The Jewish Publication Society of America

REPORT OF NINETY-SEVENTH YEAR

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(Elected June 16, 1985)

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REPORT OF THE 97th JPS ANNUAL MEETING

The 97th annual meeting of the Jewish Publication Society was held on June 16, 1985, at the Bellevue Stratford Hotel in Philadelphia. The honorable Charles R. Weiner presided.

Robert P. Frankel, chairman of the nominating committee, presented the new slate of officers and trustees. Charles R. Weiner was reelected president of the Society, and the following vice-presidents were reelected: Robert P. Abrams, Jay I. Kislak, Martin Meyerson, and Marvin Wachman. Irwin T. Holtzman was newly elected a vice-president. Leon J. Perelman was reelected treasurer and Norma F. Furst, secretary.

Reelected as trustees were Bernard Frank, Allentown; James O. Freedman, Iowa City; Maxwell E. Greenberg, Los Angeles; Richard Maass, White Plains; Rela G. Monson, Philadelphia; Jerry Wagner, Bloomfield; and Sonia B. Woldow, Philadelphia.

Newly elected trustees were Edward J. Bloustein, since 1971 president of Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, and author of numerous works on law; Herschel Blumberg, president of Prince George Center, Inc., Hyattsville, MD, chairman, National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership, former national chairman, United Jewish Appeal, and member, board of governors, the Jewish Agency; Edward E. Elson, president of Atlanta News Agency, Atlanta, GA, and treasurer, the American Jewish Committee; Walter L. Field, Birmingham, MI, author of several books, including A People’s Epic, Symphony of Threes, The Tale of the Horse, and Gleanings from the Bible; Jack E. Goldman, Norwalk, CT, chairman of the board, Cauzin Systems, Inc., recently retired senior vice-president and chief scientist, Xerox Corporation, chairman of the board and past president, American Technion Society; Alvin P. Gutman, president of Pressman-Gutman Company, board member, Heart Fund Council of New York and Hood Museum of Dartmouth College, current chairman, the Philadelphia Museum of Judaica, trustee, Rodeph Shalom Synagogue and Albert Einstein Medical Center; Roberta K. Levy, Minneapolis, MN, judge in Hennepin County municipality and president, the Talmud Torah of Minneapolis; Mitchell E. Panzer, Philadelphia, attorney, member, board of directors, Philadelphia Jewish Archives Center, National Foundation for Jewish Culture, and Jewish Education Service of North America, Inc.; David V. Wachs, Bensalem, PA, chairman of the board and secretary, Charming Shoppes, Inc., member, Republican Jewish Coalition, Israel Center for Social and Economic Programs, and the State of Israel Presidents’ Club.
Judge Weiner presented an engraved silver plate to retiring executive vice-president Bernard I. Levinson and expressed appreciation for his ten years of service. This was followed by the introduction of Nathan Barnett, the newly appointed executive vice-president. Judge Weiner reported that Mr. Barnett had served many years in Jewish communal service, first as executive director of the Delaware Jewish Federation, followed by a position as senior vice-president of the Albert Einstein Medical Center in Philadelphia. Mr. Barnett delivered brief remarks expressing his pleasure upon assuming his new position.

David Rosenberg, editor of JPS, reported on the books that had recently been published. He noted that JPS was continuing its high standard of publishing and that the new directions he had outlined in last year's report had resulted in several notable authors being published by JPS. He reiterated the Society's intention to blend the scholarly books, which are its hallmark, with belles lettres and contemporary Judaica and to introduce new authors.

Muriel M. Berman, chairman of the board, reported on the JPS centennial program contemplated for 1988. Pointing out how rare it is for an organization to continue functioning for 100 years, she asserted that JPS had served the Jewish community well over this long period of time. The board of trustees of JPS and its editors make up a "Who's Who" of American Jewry in every period, she said, and one could almost write the history of the American Jewish community through the history of JPS leadership. A crown to the centennial program will be the publication of the five volumes of the JPS Torah Commentary, a project that was initiated by the Society 25 years ago.

Following the business proceedings of the meeting, Dr. Berman introduced Allan A. Ryan, Jr., who discussed his recent book *Quiet Neighbors: Prosecuting Nazi War Criminals in America*. Mr. Ryan was appointed director of the U.S. Justice Department's Office of Special Investigations in 1980, and in 1983 the attorney general assigned him to conduct the U.S. government's investigation of Nazi war criminal Klaus Barbie.

*From the Annual Report of JPS President Charles R. Weiner*

This has been an extraordinary year for me as president of the Jewish Publication Society. During this period there have been a number of structural changes that are meaningful to the future of the Society. First, there is David Rosenberg, our new editor, who now has been aboard for 15
months. Then, there is our new executive vice-president, Nathan Barnett, who has been here only three and one-half months. I am also very pleased to announce the appointment of Nahum M. Sarna as academic consultant on Judaica. Obviously, we will have a period of adjustment, but because of the new staffing, we plan not only to begin to expand our membership but also to enlarge the number of books published each year.

I am very enthused about our upcoming birthday: in 1988 we will be 100 years young. I really mean "young," with pride and enthusiasm. With our centennial celebration under the leadership and direction of Muriel M. Berman, it promises to be a banner year!

The Jewish Publication Society—with its limited resources but with tremendous effort—has accomplished much, and we should be proud of our achievements. But the time has come for us to enlarge our scope. Therefore, we are embarking on a Century Fund Campaign, which we expect to culminate in 1988 with the raising of three million dollars.

I mentioned accomplishments—let me enumerate: I am pleased to report that the long-awaited one-volume translation of the *Tanakh*, the complete Jewish Bible, will be published in October. This work is the culmination of the historic new translation project that was undertaken by JPS three decades ago and has already become the standard for our time.

Also, I recently attended the Jewish Book Council's awards ceremonies. Of the 11 awards given, 4 were won by the Jewish Publication Society: History—*Encounter with Emancipation: The German Jews in the United States 1830-1914* by Naomi W. Cohen; Jewish Thought—*Halakhic Man* by Joseph B. Soloveitchik, translated by Lawrence Kaplan; Scholarship—*The Wars of the Lord, Book One: Immortality of the Soul* by Levi ben Gershon (known as Gersonides), translated by Seymour Feldman; Illustrated Children's Books—*Mrs. Moskowitz and the Sabbath Candlesticks*, written and illustrated by Amy Schwartz.

This year, in a joint publishing endeavor with the Jewish Theological Seminary, the Society published a limited edition of *The Selected Letters of Cyrus Adler*. Cyrus Adler was a great leader in American Jewish history—and a pious Jew. He was born in Van Buren, Arkansas, in 1863, and died in 1940, a year after being appointed by Franklin Roosevelt as the Jewish representative on a commission of world religious leaders to consult on world peace. He was the Jewish Theological Seminary's third president, serving from 1915. He was also chairman of the editorial board of the Jewish Publication Society for the new translation of the Bible, the 1917 translation, that is. Dr. Adler had a vision for the Society. He, too, wanted
to broaden its horizons and enlarge its scope. Here, in a letter to Simon Wolf dated December 16, 1908, he expresses his desire that the Society publish books for sale to nonmembers:

You made a remark at our meeting on Sunday last, with which I heartily sympathized, namely, that The Jewish Publication Society ought to be publisher of a number of the series which are now issued by independent Societies. I have been of this opinion for a long time, and a number of years ago, was instrumental in having the Board of Trustees recommend to the Society an amendment to the Constitution, which does not require the distribution to all the members, of all the publications of the Society. This amendment was defeated at the time, largely through the instrumentality of Mr. Philip Cowen, who saw in it a threat to publish either a newspaper or a magazine. I revived the matter several years ago, but the Board did not deem it feasible at the time. I am absolutely convinced that the expansion of the Publication Society in any considerable way beyond its present scope, requires the adoption of such an amendment. It could then become the publisher for any Society upon some definite commercial basis, and gradually widen its sphere into that of a general Jewish publishing and book concern. Important as increased capital is, I consider this alteration in the Constitution as an essential preliminary for the enlargement of the work. If anything is to be done in the matter this year it ought to be taken up at our January meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Sound familiar? In 1910, Dr. Adler was very optimistic about the Society. Here is what he had to say in a letter he wrote to Solomon Schechter:

The Bible Translation Board had a meeting at Atlantic City lasting ten days, and we worked on the sixth chapter of Jeremiah. We shall have a meeting in New York at the end of November and the beginning of December lasting for about eight days. I think the work has made reasonable progress and if we hold three or four meetings here, another two years will see the work finished. The Jewish Publication Society, in general, is looking up. It seems to have lived through its worst days. It has gained nearly one thousand members since last May and also doubled the sale of books, and we may probably come into our own after twenty-two years of hard work.

Today, it's 97 years of hard work. Have we “come into our own”? I concur with Cyrus Adler's optimistic outlook: “The Jewish Publication Society is looking up!”

JPS Treasurer's Report for 1984

While JPS continues to be in sound financial condition, we did not sell as many books in 1984 as we did in 1983. Income from the sale of books, memberships, and contributions amounted to $1,200,913., a drop of 3½ percent.

On the other hand, our Endowment Fund has continued to increase under the guidance of our Investment Committee.
### JPS Publications

In 1984 JPS published the following new volumes:

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<tr>
<th>Title and Author</th>
<th>Printed</th>
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<tr>
<td>CLARA'S STORY by Clara Isaacman and Joan Grossman</td>
<td>4,000</td>
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<td>HALAKHIC MAN by Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik</td>
<td>5,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE HANUKKAH OF GREAT-UNCLE OTTO by Myron Levoy</td>
<td>5,000</td>
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<td>A JEWISH BESTIARY by Mark Podwal</td>
<td>5,000</td>
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<td>THE JEWS OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA—VOLUME III Edited by Avigdor Dagan, with Gertrude Hirschler and Lewis Weiner</td>
<td>3,000</td>
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<td>MRS. MOSKOWITZ AND THE SABBATH CANDLESTICKS by Amy Schwartz</td>
<td>5,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE SEVEN GOOD YEARS AND OTHER STORIES by I.L. PERETZ (Retold by Esther Hautzig)</td>
<td>5,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE WARS OF THE LORD by Levi ben Gershom (Gersonides)</td>
<td>3,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE WORLD IS A ROOM AND OTHER STORIES by Yehuda Amichai</td>
<td>5,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK—Volume 84 Edited by Milton Himmelfarb and David Singer (copublished with the American Jewish Committee)</td>
<td>2,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>BACK TO THE SOURCES Edited by Barry W. Holtz (copublished with Summit Books)</td>
<td>1,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>JEWISH EXPERIENCE IN THE ART OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY by Avram Kampf (copublished with Bergin &amp; Garvey)</td>
<td>1,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE JEWISH HERITAGE IN AMERICAN FOLK ART The Jewish Museum and Museum of American Folk Art (copublished with Universe Books)</td>
<td>1,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE NIGHTMARE OF REASON: A Life of Franz Kafka by Ernst Pawel (copublished with Farrar, Straus &amp; Giroux)</td>
<td>1,000</td>
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### 1984 Reprints

During 1984 JPS reprinted the following books:

- THE BEST OF K'TONTON by Sadie Rose Weilerstein (3,000); THE HOLY SCRIPTURES (20,000); BLESSED IS THE MATCH by Marie Syrkin (2,000);
COMMUNITY AND POLITY by Daniel J. Elazar (1,500); THE DEVIL AND THE JEWS by Joshua Trachtenberg (5,000); THE FIVE MEGILLOTH AND THE BOOK OF JONAH (3,000); A HISTORY OF THE JEWS by Solomon Grayzel (4,000); THE FIRST JEWISH CATALOG edited by Richard Siegel, Sharon and Michael Strassfeld (15,000); THE SECOND JEWISH CATALOG edited by Sharon and Michael Strassfeld (10,000); THE THIRD JEWISH CATALOG edited by Sharon and Michael Strassfeld (10,000); THE JEWISH KIDS CATALOG by Chaya M. Burstein (10,000); THE JEWS IN THE RENAISSANCE by Cecil Roth (2,000); LEGENDS OF THE BIBLE by Louis Ginzberg (3,000); LEGENDS OF THE JEWS, Vol. I, by Louis Ginzberg (1,500); LETTERS TO AN AMERICAN JEWISH FRIEND by Hillel Halkin (2,000); MANDARINS, JEWS AND MISSIONARIES by Michael Pollak (3,000); MEKILTA DE-RABBI ISHMAEL (3-volume set) edited by Jacob C. Lauterbach (2,000); PATHWAYS THROUGH THE BIBLE by Mortimer J. Cohen (3,000); SABBATH: THE DAY OF DELIGHT edited by Abraham E. Millgram (2,000); THE TORAH (20,000); THE WRITINGS (5,000); JEWISH COOKING AROUND THE WORLD by Hanna Goodman (2,000).