

BLACK-JEWISH RELATIONS

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JUST A FEW DAYS AGO, AMERICANS SAW A STRANGE SIGHT ON T.V. JESSE JACKSON, WELL KNOWN AS A BLACK CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER, WAS ADDRESSING A GROUP OF PALESTINIANS ON THE WEST BANK AS IF THEY WERE OPPRESSED VICTIMS OF AN IMPERIALISTIC ISRAELI GOVERNMENT. JACKSON SEEMED TO BE COMPLETELY OBLIVIOUS OF THE FACT THAT THESE SAME PALESTINIANS HAD FOUR TIMES MADE WAR ON THE ISRAELIS, AND IF THEY WERE SUFFERING AT ALL, IT WAS ONLY BECAUSE THE ISRAELIS WERE DETERMINED TO CONTROL THEIR WARLIKE DISPOSITION. AS WE WATCHED THE END OF THIS TELEVISED EPISODE, THE ARABS SHOUTED, "ARAFAT-JACKSON, ARAFAT-JACKSON". WITH ONE QUICK PLANE RIDE, THIS AMERICAN CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER HAD BECOME CLOSELY IDENTIFIED WITH THE LEADER OF THE MOST EXTREME ARAB TERRORIST GROUP. OF COURSE, JACKSON HAS STATED ON A T.V. INTERVIEW THAT HE WILL ACCEPT ARAB MONEY FOR THE INSTITUTIONS HE SERVES, ALTHOUGH HE CLAIMS HE WILL NOT USE THIS MONEY FOR HIMSELF.

THE VISIT OF JACKSON TO THE NEAR EAST FOLLOWS ONLY BY A WEEK THE VISIT OF OTHER AMERICAN BLACKS, SPECIFICALLY SOME OF THE LEADERS OF THE SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE. THIS GROUP, THE S.C.L.C., TELLS US THAT THEY WENT TO THE NEAR EAST TO TEACH THE P.L.O. THEIR DOCTRINE OF NON-VIOLENCE. ASSUMING THAT THE P.L.O. HAD MIRACULOUSLY ACCEPTED THIS DOCTRINE, THE S.C.L.C. HAS ISSUED A STATEMENT CALLING FOR THE STATE DEPARTMENT TO DEAL WITH THE P.L.O. AND TO GIVE THE PALESTINIANS A HOMETLAND. YOU KNOW, OF COURSE, THAT SHOULD THE UNITED STATES DEAL WITH THE P.L.O., IT WILL BE IN EXPRESS VIOLATION OF AN AGREEMENT MADE WITH ISRAEL. THE U.S. AGREED NOT TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE P.L.O. IN ORDER TO PERSUADE ISRAEL TO WITHDRAW FROM ITS MILITARY POSITIONS IN EGYPT GAINED AFTER THE COSTLY YOM KIPPUR WAR.

AMERICAN JEWS WOULD BE UNHAPPY IF THEY SAW SOME WHITE AMERICAN LEADERS PATRONIZING THE P.L.O., THAT SAME ORGANIZATION WHICH BRUTALLY SLAUGHTERED DOZENS OF SCHOOL CHILDREN IN GALILEE A FEW YEARS AGO, THAT SAME PEACE LOVING GROUP THAT INDISCRIMINATELY PLANTS BOMBS IN BUSY ISRAELI MARKET PLACES TO KILL INNOCENT WOMEN AND CHILDREN. UNHAPPY AS WE JEWS WOULD BE TO SEE WHITE AMERICANS KISSING ARAFAT, WE ARE ALL THE MORE UNHAPPY TO SEE BLACKS CARRYING ON THIS AMAZING BUSINESS.

THE TRUTH IS THAT AMERICAN JEWS FEEL BETRAYED. WE KNOW, IF THE CURRENT GENERATION OF BLACKS DO NOT, THAT IT WAS JEWS WHO HELPED START SOME OF THE MORE IMPORTANT BLACK ORGANIZATIONS. ONE HAS ONLY TO READ THE HISTORY OF THE URBAN LEAGUE AND THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE TO KNOW THAT JEWS PLAYED AS MUCH OF A ROLE AS BLACKS IN STARTING THESE ORGANIZATIONS. IN THE HISTORY OF THE N.A.A.C.P., YOU WILL NOTE THAT JEWS HAVE SERVED IN ALL OF ITS MAJOR OFFICES, LIKE THAT OF PRESIDENT AND CHAIRMAN OF THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT AND CHIEF FUND RAISER. A REFORM JEW, KIVVIE KAPLAN, WHO DIED JUST A FEW YEARS AGO, SERVED NOT ONLY AS PRESIDENT OF THE N.A.A.C.P., BUT DEVELOPED ITS LIFE MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM AND RAISED ENORMOUS SUMS OF MONEY IN ITS REHALF. BUT, THEN AGAIN, WE HAVEN'T SEEN ANY N.A.A.C.P. LEADERS KISSING ARAFAT, HAVE WE? IN FACT, THE CURRENT PRESIDENT OF THE N.A.A.C.P. TOLD ME LAST WEEK, WHEN HE WAS IN MIAMI, THAT HE HAS RECEIVED MANY INVITATIONS TO VISIT ARAFAT AND HAS REFUSED THEM ALL, AS HE WILL CONTINUE TO DO. PERHAPS, THEN, ALL BLACK ORGANIZATIONS HAVE NOT BETRAYED US, AND, PERHAPS, WE OUGHT TO TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE AREA OF BLACK JEWISH RELATIONS BEFORE WE GET HYSTERICAL.

YOU OUGHT TO KNOW THAT SHORTLY AFTER ANDREW YOUNG'S RESIGNATION AS AMERICA'S AMBASSADOR TO THE U.N., AND SHORTLY AFTER THE ANGRY OUTBURST BY MOST BLACK

ORGANIZATIONS, THE LOCAL ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE OF B'NAI BRITH, CHAIRED BY RICHARD ESSEN, A BETH AMITE, CALLED A MEETING OF BLACK AND WHITE LEADERS IN MIAMI. PRISCILLA PERRY, A MEMBER OF THIS CONGREGATION AND A LONG TIME CIVIL RIGHTS CRUSADER, AND MYSELF WERE AMONG THE FEW PEOPLE PRESENT. WE DID NOT FIND AT THAT MEETING THE KIND OF ANGER AND INTERMPERANCE WHICH CHARACTERIZED THE OUTBURST ON A NATIONAL LEVEL. SURPRISINGLY, WE FOUND THAT THERE WERE DEEP MISUNDERSTANDINGS, BUT ALL AGREED THAT DIALOGUE WAS NEEDED, AND ALL SPOKE OF WORKING TOGETHER AS WE HAVE DONE FOR YEARS. IN OTHER WORDS, THERE IS A DIFFERENCE, A SHARP DIFFERENCE, BETWEEN WHAT SOME OF THE NATIONAL BLACK LEADERS FEEL AND WHAT MOST LOCAL BLACKS FEEL. IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THIS DIFFERENCE.

IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT IN A NATIONAL POLL TO DETERMINE THE PUBLIC'S REACTION TO ANDREW YOUNG'S RESIGNATION, AS LARGE A PERCENTAGE OF BLACKS THOUGHT HE SHOULD HAVE RESIGNED AS DID WHITES. IN OTHER WORDS, THE RANK AND FILE OF BLACK PEOPLE IN THIS COUNTRY DID NOT HAVE INVESTED IN ANDREW YOUNG THE KIND OF EMOTIONS RELEASED BY SOME BLACK LEADERS. NOR DOES THE RANK OF FILE OF BLACKS, I AM SURE, FEEL THAT THEY WANT TO BE KISSING BUDDIES WITH ARAFAT. THIS BEING TRUE, LET US TRY TO UNDERSTAND A LITTLE MORE ABOUT JESSE JACKSON AND THE S.C.L.C.

THE S.C.L.C. IS THAT ORGANIZATION WHICH CAME INTO PROMINENCE WHEN MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. WAS ITS LEADER. WHEN DR. KING WAS MURDERED, SO BRUTALLY AND TRAGICALLY, THE S.C.L.C. TOOK A NOSEDIVE. IN RECENT YEARS, THIS ORGANIZATION HAS BEEN ON THE VERGE OF BANKRUPTCY AND DISINTEGRATION. GEORGE F. WILL, WRITING IN "NEWSWEEK" CALLS THE S.C.L.C. "THE RAGTAG REMNANT OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT." (SEPT. 3, 1979, p. 76). WHILE IT IS DISAPPOINTING TO SEE THE S.C.L.C. MAKE A PARTNERSHIP WITH THE P.L.O., AMERICAN JEWS NEEDN'T FEAR THAT THE S.C.L.C. REPRESENTS A LARGE BLACK CONSTITUENCY. JESSE JACKSON, ON THE OTHER HAND, IS ARTICULATE AND HAS A KNACK FOR PUSHING HIMSELF INTO POSITIONS OF PROMINENCE. HE, NO DOUBT, WILL CLAIM A RELATIVELY LARGE NUMBER OF FOLLOWERS NOT ASSOCIATED WITH ESTABLISHED BLACK ORGANIZATIONS, AND HE MAY BE ABLE TO BUY HIS WAY WITH ARAB MONEY INTO THE MEDIA, BUT JACKSON IS FAR FROM THE ACCEPTED SPOKESMAN OF AMERICAN BLACKS. MARTIN LUTHER KING, ONE OF AMERICA'S GREAT MEN, WAS SUCH A LEADER. UNTIL HIS RESIGNATION FROM THE U.N., ANDREW YOUNG HAD A LARGE NATIONAL FOLLOWING, AND HE MAY STILL BE HEARD FROM, BUT ANDREW YOUNG IS NEITHER A MARTIN LUTHER KING NOR A JESSE JACKSON. YOUNG IS A CHARISMATIC TYPE, WHOM MANY BLACKS ADORED AS THEIR MAN ON THE WORLD SCENE; AFTER ALL, HE WAS AMERICA'S NUMBER ONE MAN AT THE U.N. STILL, YOUNG PAINTED HIMSELF INTO A CORNER BY REFUSING TO WORK IN REGULAR DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS, AND SINCE HIS RESIGNATION, HE HAS SAID CONFLICTING KINDS OF THINGS. ON THE ONE HAND, HE HAS LECTURED ISRAEL FOR REFUSING TO WORK WITH THE P.L.O., AND ON THE OTHER HAND, HE HAS URGED THE BLACK NATIONS OF AFRICA TO INCREASE THEIR TRADE WITH ISRAEL. BOTH YOUNG AND JACKSON HAVE ONE THING IN COMMON. THEY ARE BOTH VERY AMBITIOUS YOUNG MEN, BUT, THEN AGAIN, THERE ARE SOME VERY AMBITIOUS WHITE MEN, AND IF NOW THERE SEEM TO BE SOME BLACK MEN IN HIGH POSITIONS SEEMING TO MAKE SOME INAPPROPRIATE STATEMENTS, THINK OF THE MANY WHITE MEN IN HIGH POSITIONS WHO GO OFF HALF-COCKED EVERY DAY. THINK, FOR EXAMPLE, OF THE FORMER VICE-PRESIDENT, SPIRO AGNEW, WHO AFTER BEING CHARGED WITH CRIMINAL ACTIVITY IN MARYLAND, RESIGNED HIS VICE-PRESIDENCY AND IMMEDIATELY BECAME A SPOKESMAN FOR ARAB CAUSES. THINK ALSO OF THE CURRENT NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL ADVISOR, BREZINSKI, WHO, IN A MORE SOPHISTICATED MANNER, DAILY SUPPORTS THE IDEA OF NEGOTIATING WITH THE P.L.O.

I WAS ENCOURAGED BY MY EXPERIENCE WITH BENJAMIN HOOKS, PRESIDENT OF THE N.A.A.C.P. LAST WEEK. FIRST, I WAS A PART OF A SMALL LUNCHEON WHICH HE ADDRESSED. MR. HOOKS IS THE PRESIDENT OF THE LARGEST BLACK ORGANIZATION IN AMERICA. IT HAS HALF A MILLION MEMBERS. HE SAID THINGS IN HIS SPEECH LIKE, "JEWS AND BLACKS MUST CONTINUE TO WORK TOGETHER." HE DELIBERATELY REFERRED TO KIVVIE KAPLAN, THE JEW WHO RECENTLY WAS PRESIDENT OF THE N.A.A.C.P. AFTER THE LUNCHEON, I WAS GRATEFUL FOR THE CHANCE TO MEET WITH MR. HOOKS PRIVATELY WITH THE REV. IRWIN ELLIGAN, A WONDERFUL BLACK FRIEND OF MINE HERE IN MIAMI. I TOLD MR. HOOKS THAT THE JEWS WERE AFRAID OF A PALESTINIAN STATE ON THE WEST BANK BECAUSE THAT WOULD MEAN STILL ANOTHER ARAB ARMY AND THIS ONE WITHIN 35 MILES OF THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA. I TOLD HIM THAT IF THE P.L.O. MOVED IN AND SET UP RUSSIAN MISSILES, AS SYRIA AND EGYPT DID, THAT THE ISRAELIS COULD NEVER TAKE OFF FROM ANY AIRPORT IN ISRAEL WITHOUT FEAR OF HAVING THE PLANE SHOT DOWN. MR. HOOKS TOLD ME, "THE N.A.A.C.P. DOES NOT TALK ABOUT A PALESTINIAN STATE. WE ARE NOT INTERESTED IN AN ARAB ARMY THREATENING ISRAEL. WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT DEFENDABLE ISRAELI BORDERS." "ON THE OTHER HAND," MR. HOOKS CONCLUDED, "THE N.A.A.C.P. HAS SUPPORTED A PALESTINIAN HOMELAND FOR MANY YEARS, BUT WE DO NOT INTEND TO AGITATE FOR DEVELOPMENTS THAT WOULD ENDANGER THE STATE OF ISRAEL." AFTER THIS MEETING, I TOUCHED BASES WITH THE NATIONAL OFFICE OF OUR REFORM MOVEMENT, WHICH HAS A SOCIAL ACTION AGENCY, AND TOLD THEM OF MY MEETING. THEY REPLIED THAT MR. HOOKS IS SAYING THE SAME THINGS WHEREVER HE GOES AND HAS SPECIFICALLY INVITED OUR MOVEMENT TO ARRANGE DIALOGUE MEETINGS.

SO IT SEEMS, DEAR FRIENDS, THAT WE ARE GOING TO HAVE IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY WHAT WE HAVE IN THE WHITE COMMUNITY, SOME EXTREMISTS, SOME ENEMIES, SOME MODERATES, SOME FRIENDS. WE SHOULD BE CAREFUL NOT TO ASSUME THAT ALL BLACK LEADERS ARE OUR ENEMIES, AND ESPECIALLY SHOULD WE BE CAREFUL NOT TO CONDEMN THE RANK AND FILE BLACKS FOR WHAT SOME OF THEIR NATIONAL LEADERS ARE DOING.

PERHAPS WE CAN UNDERSTAND THE FURORE WHICH ERUPTED AFTER THE RESIGNATION OF ANDREW YOUNG IF WE FOLLOW SOME OF MR. HOOKS REMARKS AT THE RECENT LUNCHEON. HE SAID, "WHEN WE FIRST HEARD THAT ANDREW YOUNG WAS BEING CRITICIZED FOR MEETING WITH THE P.L.O. REPRESENTATIVE, WE DREW UP A TELEGRAM URGING MR. YOUNG NOT TO RESIGN. BEFORE WE COULD SEND THE TELEGRAM, HOWEVER, WE HEARD THAT YOUNG HAD RESIGNED." "THEN," SAID MR. HOOKS, "WE DREW UP ANOTHER TELEGRAM CRITICIZING PRESIDENT CARTER VERY STRONGLY FOR ACCEPTING THE RESIGNATION. BUT BEFORE WE COULD SEND THAT TELEGRAM, MR. YOUNG ANNOUNCED THAT HE WAS GOING TO SUPPORT MR. CARTER FOR A SECOND TERM." WHAT MR. HOOKS DID NOT SAY WAS THAT SINCE EMOTIONS COULD NOT BE DIRECTED ONE WAY, IT WAS INEVITABLE THAT THEY BE DIRECTED ANOTHER WAY. IT IS TERRIBLY UNFORTUNATE THAT THE JEWS, WHO WERE THE VICTIMS OF MR. YOUNG'S INDISCRETION, SHOULD BEAR THE BRUNT OF THE FEELING AMONGST BLACKS BECAUSE OF THAT RESIGNATION. ONCE AGAIN IN OUR HISTORY, THE JEWS, AS THE WRONGED PARTY, WERE BLAMED FOR THEIR OWN VICTIMIZATION.

IT IS UNDERSTANDABLE THAT JEWS SHOULD FEEL ANGER AND DISAPPOINTMENT TOWARDS BLACK LEADERS WHO ISSUED SOME VERY STRONG STATEMENTS AROUND THAT TIME. WE HAVE NOT BEEN ACCUSTOMED TO SUCH TREATMENT FROM THOSE WITH WHOM WE HAVE WORKED TOGETHER IN COMMON CAUSES FOR SO LONG; BUT, THEN AGAIN, WE HAVE BEEN ABUSED SO OFTEN BY WHITE PEOPLE, WHO IS TO SAY THAT SOME BLACKS CANNOT BE AS SHORTSIGHTED AS SOME WHITES?

I HAVE LEARNED SOME THINGS IN THIS PRESENT CRISIS WHICH I DID NOT UNDERSTAND SO WELL BEFORE. I HAVE LEARNED THAT BLACKS THINK OF THEMSELVES NOT JUST AS PART OF A MINORITY IN AMERICA, BUT AS A PART OF A WORLDWIDE PEOPLE. MANY BLACKS THOUGHT OF ANDREW YOUNG AS UNOFFICIAL PRESIDENT OF THE WORLDWIDE BLACK PEOPLE. HE UNITED AMERICAN BLACKS WITH AFRICANS. AND I AM TRYING TO UNDERSTAND WHY BLACKS HAVE SOME SYMPATHY FOR THE PALESTINIANS. AFRICA IS THE BLACK MAN'S CONTINENT, BUT THERE ARE MILLIONS OF MOSLEMS IN AFRICA, MANY OF THEM BLACK. BECAUSE THERE ARE SO MANY BLACK MOSLEMS IN AFRICA, THERE IS A NATURAL SYMPATHY OF BLACK AFRICANS FOR THE ARABS. THAT SURELY IS WHY THE BLACK NATIONS VOTED WITH THE ARABS IN CONDEMNING ISRAEL AS RACIST AT THE U.N. AT THE TIME OF THE U.N. VOTE, THOSE SAME BLACK NATIONS WERE ACCEPTING ISRAELI EMISSARIES WHO WERE TRAINING THEM IN MODERN METHODS OF FARMING AND COMMUNITY HEALTH.

WHEN THE ISRAELIS COMPLAINED TO THE BLACK NATIONS, "HOW CAN YOU DO THIS TO US AFTER ALL WE HAVE DONE FOR YOU?" THE BLACKS ANSWERED, "DON'T PAY ANY ATTENTION TO THAT POLITICAL STUFF, IT DOESN'T MEAN ANYTHING." SOME BLACK LEADERS IN AMERICA ARE TELLING US NOW, "DON'T PAY ANY ATTENTION TO OUR PUBLIC STATEMENTS, THEY DON'T MEAN ANYTHING." IT IS DIFFICULT TO ASK A PEOPLE LIKE THE JEWS, WHICH IS SO MUCH IN NEED OF FRIENDS AND A KIND WORD, TO SHOW SUCH EXTREME FORBEARANCE AND SAINTLINESS.

WHILE I FEEL RATHER CONFIDENT THAT BLACK-JEWISH RELATIONS IN MIAMI WILL CONTINUE TO BE GOOD (I HAVE NOT TOLD YOU OF MANY THINGS GOING ON TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT THIS GOOD RELATIONSHIP CONTINUES), I DO THINK THAT THERE ARE CERTAIN CITIES IN THE COUNTRY WHERE BLACK-JEWISH RELATIONSHIPS ARE STRAINED AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE STRAINED FOR A WHILE. IN THE LARGE CITIES WHERE BLACKS HAVE BECOME A MAJORITY WITHIN THE CITY PROPER, BLACKS HAVE TRIED TO USE THEIR MUSCLE AGAINST THOSE WHO HAVE WORKED INTO POSITIONS OF AUTHORITY OVER THE YEARS. FOR EXAMPLE, WHEN BLACKS DECIDED THEY WANTED TO RUN THE SCHOOLS IN HARLEM IN NEW YORK CITY, THEY FOUND THAT THE WHITES WHO WERE THE ENTRENCHED TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS WERE JEWS. THE JEWS WERE IN HARLEM BECAUSE NON-JEWISH WHITES WERE NOT WILLING TO GO INTO THE BLACK SECTION OF THE CITY AND WORK WITH THE UNDERPRIVILEGED CHILDREN. THE JEWS, TO THEIR CREDIT, WERE WILLING AND ROOTED THEMSELVES IN POSITIONS BASED ON YEARS OF STRUGGLE AND DISTINGUISHED SERVICE. RECENTLY, BLACK LEADERS TRIED TO FORCE THESE EDUCATORS TO SURRENDER THEIR JOBS TO BLACKS. UNDERSTANDABLY, THE WHITES REFUSED TO DO SO. GREAT RESENTMENTS WERE BUILT UP AND STILL ARE BUBBLING OVER IN NEW YORK.

SIMILAR KINDS OF THINGS HAVE HAPPENED IN AREAS OF BIG CITY GOVERNMENT AND CITY MANAGEMENT. THIS KIND OF STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE NEW MAJORITY AND THE OLD TIMERS HAPPENS EVERYWHERE BETWEEN DIFFERENT GROUPS OF PEOPLE. IN THE BIG CITIES OF AMERICA, IN A DISPROPORTIONATE NUMBER OF CASES, THE STRUGGLE HAPPENS TO BE BETWEEN JEWS AND BLACKS. THE EMOTIONS FIRED UP BY THIS KIND OF INTERACTION UNQUESTIONABLY SPILLED OVER INTO THE PUBLIC STATEMENTS MADE AFTER THE ANDREW YOUNG RESIGNATION.

THE PUBLIC STATEMENT MADE BY BLACK LEADERS AT THE TIME OF YOUNG'S RESIGNATION SHARPLY CRITICIZED JEWS FOR THEIR STAND ON QUOTAS. JEWISH CIVIL RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS HAVE FOR A HUNDRED YEARS FOUGHT AGAINST QUOTAS IN THE UNIVERSITIES AND IN EMPLOYMENT. THE QUOTA SYSTEM WAS USED TO KEEP JEWS AND BLACKS OUT OF THE

UNIVERSITIES AND OUT OF INDUSTRY. COLLEGES WOULD SAY, WE'LL TAKE SO MANY JEWS AND SO MANY BLACKS, OR WE'LL TAKE SO MANY NEW YORKERS. BLACKS WERE GRATEFUL FOR THE HELP THEY GOT FROM JEWS WHEN BLACKS WERE AGAINST QUOTAS. HOWEVER, IN RECENT YEARS, BLACKS HAVE TRIED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE NEW SYMPATHY FOR THEMSELVES BY INTRODUCING QUOTAS. THAT IS TO SAY, COLLEGES AND CERTAIN INDUSTRIES HAVE BEEN ASKED TO ACCEPT AN EXTRA PERCENTAGE OF BLACKS TO COMPENSATE FOR THE DEPRIVATIONS BLACKS HAVE EXPERIENCED OVER THE YEARS. THIS IS OF COURSE A QUOTA SYSTEM WHICH FAVORS THE BLACKS. JEWISH CIVIL RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS HAVE MAINTAINED THEIR TRADITIONAL POSITION CONCERNING QUOTAS, CONTENDING THAT ONCE QUOTAS ARE PERMITTED FOR ANY REASON, THE SYSTEM WILL BE USED IN THE FUTURE TO THE DISADVANTAGE OF MINORITIES. JEWISH CIVIL RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS HAVE SAID THAT ADMISSION TO COLLEGES SHOULD BE ON AN ABILITY BASIS. ON THE OTHER HAND, WE HAVE STRONGLY SUPPORTED ALL KINDS OF SPECIAL PROGRAMS THAT WOULD ENABLE BLACK YOUNG PEOPLE TO COMPETE EFFECTIVELY WITH WHITES, AND ALL OF US KNOW THAT ON THE LOCAL LEVEL JEWS HAVE INSTINCTIVELY HELPED BLACKS IN A THOUSAND AND ONE LITTLE WAYS WHEREVER THE OPPORTUNITY PRESENTED ITSELF. STILL, WHEN ANDREW YOUNG RESIGNED, BLACK LEADERS PLACED IN RAGING PRINT THEIR RESENTMENT AGAINST THE JEWISH POSITION ON QUOTAS.

WE HAVE DISCUSSED JUST SOME OF THE REASONS THAT SOME BLACKS RESENT JEWS. THERE ARE OTHER REASONS, OF COURSE; THE KIND OF RESENTMENT THAT POOR PEOPLE FEEL FOR THOSE IN THE MIDDLE CLASS, THE KIND OF RESENTMENT THAT THE RENTER FEELS FOR THE LANDLORD, AND THOSE BLACKS WHO ARE FUNDAMENTALIST CHRISTIANS NO DOUBT SHARE THE PREJUDICES THAT SOME WHITE FUNDAMENTALISTS HAVE FOR US. AFTER ALL, WHITES DO NOT HAVE A CORNER ON PREJUDICE.

IN THE LIGHT OF OUR DISCUSSION, I HAVE A FEW CONCLUSIONS TO SUGGEST TO YOU. FIRST, WE JEWS SHOULD TRY TO UNDERSTAND WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY. THE BLACKS HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO, BUT THEY ARE STRUGGLING TO BECOME A FORCE ON THE AMERICAN SCENE. WITH 20 MILLION BLACKS IN AMERICA AND ONLY 5 MILLION JEWS, AND WITH THE BLACK POPULATION INCREASING WHILE THE JEWISH POPULATION IS DECREASING, IT IS TO BE EXPECTED THAT, IN TIME, THE BLACKS WILL BE A MORE SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL FACTOR ON THE AMERICAN SCENE THAN THE JEWS. JUST AS JEWS HAVE HAD TO MAKE AN ACCOMMODATION WITH WHITE GROUPS IN AMERICA DOWN THROUGH THE YEARS, WE HAVE TO MAKE AN ACCOMMODATION WITH BLACKS, AND IT IS CLEAR THAT THE BASIS FOR THAT ACCOMMODATION CAN NO LONGER BE WHAT IT USED TO BE. FOR DECADES, BLACKS HAVE TRIED TO FOLLOW IN THE FOOTPATH OF JEWS, TRYING TO OVERCOME PREJUDICE AND TO CLIMB THE ECONOMIC LADDER, AS WE HAVE. FOR DECADES, THEY HAVE BORROWED FROM US AND WELCOMED OUR HELP. NOW THEY WANT AN INCREASING MEASURE OF INDEPENDENCE. IT SEEMS THEY ARE ENTITLED TO THAT.

SECONDLY, JUST AS BLACKS HAVE DECIDED THAT THEY MUST CONCENTRATE ON THEIR OWN NEEDS, SO JEWS HAVE TO UNDERSTAND THAT IF JEWS DO NOT TAKE CARE OF JEWS, NO ONE ELSE WILL. THE STATE OF ISRAEL UNDERSTANDS THIS. IT KNOWS THAT THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD WOULD SELL ISRAEL INTO SLAVERY FOR AN INCREASE IN THE OIL SUPPLY. ACCORDINGLY, ISRAEL KNOWS THAT IT HAS TO BE STRONG. LIKEWISE, JEWS IN AMERICA HAVE TO UNDERSTAND THAT OUR STRENGTH AS A COMMUNITY DEPENDS ON THE SACRIFICES EACH OF US IS WILLING TO MAKE FOR THAT COMMUNITY. SINCE WE ARE SO FEW IN NUMBER, JEWS ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS MUST SHOW GREATER LOYALTY AND GIVE MORE OF THEMSELVES TO THE JEWISH COMMUNITY THAN IS REQUIRED OF THE MEMBERS OF OTHER GROUPS.

THIRDLY, LET ME SAY THAT IT WOULD BE A GREAT TRAGEDY IF JEWS SHOULD DECIDE TO WORK ONLY FOR THEMSELVES ON THE LOCAL OR INTERNATIONAL SCENE. ISRAEL UNDERSTANDS THIS, FOR IT HAS GIVEN UP THE ENTIRE SINAI WITH ALL OF ITS MILITARY AND OIL VALUE IN ORDER TO MAKE A FRIEND OF THE LARGEST ARAB NATION. WE COULD NOT BE TRUE JEWS OR WORTHY JEWS IF WE WERE ONLY INTERESTED IN OUR OWN WELFARE HERE AT HOME. I AM A LIFE MEMBER OF THE N.A.A.C.P. I DO NOT INTEND TO STOP WORKING FOR IT AND OTHER BLACK CAUSES. ON THE OTHER HAND, I INTEND TO USE SUCH INFLUENCE AS I HAVE IN THE N.A.A.C.P. AND IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY TO SEE THAT PREJUDICE AGAINST THE JEWS IS ELIMINATED. I WANT TO HELP THE BLACKS, BECAUSE THEY ARE IN NEED. IN SPITE OF THE GREAT PROGRESS SOME BLACKS HAVE MADE IN AMERICA, IT IS STILL TRUE THAT THE BLACK COMMUNITY, ON THE WHOLE, IS THE POOREST COMMUNITY IN AMERICA. IT WOULD BE VERY UNJEWISH FOR ME TO TURN MY BACK ON THAT REALITY. ONE CANNOT BE A TRUE JEW AND BE INTERESTED ONLY IN HIMSELF, NOR CAN ONE HOPE TO DISSIPATE PREJUDICE BY BUILDING A WALL AROUND ONESELF.

IF A FRIENDSHIP IS TO ENDURE, EACH OF THE PARTIES MUST BE WILLING TO TAKE SOME ANGER AND BARBS WHEN THE OTHER PARTY IS HURT AND ACTING OUT THAT HURT. WE JEWS CAN UNDERSTAND THE BLACK DESPAIR WHEN THEIR NUMBER ONE MAN FELL FROM GRACE AT THE U.N. IT IS A TRAGEDY THAT THAT FALL HAD TO INVOLVE US, ALTHOUGH WE DID NOT SEEK HIS RESIGNATION. WE MUST UNDERSTAND THAT MUCH OF WHAT WAS SAID IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY AT THAT TIME WAS THE RESULT OF THEIR OWN PAIN, AND WE MUST BE READY TO FORGIVE SOME OF IT. ON THE OTHER HAND, WE MUST RECOGNIZE THE BASIC PROBLEMS THAT EXIST, AND WE MUST TRY TO COME TO GRIPS WITH THEM.

OVER THE CENTURIES, JEWS HAVE DEALT WITH WHITE PEOPLE WHEN WE KNEW THAT THEY CONDEMNED US TO HELL, AND TODAY WE HAVE A WIDE CIRCLE OF FRIENDS IN THE WHITE COMMUNITY. WE MUST CONTINUE TO WORK WITH BLACKS EVEN THOUGH SOME OF THEM DON'T LOVE US VERY MUCH. I AM CONFIDENT THAT, IN TIME, THE RESPONSIBLE BLACK LEADERSHIP WILL ADMIT WHAT RANK AND FILE BLACKS ALREADY KNOW - THE JEWS ARE THE BEST FRIENDS THEY EVER HAD.

A Rosh Hashanah Sermon
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