membership retains its level, and we are now in the process of implementing a strong membership drive—we believe our books must be disseminated to more and more readers.

Lack of Jewish education weakens bonds between fellow Jews—lack of Jewish education opens the door to assimilation, and lack of Jewish education undermines our own self-respect, and leaves us vulnerable.

Ninety-five years ago, the Jewish Publication Society came into being to communicate Jewish educational and religious values to a new generation of Americans.

But the picture in publishing in 1888 was far different from what it is in 1983. At that time, our organization was called into being, mandated, if you will, because the children of the immigrants were growing up knowing only
one language—English. Unfortunately there were no books in English
about Jewish culture or history, not even an English language Jewish prayer
book. The necessity was filled when the Jewish Publication Society of
America became a reality, and for 95 years we have provided continuous,
uninterrupted service to the reading public.

Last year, in 1982, the Jewish Publication Society distributed 166,000
books, published 12 new books, and reprinted 23. In comparison, at the
20th annual meeting, 75 years ago in 1907, only four books were published.
That year Edwin Wolf, the president, reported a forthcoming epoch-making
work, The Legends of the Jews by Louis Ginzberg (translated by Henrietta
Szold). This is one of the most distinguished of J.P.S. books. It is still in
print, and after 75 years is still widely used by both the Jewish and non-
Jewish community.

Today, many other concerns publish books of Jewish content. Nearly all
the leading university presses and most of the commercial publishing houses
feature books on Jewish subjects from many of our best-selling Jewish
authors. But the Jewish Publication Society is unique, we are still resolutely
dedicated to publishing quality, authoritative books on every Jewish subject
that requires attention. Peruse through our catalog and you will see volumes
on history, religion, literary novels, translations of the classics, art books,
biographies, marvelous children’s books, a wonderful poetry series, an-
thologies, books on philosophical studies, all of which are actually selling.

There are books on the Holocaust, among the best of which is Martin
Gilbert’s Atlas of the Holocaust. He is a young man, recognized as the
official historian on Winston Churchill, who painstakingly pinpointed on
maps of Europe, the communities that were victims of the Holocaust. This
is valuable material, especially since some Nazi groups are claiming the
Holocaust never happened. The Holocaust must not be forgotten, and this
book should be in every college, university and public library, and J.P.S. will
see that it is.

Incidentally, the Berman National Medical Library in Jerusalem is estab-
lishing a new concept—by request of the medical students and faculty—a
department of non-medical educational and recreational Jewish content
books. Five hundred volumes are currently being selected for initial delivery
—and, of course, all of them are J.P.S. selections. Many volumes are read
by medical students; some are even taken on army maneuvers when the
students serve in the military. Later this will be expanded to include other
publishers. This concept of J.P.S. libraries could be duplicated in many
libraries around the country.
We have just celebrated the holiday of Shevuot, commemorating God's wondrous gift of the Holy Torah to the Jewish people, and in turn to the world. It is truly amazing, that this body of law, so succinct, yet all inclusive, still remains so relevant and inspiring, that one has to force oneself to remember these laws were handed down centuries ago.

And, again I was struck with the awesome accomplishments of our Society. As you all know, the quarter-century task of our new translation of the Holy Scriptures was finally completed last year and we are still receiving accolades.

Time devoted a full page article in its July 5, 1982 issue, and the New York Times, as well as hundreds of newspapers and magazines throughout the country carried the story of this major event. Jewish Book Month hailed our new translation “as possibly the most extraordinary scholarly achievement in American Jewish history.” The New York Times Sunday magazine printed an article by our own Chaim Potok, the Special Projects Editor of J.P.S., entitled “The Bible’s Inspired Art” on October 3, 1982.

Further recognition of the Bible came when the Layman’s National Bible Committee honored us with an award at the annual meeting of the New York Board of Rabbis on January 12th. I was pleased and surprised when Bowie Kuhn, commissioner of baseball and a director of this interfaith lay organization, made the presentation—and even more surprised when none other than Howard Cosell accompanied him. This was really an ecumenical event, baseball and the New York Board of Rabbis. And the common denominator—the Bible!

A prophet is often without honor in his own country, but on November the 11th, the Philadelphia chapter of the American Jewish Committee honored us. We were especially pleased to be acknowledged for bringing honor to the entire Philadelphia community.

On April 21st, our publication of Kethubim received still another citation in the translation category of the Kenneth B. Smilen Present Tense Literary Awards. Chaim Potok accepted for the Society.

His Eminence Pope John Paul II sent a gracious letter of appreciation from the Vatican in Italy—thanking us for the presentation of our new translation to him through the kindness of His Eminence John Cardinal Krol—and Cardinal Krol was delighted with the specially engraved edition which was presented to him. It will remain in the diocese library.

On January 21st at a dinner held in Jerusalem, Dr. Avraham Harman, president of the Hebrew University, accepted our new editions in the presence of the three scholars involved in the translation of the last volume,
and again in Jerusalem, on June 29th, 1982, President Navon of Israel received us at the President's House, discussing with us at length the merits and beauty of our new translations. Moshe Greenberg and Jonas Greenfield, two of the scholars involved with the translation, as well as Dorothy Harman, our representative in Israel, were in attendance. The genuine admiration President Navon had for every phase of our work was indeed heartening.

Recognition and honor for our Bible translation reached a new height when on April 11th, we were invited to the oval office of the White House where we presented our new translation of the Jewish Bible, suitably bound and engraved. President Reagan warmly accepted our gift. The meeting was arranged by Philip Berman, Senator Arlen Specter, and Senator John Heinz and was attended by these gentlemen as well as by Vice President Bush, our editor, Chaim Potok, and our vice presidents Stuart Eizenstat, Dr. Norma F. Furst, Norman Oler, Robert S. Rifkind, Judge Charles Weiner and trustee Joseph Mendelson. The president was especially attentive to the remarks made to mark the occasion about the history of the Jewish Publication Society, and before leaving I asked Mr. Reagan to sign another set of the Bible for us to put in our archives for our 100th anniversary celebration in 1988. After the ceremony, Senator Specter arranged a cocktail reception at the Capitol Senate Building where other senators, congressmen, influential Washingtonians and many Jewish Publication Society members attended.

The next day a most comprehensive article describing the White House visit and the history and goals of the Jewish Publication Society appeared in the Senate Congressional Record (page S4471).

Many other awards and citations almost too numerous to cite came our way this year. The New York Times praised Dan Pagis' book of poetry. Commentary devoted two articles to our books, the new Bible translation and Spain, the Jews and Franco, which was also featured in the New Republic.

The book world too has its Emmy's and Oscar's, and our Society won a good share of them. The Medieval Academy of America has selected our book, The Jewish Debate in the High Middle Ages by David Berger as the winner of the John Nicholas Brown Prize for 1983. The New York Review of Books carried a long, glowing essay by Harold Bloom on our co-publication Zakhor by Yosef Yerushalmi. The Philadelphia Book Clinic awarded our Society for the highest standards of design, printing and binding in the 38th Philadelphia Book Show, for Linda Heller's The Castle on Hester
Street, a charming, utterly delightful book for youngsters five to eight, full of humor and fantasy.

Also noted by important periodicals were Alina by Mira Meier; In New York by Moyshe-Leyb Halpern; Quality of Witness, A Romanian Diary by Emil Dorian; and Marc Angel's La America, in literally hundreds of favorable reviews.

As your president, I was interviewed on the NBC "Eternal Light" radio program, featuring our Society's goals, history and anecdotes back to the time of Henrietta Szold. The host was Martin Bookspan, noted television and radio commentator, and known as the voice of the New York Philharmonic and of "Live from Lincoln Center." In celebration of Jewish Book Month, NBC's radio program, "In Good Faith", featured David Adler, our editor of J.P.S. juvenile books, who is himself the author of more than 25 children's books.

One of our most outstanding events was a membership brunch hosted by the board of trustees at the Bourse in Philadelphia, followed by a standing-room-only event at the American Jewish History Museum. This symposium, entitled "On Women and Judaism, A View From Tradition," was led by Blu Greenberg, author of the book by the same name, a JPS publication. Respondents were Rabbi Susan Abramson, Rabbi Hava Pell, and Reena Sigman Friedman. The list of co-sponsors for this event is a veritable who's who of Jewish organizations in Philadelphia. They included the American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress, Philadelphia Hadassah, Jewish Archives Board, Leadership Development Committee of the Federation, and the Museum of American Jewish History. The moderator of this meaningful and stimulating discussion was none other than Philadelphia's Marciarose.

Seventy-five, going on 100, seems to be a good number—for it was 75 years ago we enrolled our first Palestinian member on King David Street in Jerusalem. Now we have an active growing Israeli branch, and this was the year for our Israel office to shine. The Jerusalem International Book Fair took place a few weeks ago, and this year the prestigious Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies held seminars there on "The Future of Books in the Electronic Era" exploring such avenues as cassette, video tapes, and other exciting possibilities. Our booth was quite prominent, and over 100 new Israeli members signed up. More than 100,000 books were exhibited. Israel is a book-minded country, and welcomed the more than 60,000 people who attended. More than 1,100 publishers representing 45 countries showed their products to the public and fellow publishers.
Besides the commercial and image building aspects of the fair, we sponsored several intellectual seminars, with some of our most prominent authors, at the Van Leer Institute in Jerusalem. As you know, many Israelis are in the forefront of Jewish thought and literature today, and a great many of their manuscripts are sent through our Israeli office, and published by our Society.

We participate in so many things. We send a generous amount of books through proper channels known as Project Sefer to Soviet Jewry, to encourage the continuation and growth of Jewish culture there. Through the cooperation of our Society, the Jewish Braille Institute of America is preparing an edition of the Torah, in large 18-point bulletin-size type, to be distributed free of charge exclusively to the visually handicapped throughout the world.

In conclusion, I would like to mention a phenomena that seems to be pervasive in the academic world. It is not entirely new, it has been taking place in our important universities for many years. In the last few years, however, great interest has surfaced in the Christian world in the study of Jewish civilization. There is particular concern that the sources be authentic and of Jewish origin, and not abridgements or interpretations of their own theologians. To meet these needs, the president of Israel, under the direction of Moshe Davis, has established a group known as the International Center for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization. As a member of this Board, I attended the December meeting at the President's House in Jerusalem, and, to confirm that this interest does exist on the part of the colleges and universities and to see how they can become more involved with teaching Jewish studies, I will be meeting (at their request) with the Presidents of both Lafayette College and Lehigh University on June 13th.

So you see, the opportunities for J.P.S. are expanding all around us. Obviously J.P.S. will be an important resource, supplying reading material and information for successful college and university programs as well as background material.

We have had a busy and successful year of accomplishment. For this I want to thank all of you, our members, the dedicated staff, our executive director, our editors, all our committees and their chairmen—and most of all, the board of trustees who formulate policy and are truly dedicated, concerned, and involved with every phase of our activity.

Jewish life depends on the transmission of Jewish knowledge from generation to generation. I am sure all of us are proud of the substantial link in
the chain that has been forged by the Jewish Publication Society of America for almost ten decades.

**JPS Treasurer's Report for 1982**

This year, once again, I am pleased to report that the Society's financial condition continues to improve. In 1982 income from sales of books and membership dues amounted to $1,166,119 compared with $1,038,470 in 1981, an increase of over twelve percent. Publishing costs and other expenses came to $1,378,969 compared with $1,301,047, an increase of only about six percent. As a result, the bottom line, after taking into consideration donations and income from investments, showed net revenue for the year in the amount of $26,485 as compared to a deficit in 1981 of $49,164.

As I step down from the office of treasurer, I am also pleased to be able to report that under the watchful eye of our investment committee and our investment advisor, the Society's funds continue to be prudently invested and that we may look forward to being able to publish significant books of Judaica in the years ahead. I would like to thank each of the members of the investment committee for their guidance that has been so helpful in insuring the financial stability of the Society.

**JPS Publications**

In 1982 JPS published the following new volumes:

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<tr>
<th>Title and Author</th>
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<tr>
<td>WALTER BENJAMIN: The Story of a Friendship</td>
<td>5,000</td>
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<td>by Gershom Scholem</td>
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<td>ON WOMEN AND JUDAISM: A View from Tradition</td>
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<td>by Blu Greenberg</td>
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<td>THE WRITINGS-KETHUBIM</td>
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<td>A New Translation of The Holy Scriptures According to Traditional Hebrew Text</td>
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<td>POINTS OF DEPARTURE</td>
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<td>by Dan Pagis</td>
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<td>IN NEW YORK: A Selection</td>
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<td>by Moyshe-Leyb Halpern</td>
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<td>SPAIN, THE JEWS AND FRANCO</td>
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<td>by Haim Avni</td>
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<td>LA AMERICA: The Sephardic Experience in the United States</td>
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<td>by Marc Angel</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALINA: A Russian Girl Comes to Israel</td>
<td>5,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>by Mira Meier</td>
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THE CASTLE ON HESTER STREET 6,000
by Linda Heller

POTATO PANCAKES ALL AROUND: A Hanukkah Tale 5,000
by Marilyn Hirsh (paperback edition)

AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK—Volume 82 2,500
edited by Milton Himmelfarb and David Singer
(co-published with the American Jewish Committee)

ZAKHOR: Jewish History and Jewish Memory 1,000
by Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi
(co-published with University of Washington Press)

THE MACMILLAN ATLAS OF THE HOLOCAUST 1,000
by Martin Gilbert
(co-published with Macmillan Publishing Co.)

1982 Reprints

During 1982 JPS reprinted the following books:

THE ALEPH-BET STORY BOOK by Deborah Pessin (2,000); BEHOLD A GREAT IMAGE edited by Sharon Strassfeld and Arthur Kurzweil (3,000); THE BEST OF K'TONTON by Sadie Rose Weilerstein (3,000); DON ISAAC ABRAVANEL by Benzion Netanyahu (2,000); THE FIVE MEGILLOTH AND THE BOOK OF JONAH (3,000); HEBREW ETHICAL WILLS edited by Israel Abrahams (2,000); HEBREW: THE ETERNAL LANGUAGE by William Chomsky (2,000); THE HOLY SCRIPTURES (23,000); THE JEWISH CATALOG edited by Richard Siegel, Michael and Sharon Strassfeld (15,000); THE JEWISH MARRIAGE ANTHOLOGY by Philip and Hanna Goodman (2,000); THE JEWS OF POLAND by Bernard Weinryb (2,000); LEGENDS OF THE JEWS—Volumes III, IV, and VI by Louis Ginzberg (1,500); LETTERS TO AN AMERICAN JEWISH FRIEND by Hillel Halkin (2,000); ON WOMEN AND JUDAISM by Blu Greenberg (2,000); THE PASSOVER ANTHOLOGY edited by Blu Greenberg (2,000); PESIKTA DE-RAB KAHAANA translated by William G. Braude and Israel J. Kapstein (1,000); THE PROPHETS by Abraham J. Heschel (2,000); THE THIRD JEWISH CATALOG edited by Sharon and Michael Strassfeld (10,000); THE TORAH (25,000).