

AJC TASK FORCE REPORT PREDICTS JEWS WILL REMAIN LIBERAL IN THE 1970S

NEW YORK -- A Task Force of leading scholars and community relations executives predicted that despite some defections, Jewish involvement in the liberal coalition would probably continue in the 1970s. The members noted, however, that Jews would be affected by the weakening of the coalition resulting from conflicts brought about by the current emphasis on group rights and by leftist antagonism to Israel.

The Jewish agenda of the future, the Task Force noted, would have to include policies designed to help incorporated the underclass into the mainstream of American society and to improve the conditions of blacks and economically depressed Protestants, Jews, and Catholic ethnics.

The report, prepared by the American Jewish Committee's Task Force on Group Life in America, was released at a news conference at the Committee's national headquarters by the Task Force Chairman, Morris B. Abram, Honorary President of the American Jewish Committee and former President of Brandeis University, and Seymour Martin Lipset, Professor of Government and Social Relations at Harvard University, consultant to the Task Force and author of the report.

"The breakdown in the old political consensus, the rise of new intergroup issues related to the redefinition of civil rights in GROUP, as distinct from INDIVIDUAL terms, and the shifts in the position of some groups from 'have nots' to 'haves' have severely challenged the traditional New Deal Democratic coalition," the Task Force stated.

This coalition, the Task Force declared, "once united in one common group the large majority of non-Protestant ethnic and racial groups, together with economically deprived WASPs. Some traditional Jewish concerns, particularly with respect to the survival of Israel and support of meritocratic principles, now find stronger support from many moderates and conservatives than leftists."

Nevertheless, the Task Force added, "Jewish predominant involvement in the liberal coalition will probably continue, given the logic of the Jews' self-identification as a historic have-not group in a non-Jewish world. And though the challenges to meritocracy and the growing antagonism to Israel among the ideological left have placed strains on the liberal coalition, we believe that deeply rooted historic ties will continue to involve most politically active Jews within the Liberal tradition."

The experts agreed that the Jewish community was threatened with a revival of anti-Semitism, and that Jews therefore must continue to be concerned with problems of defense and the elimination of prejudice. For this reason, Jewish groups constantly strive to build coalitions with other ethnic groups, including Catholic ethnics, Black, Puerto Ricans, Mexican-Americans, and Protestants.

The Task Force called for the adoption of an "economic bill of rights," committing the Federal government to increased funding for improved housing, jobs, adequate income, and better medical care. It also recommended reform of the tax structure to help pay for these services, welfare reform, and increased investment in the public sector.

Declaring that "the problem of race and the black condition is the overriding concern and must underlie all discussions of intergroup relations in the 1970s," the panel strongly endorsed the principle of affirmative action to aid the disadvantaged. It recommended a review of all entrance and job requirements, and of testing systems to make sure they did not discriminate against differing cultural outlooks. At the same time it rejected any proposals to set quotas for groups on the basis of race,

religion, or ethnic origin. Calling quotas destructive to individual freedom, the Task Force pointed out that one of the marks of a free society was emphasis on "achieved" over "ascribed status," that is, status derived from ancestry.

The Task Force also noted dangers to the political structure and to the maintenance of democratic rights in methods that undermine the rule of law and the constitutional guarantees of civil liberties. It therefore recommended that the defense of democratic rights be a high priority of Jewish intergroup relations agencies.

Commenting on educational opportunities for minority groups, Mr. Abram said: "We must be certain to maintain the distinction between standards for entry into an institution and standards for graduation. Flexibility in the former can be helpful. In the latter, once the validity of standards has been established, they should be the same for all groups. If our methods for testing and our definition of merit are scrutinized, and if needed, adjusted for their fairness and validity, as suggested in the Report, then we can accurately measure potential and

performance according to achievement, not group membership."

The papers prepared for the Task Force are scheduled for publication in the Spring of 1973 by Quadrangle Books, of New York City.

Morton K. Blaustein, prominent Baltimore communal leader, served as Chairman of the Task Force Policy Committee, which created three independent task forces, each to operate in an area of vital concern to American and world Jewry. These were: intergroup relations in America, the future of the American Jewish community, and international affairs.

Morris Fine served as Task Force coordinator and Phyllis Sherman was Assistant Task Force Coordinator. Copies of the Task Force report are available at \$1.50 each.

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Founded in 1906, the American Jewish Committee is this nation's pioneer human relations organization. It combats bigotry, protects the civil and religious rights of people at home and abroad, and seeks improved human relation for all men everywhere.

RUSSIAN JEW GETS 3 YEARS

NEW YORK (WNS) -- After a two-day trial, Vladimir Markman, Sverdlovsk Jewish activist, was found guilty of hooliganism and spreading slanderous information about the Soviet Union and sentenced to 3 years at hard labor.

Richard Maass, chairman of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry, said "There can no longer be any doubt that Soviet policy is continuing to reflect the view that Soviet Jews, and particularly Jewish activists, will be stopped." Telegrams protesting the conviction were sent by the NCSJ to Pres. Nixon and the State Department. Eugene Gold, Brooklyn District Attorney and vice-chairman of the NCSJ, aided Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin

Prosecutor General Roman Rudenko and Anatoly Dobrynin, Soviet Ambassador to the U.S. urging them to "undo the injustices" of the 3-year sentence. Gold called the sentence "an affront to all men of conscience."

(In London, the British Board of Jewish Deputies expressed its sympathy to Markman wife, and its "shock" at the severity of the sentence to the Soviet Ambassador to Britain. The Committee of 35, a women's group campaigning for Soviet Jewry, the Universities Committee for Soviet Jewry and Herut marched through London and demonstrated outside the Soviet Embassy.)

The Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry reported that Hillel Shur was released from the

Potma Labor camp after having served a 2-year sentence. It also said that Leonid Yoffe, one of 14 Jewish activists called to reserve duty at the time of Pres. Nixon's visit to Moscow was released from the reserved after serving for two months.

WOMAN MOURNER BEATEN IN MOSCOW

TEL AVIV (WNS) -- Mrs. Esther Markish, widow of the Yiddish writer Peretz Markish who was killed in a Stalinist purge, told Israeli

officials by telephone that she was beaten in Moscow's Choral Synagogue where she had gone to say kaddish for her husband.

Mrs. Markish said she had sat in the women's section where many American visitors worship.

A government functionary, asked her to leave but permitted her to finish praying.

On her way down from the gallery, she said, another functionary, grabbed her by the arm, pushed her into a room and began beating her.

Her screams brought her son, David, and his friends to her rescue.

EBAN; CEASE FIRE A SUCCESS

JERUSALEM (WNS) -- As quiet continued along Israel's border on the second anniversary of the Middle East cease-fire, Foreign Minister Abba Eban told foreign newsmen that Israel had no reason "to doubt the prudence and efficacy" of its decision to "respond affirmatively" to the U.S. initiative which led to the cease-fire.



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