

Atlanta's Black Children

BY RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM

Atlanta, Georgia, once an inconspicuous railroad camp, in the 1980's became the commercial and industrial center of the Confederacy, holding the entire economy of the South. Today, Atlanta is a bustling city on the move, dominated by skyscrapers, massive new hotels, and one of the busiest airports in America.

But Atlanta today is also an emotionally battered city whose culture and technology stand impotent before the vast human tragedy of 21 murdered innocent black children.

I came to this city to address some 1,400 people attending a meeting convened by the Atlanta Council of Churches. The only redeeming fact to emerge from this numbing, senseless savagery is that it has united this city - Christians and Jews, blacks and whites - in a spirit of solidarity as nothing else has in recent history.

In the presence of Mayor Maynard Jackson, the Rev. Martin Luther King, Sr. ("Daddy King") and other dignitaries, I tried to indicate why the Jewish people feel a particularly deep sense of identity with these forlorn black families. Children hold an especial place of esteem in Jewish tradition. Judaism describes children as "our messiahs of tomorrow;" they carry all our hopes for the future, our very

immortality.

And historically, Jews have still not recovered from the trauma that the Nazis cruelly murdered one million of our children, many of them the same age as these black children. No less terrible for us than the searing fact of the murder of Jewish children, was the knowledge that they and their families were abandoned by the world, that their lives meant little or nothing to anyone.

That is why we traveled to Atlanta, to tell the families and the black community that we know that anguish in our bones. And we want them to know that they are not alone and that we stand by their side throughout this madness.

WASHINGTON (WNS) -- President Reagan is expected to name John Loeb Jr., a New York investment banker and a member of one of America's most prominent Jewish families, Ambassador to Denmark. Loeb, a prominent Republican, traces his family's origin to 1680 when his Sephardic forbears arrived in New Amsterdam from the Dutch colony of Curacao.

WASHINGTON MAYOR IS CRICIZED

WASH. (WNS) -- Washington Mayor Marion Barry has been criticized by the White House and representatives of Jewish organizations for saying that if the 21 Black children murdered in Atlanta "had been Jewish, the federal government would have moved much faster" to help solve the crimes. "If they had been anything except Black they would have moved faster," Barry said at a recent press conference.

A White House spokesman, Larry Speakes, noted that President Reagan

had said about the Atlanta killings that "Let's get one thing straight. This Administration is color blind." Reagan made the statement after the Administration appropriated \$1.5 million to help Atlanta meet the costs of the police investigation into the murders. Washington representative of the American Jewish Committee, said for Barry "to talk about the Jews and imply that we are all safe and protected is an outrage."

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The traditional way to make a Seder

- 1 **CANDLES** are lit by the mother of the house to usher in the festival of Passover. The benediction which she pronounces over the candles gives a religious meaning to this simple act. An abundance of light symbolizes joy and festivity, and the soft candle-glow adds an aura of spirituality to the Seder table.
- 2 **A CUP OF WINE** is placed at each table setting. The sanctification of the Holiday is pronounced over the first cup. Three additional cups are drunk during the course of the Seder, making a total of four, to symbolize the four expressions of the Lord's promise to redeem the children of Israel and deliver them from bondage.
- 3 **THE HAGGADAH** (literally "the telling") contains the complete Seder ceremonies in their prescribed order (*sefer*). The first part of the book, concerned mainly with the story of the Jews' deliverance from Egypt, is read before the meal. After dinner follows the second portion consisting of prayers of praise and thanks to the Almighty.
- 4 **MATZOH** represents the "bread of affliction" eaten by the Jews in Egypt, and also the bread that had to be baked during their hasty flight when there was no time for leavening. Three *matzot* are placed in the Seder tray. Half the middle *matzoh*, saved for the *Ajikomon* (dessert), is playfully "stolen" by a child and ransomed for a prize.
- 5 **THE Z'ROAH**, a roasted shank bone, is placed on the Seder tray. It represents the ancient sacrifice of the Paschal lamb (*Pesach*) which had to be eaten roasted. *Pesach*, the Hebrew name for Passover, also refers to the Lord's passing over (*posach*) the Jewish homes during the plague visited upon the Egyptian firstborn.
- 6 **THE BEITZAH**, a roasted egg placed left of the *Z'roah*, symbolizes the required offering brought on all festivals in the Temple. The egg, while not itself sacrificed, is used in the Seder as it is the Jewish symbol of mourning (in this case for the loss of the Temple where the sacrifices were brought).
- 7 **THE MAROR** or "bitter herbs" (usually horseradish) is placed in the middle of the tray and symbolizes the Jews' bitter suffering under the Egyptian yoke. Directly below is the *Chazereth*, another piece of bitter herbs, commemorating the custom of eating *Maror* sandwiched between two pieces of *Matzoh*.
- 8 **THE CHAROSET**, placed beneath the *Z'roah*, is a mixture of chopped apple, nuts, cinnamon, and wine designed to look like the mortar used by the Jews in building the palaces and pyramids of Egypt during centuries of forced labor. Before the *Maror* is eaten, it is dipped into the *Charoset*.
- 9 **THE KARPAS**, a piece of parsley or lettuce placed to the left of the *Charoset*, symbolizes the meager diet of the Jews in Egyptian bondage. It is dipped into salt water in remembrance of the tears they shed in their misery. The *Karpas* also signifies Springtime, the season of Passover.
- 10 **THE CUP OF ELIJAH**, filled with wine, is kept on the table throughout the Seder in the hope that the Prophet Elijah may appear as a messenger of the Almighty and announce the coming of the Messiah. Thus, in the midst of their memories of the past, the Jews look forward to the day of universal peace, love, and brotherhood.

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