

# SOUTHERN JEWISH HISTORY

**Journal of the Southern Jewish Historical Society**

Mark K. Bauman, *Editor*

Rachel Heimovics Braun, *Managing Editor*

Bryan Edward Stone, *Associate Managing Editor*

Scott M. Langston, *Primary Sources Section Editor*

Stephen J. Whitfield, *Book Review Editor*

Jeremy Katz, *Exhibit Review Editor*

Adam Mendelsohn, *Website Review Editor*

2014

Volume 17



# Southern Jewish History

## Editorial Board

Robert Abzug	Kirsten Fermaglich
Dianne Ashton	Dan J. Puckett
Ronald Bayor	Stuart Rockoff
Hasia Diner	Ellen Umansky
Seth Epstein	Deborah Weiner
Lee Shai Weissbach	

*Southern Jewish History* is a publication of the Southern Jewish Historical Society available by subscription and as a benefit of membership in the Society. The opinions and statements expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the journal or of the Southern Jewish Historical Society.

Southern Jewish Historical Society OFFICERS: Dale Rosengarten, *President*; Ellen Umansky, *President Elect*; Phyllis Leffler, *Secretary*; Les Bergen, *Treasurer*; Jean Roseman, *Corresponding Secretary*; Stuart Rockoff, *Immediate Past President*. BOARD OF TRUSTEES: Stephen Bodzin, Perry Brickman, Bonnie Eisenman, Robert Gillette, Gil Halpern, Sol Kimerling, Beth Orlansky, Dan J. Puckett, Bryan Edward Stone, Jarrod Tanny. Bernard Wax, *Board Member Emeritus*. EX-OFFICIO: Rayman L. Solomon.

For authors' guidelines, queries, and all editorial matters, write to the Editor, *Southern Jewish History*, 6856 Flagstone Way, Flowery Branch, GA 30542; e-mail: MarkKBauman@aol.com. For journal subscriptions and advertising, write Rachel Heimovics Braun, 954 Stonewood Lane, Maitland, FL 32751; e-mail: journal@jewishsouth.org; or visit [www.jewishsouth.org](http://www.jewishsouth.org). For membership and general information about the Southern Jewish Historical Society, write to PO Box 71601, Marietta, GA 30007-1601 or visit [www.jewishsouth.org](http://www.jewishsouth.org).

Articles appearing in *Southern Jewish History* are abstracted and/or indexed in *Historical Abstracts*; *America: History and Life*; *Index to Jewish Periodicals*; *Journal of American History*; *Journal of Southern History*; RAMBI-National Library of Israel; the Immigration and Ethnic Historical Society *Newsletter*; and the *Berman Jewish Policy Archive* ([www.bjpa.org](http://www.bjpa.org)).

*Southern Jewish History* acknowledges with deep appreciation grants from the Lucius N. Littauer Foundation, New York, and the Gale Foundation, Beaumont, Texas.

Copyright © 2014 by the Southern Jewish Historical Society

ISSN 1521-4206

## PERMISSION STATEMENT

Consent by the Southern Jewish Historical Society is given for private use of articles and images that have appeared in *Southern Jewish History*. Copying or distributing any journal, article, image, or portion thereof, for any use other than private, is forbidden without the written permission of *Southern Jewish History*. To obtain that permission, contact the editor, Mark K. Bauman, at [MarkKBauman@aol.com](mailto:MarkKBauman@aol.com) or the managing editor, Bryan Edward Stone, at [bstone@delmar.edu](mailto:bstone@delmar.edu).



*PRIMARY SOURCES*

## Two Civil Rights Testimonies

by

Edward K. Kaplan\*

**Kivie Kaplan, "Report on Trip to Mississippi,"  
Vineyard Haven, Mass., July 14, 1964**

**Edward K. Kaplan, "Personal Report  
on the March to Montgomery,"  
March, 1965<sup>1</sup>**

**T**he background of this first document is somber. It is a personal report by my father, Kivie Kaplan, a participant in a fact-finding mission of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) to investigate the disappearance and probable deaths of three young civil rights activists: Michael Schwerner and Andrew Goodman, who were Jews from the North, and James Chaney, an African American from rural Mississippi. Summer 1964, known by supporters as "Freedom Summer," was the theater of a massive campaign to train volunteers to register black people to vote—all of them risking beatings, torture, and death for doing so.

Because these events have been covered comprehensively by Seth Cagin and Philip Dray,<sup>2</sup> I concentrate on the personal experience of one person, Kivie Kaplan, a white liberal, recognizably Jewish (that is conforming to the stereotype of an

---

\*The author may be contacted at [edkaplan@brandeis.edu](mailto:edkaplan@brandeis.edu).

overweight man with a long nose), motivated by his Jewish identity to fight for justice and equality for all people.<sup>3</sup> Like numerous other Jews of his generation (he was born in 1904), his parents and grandparents had emigrated from Lithuania before World War I, settling in Boston. Kivie did not go to college but developed a successful leather business with his two older brothers. Wealthy, generous, and idealistic, he was deeply, almost obsessively committed to social justice for all citizens, especially Jews and African Americans. Such was his identity as a Jew in post-Shoah America.

Kivie Kaplan developed his engagement through two organizations: the Social Action Commission of Reform Judaism, part of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC, now the Union for Reform Judaism, URJ) and the NAACP.<sup>4</sup> At the time of his "Report on Trip to Mississippi," dated July 14, 1964, he was serving on the NAACP board of directors and co-chairing the Life Membership Committee with Dr. Benjamin Mays; he later served as cochair alongside Jackie Robinson. My father seemingly devoted most of his waking hours to raising money through the life membership program, saving the organization from financial ruin in the early fifties.<sup>5</sup> He won election to the NAACP national presidency in 1966, an honorary but influential volunteer position traditionally reserved for white men. His predecessors included Jewish brothers Joel and Arthur Spingarn.

Two organizations recruited and trained students from the North for Mississippi Freedom Summer: the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the coalition vehicle, the Council of Federated Organizations (COFO), run mainly by energetic young people. My father participated in the NAACP, the largest and most stable civil rights organization, on the local and national levels.

How did this Jewish businessman become a national leader of the NAACP? Kivie was active in Jewish causes in Boston, his home base. Already committed to sectarian humanitarian service, he enlarged his concerns through the initiative of a friend, S. Ralph Harlow, professor of religion at Smith College,

*Kivie Kaplan, c. 1950.  
(Courtesy of the Jacob Rader  
Marcus Center of the American  
Jewish Archives, Cincinnati.)*

a democratic socialist, Christian Zionist, and active member of the NAACP board of directors.<sup>6</sup> In February 1954 Harlow presented Kivie to the board as a person highly qualified to save the financially strapped organization.

Kivie began by reviving its life membership program. At five hundred dollars, or fifty-two cents a day, this was something within reach of most people. He quickly proved more than just a charismatic fund-raiser. He had a knack for inspiring NAACP professional staff as well as activists in the field.

Kivie was progressive but neither a radical nor a Democrat. As a Boston Jew, he did not trust the Irish Democratic machine or countenance the segregationist Dixiecrats of the South. An unabashed manager of his company, he was not a labor activist. His Colonial Tanning Company had a profit-sharing system in which all employees received a bonus on that year's profits in proportion to their position in the company. He was wary of unionization and preferred to deal with the local

Profit Sharing Committee. Nonetheless some signs indicated limited egalitarianism. For example, all employees received a hot lunch and ate in the same dining area. Kivie identified himself as a "liberal Republican" like New York Senator Jacob Javits and Governor Nelson Rockefeller, two among hundreds of celebrities to whom he sold NAACP life memberships.

As a Jew and a liberal, therefore, Kaplan embraced the integration mission of the NAACP. As a Jew, fully aware of the Shoah, he was attuned to the lethal possibilities of institutional and personal racial discrimination in the United States. He also had experienced antisemitism in America. He often told the story of his honeymoon trip in Florida when he encountered a hotel sign: "No dogs or Jews allowed." "Don't feel too bad, Mr. Kaplan," his black driver sought to console him, "we Negroes can't use the beach or go out after dark without a permit."<sup>7</sup> This image remained with the sensitive Jew from the North, who ultimately became fervently devoted to the civil rights struggle even to the point of putting his life in danger, as his "Report on Trip to Mississippi" testifies.

Nonetheless Kivie also enjoyed himself. He admired and was admired by hundreds of those he termed "fighters for justice," the NAACP activists and social action rabbis, the latter primarily from the Reform movement. He relished the personal contact and meals with these "dedicated people," white, black, old, and especially young, most of whom exhibited forceful personalities.

Kivie Kaplan was an outgoing, gregarious person who constantly solicited NAACP life memberships, a compulsion that annoyed many people while earning the admiration of those who sympathized with the cause. At times he could be harsh, even insensitive, calling someone a "bigot" to their face. But normally when he met people, to sweeten the medicine he distributed cards that read "Keep Smiling," with inspirational sayings on the back, such as "The optimist is as often wrong as the pessimist, but is far happier." These cards became a trademark even when traveling abroad. They also served as a crutch against a suppressed shyness.

*Kivie Kaplan's "Keep Smiling" card, front and back.  
(Courtesy of Edward K. Kaplan.)*

His confidence in the "Keep Smiling" slogan could also be dangerous. With grim humor, he told how he risked being murdered by a man he thought was a Jewish businessman but who turned out to be a corpulent Mississippi sheriff who hated Jews and blacks.

Kivie maintained an immense correspondence with rabbis (mostly Reform), various activists, personal friends and family, dictating, it has been claimed, about five hundred letters a week. As his son, I remember seeing him using his Dictaphone for several hours a day. He would also telephone civil activist rabbis from the South who felt they were victimized by their congregations, or whose synagogues or homes were bombed by racists. He formed a lifelong bond with William B. Silverman, rabbi of Reform temple Ohabei Sholom (commonly called the Vine Street Temple) in Nashville, Tennessee, after his Jewish Community Center was bombed in March 1958 and he received personal threats. Kivie telephoned immediately to offer hospitality at his home in Boston to Silverman and his family "until this blows over." Kivie said that they became "friends," and he promised to write or telephone the rabbi every week, which he did. Silverman repaid the favor by coediting, with S. Norman Feingold, the book *Kivie Kaplan: A Legend in His Own Time*, a collection of testimonials.<sup>8</sup>

Kivie's most benign custom was to send gifts of books, snacks, and other goodies to people he knew. For example, he made sure that civil rights leader Bayard Rustin received his almonds! In his almost constant travels he accumulated a mass of friends and supporters, as we may easily infer from the report highlighted in this article. I was privileged to partake in this moral force, although not always joyfully.<sup>9</sup> Sometimes I got tired of delivering these "care packages."

*The NAACP Special Committee*

The following reproduces a mimeographed copy of Kivie Kaplan's dictated report of his participation with a committee of the NAACP national board of directors formed to investigate the disappearance and probable murders of three young civil

rights workers—Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman, and James Chaney—near Philadelphia, Mississippi. This took place during a time of crisis for everyone involved with voter registration in the South, particularly in Mississippi. The Freedom Summer mission was launched at the fifty-fifth annual NAACP convention in Washington, D.C., on June 25, 1964. Delegates from around the country demanded that the federal government prevent violence against black citizens. They began by picketing the U.S. Department of Justice. It was also decided that after the convention a delegation would tour Mississippi in order to substantiate FBI and local police investigations of the disappearance of the three young men. Furthermore, they hoped that a highly publicized visit would help protect the remaining civil rights workers and generally raise morale. Kivie Kaplan was the first board member to volunteer.

Robert L. Carter, NAACP general counsel and later a federal judge in New York City, guided the special committee. Gloster B. Current, director of branches and field administration of the national NAACP and a buddy of my father's, oversaw operations.<sup>10</sup>

The delegation included Dr. H. Claude Hudson, an ebullient eighty-year-old dentist from Los Angeles (head of the delegation); John F. Davis of East Orange, New Jersey, a youth representative; Alfred Baker Lewis and his wife, Eileen, from Greenwich, Connecticut; Chester I. Lewis of Wichita, Kansas, an attorney; L. Joseph Overton of New York, a labor leader; and Dr. Eugene T. Reed, New York State Conference president. Maurice White of the national NAACP provided public relations logistics. But the trip depended primarily on local officials. Charles Evers, who had succeeded his brother Medgar as Mississippi field director after the latter's murder, coordinated visits to several towns.

Kivie's dictated "Report on Trip to Mississippi" displays his objectivity and lack of pretentiousness, with a characteristic looseness of syntax. The reader is struck by his vitality, uncomplicated courage, warmth, and admiration for people. A practical, unsentimental man, his emotions are largely implied.

*The NAACP Special Committee at JFK International Airport,  
preparing to board their plane to Jackson, Mississippi, July 5, 1964.*

*Top row: newspaper reporter Thomas Johnson and NAACP public  
relations officer Maurice F. White; second row: Mrs. Eileen Lewis and  
NAACP board member John F. Davis; third row: NAACP board  
members Alfred Baker Lewis, L. Joseph Overton, and Kivie Kaplan;  
bottom row: NAACP director of branches and field administration Gloster B.  
Current, general counsel Robert L. Carter, board member Dr. Eugene T.  
Reed, and Msgr. Archibald McLees.  
(Courtesy of Edward K. Kaplan.)*

His eyewitness report begins with the NAACP national convention, the organization's strongest political tool. In June 1964, two thousand delegates gathered in Washington, D.C., gave reports, held workshops, and applauded rousing speeches. That year the featured theme was Mississippi Summer and the disappearance of three civil rights workers. Emotions were raw, as Medgar Evers had been assassinated just one year earlier.

After the delegates picketed the Department of Justice, a group of leaders, including Kivie Kaplan, met with President Lyndon Johnson, who impressed them as sincere. He told the delegates that he would authorize federal protection such as FBI agents. Allen Dulles, CIA director under presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy, would provide oversight. Having interrupted his customary summer vacation on Martha's Vineyard to attend the NAACP convention, Kivie Kaplan returned to the island to prepare for the dangerous involvement in Mississippi Freedom Summer.

A few days later, as the NAACP committee met at John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York, Kivie greeted other "coworkers in the fight for justice." The send-off crowd included Monsignor Archibald V. McLees, a Catholic priest active in the NAACP and a former pastor in the predominantly black Bedford-Stuyvesant area of Brooklyn; Jacob Polish, a Reform rabbi from Forest Hills, New York; Albert Vorspan, director of the UAHC Social Action Commission, an associate and close friend; his wife Shirley; and me, in New York to begin graduate study in French literature at Columbia University that fall. An airport porter who "refused to take a tip and gave me a blessing besides" especially moved Kivie.

Not a minute would be wasted. Careful preparation made this trip an opportunity to lift the spirits of "our people," as Kivie called the NAACP family, through mass meetings, personal visits, press conferences, and also, quite bravely, desegregation of hotels, restaurants, and other public facilities. The hope was that this highly visible integration would become permanent. It is remarkable how many segregated facilities remained open to this mixed group from the NAACP, at least temporarily. Per-

haps the owners were being pragmatic in light of the highly visible media coverage. Each stop reinforced the synergy of the national NAACP and its local branches. The first night began with a mass meeting. In the crowd Kivie was delighted to recognize Marvin Braiterman, a lawyer from Baltimore and fellow member of the UAHC Social Action Commission, as well as several young people from the North participating in the voter registration drive.

The NAACP branches had made arrangements with local and federal law enforcement—who were not always trustworthy—starting with a press conference at the Jackson, Mississippi, airport. Kivie described the hostile stares of local whites, the sense of danger shared by both visitors and locals. All the while, following his grand obsession, Kivie continued to sell life memberships and innocently pass out his “Keep Smiling” cards.

In Jackson, Kivie greeted Charles Evers and was happily surprised to see Kenneth Guscott, president of the Boston Branch of the NAACP.<sup>11</sup> He was especially pleased to learn from the Religious Bi-Racial Committee that the forceful Reform rabbi in Jackson, Perry E. Nussbaum, was “very cooperative.” The Ku Klux Klan subsequently bombed Nussbaum’s house and synagogue.<sup>12</sup> We do not have any additional record that Kivie met with other Mississippi rabbis, but I remember an anecdote about Charles Mantinband of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, whom Kivie knew well. Mantinband, whose sense of humor Kivie enjoyed, once defended accepting some dishonest or “tainted” money donated to his synagogue. Mantinband retorted: “The only thing tainted about this money is that it ‘taint enough.”<sup>13</sup>

The next morning, Kivie, who used every waking minute, invited for “an early breakfast” the president and dean of Tougaloo College, a historically black institution associated with Brown University through exchanges of students and faculty. Kivie served on the Tougaloo Board of Trustees.

Canton, Mississippi, about fifty miles from Jackson, provided the next stop, where the delegation visited COFO

headquarters.<sup>14</sup> As the delegation approached its goal, Philadelphia, Mississippi, about sixty miles from Canton, a showdown took place. In the courthouse they first met with the county prosecutor, who was “very antagonistic,” according to Kivie’s memorandum. Outside they saw a hostile mob, “about 700 people that had rocks, bottles, guns and other things

*Federal Bureau of Investigation, “Missing”  
poster picturing Andrew Goodman, James Chaney,  
and Michael Schwerner, 1964.  
(FBI / Core NYC.)*

ready . . . but we were just fortunate that God was on our side and we were on our way." He continued, "We could see on our way to Meridian that everybody had been alerted along the road—all unfriendly. If looks could kill we all would have been dead ducks." The fate of the missing young men became more ominous.

A midnight press conference launched their stay in Meridian. The next day began with a poignant visit with Fannie Lee Chaney, mother of James Earl "J. E." Chaney, one of the missing men. Kivie gave Mrs. Chaney a fifty-dollar check from Hazel Greenwald, the official photographer of the Zionist women's organization Hadassah; a personal friend from the Vineyard; and, of course, a life member of the NAACP. (A life membership was usually required to be his friend.) Several weeks after the committee returned to New York, the bodies were found, and still later it was learned that members of the Ku Klux Klan had murdered the three activists near Philadelphia, Mississippi.

The next stop was Laurel, where a rousing event of "a few hundred boys and girls" took place. Then they completed a two-hour drive to Moss Point, where a young woman had been shot one day earlier. The police, as Kivie wrote, "supposedly" protected their mass meeting from a hostile mob.

Next, at the infamous courthouse of Philadelphia, Mississippi, came Kivie's brush with death. The delegation attempted to speak with Rayford Jones, the county prosecutor, and Cecil Price, the deputy sheriff later indicted for the murder of the three young men. With a salutary sense of humor, Kivie made an almost fatal mistake based on wishful thinking. Among the hostile lawmen, Kivie thought he recognized a fellow Jew, as he wrote: "a prosperous-looking business man . . . about one and a half times as big as I was . . . and when I started to sell him a life membership I found out that he was a sheriff and what he said I wouldn't dare write. I got away from him so quickly after he put his hand on his guns that I never realized I could move so fast. I didn't even dare give him a Smile card."

Kivie impulsively and incorrectly judged that this hefty "prosperous-looking business man" (that is, heavier than he

was) must have been a fellow Jew. Ironically, Kivie was actually seeking companionship through a stereotype shared by anti-semites: heavy-set, prosperous businessmen were, almost by definition, Jews. This comforting illusion did not last. Gloster Current's account is more explicit, although he places this event later. Quoting my father, with some syntactical acrobatics: "I thought he was a Jewish fellow who owned the motel because he looked like one of my brothers there. So, he opens his coat with two guns and his badge and you never saw Kivie move so fast in all your life."<sup>15</sup>

The remainder of Kivie's report needs no interpretation. Along the way he names heroic figures such as Rev. Charles L. Pendleton, a white minister from Waterbury, Connecticut. In Jackson, Mississippi, capital of segregation and racist violence, the delegation met with Mrs. Vera Mae Pigeo and her daughter Mary Jane and heard harrowing testimony from a fifteen-year-old male who had been jailed and beaten.<sup>16</sup>

Kivie Kaplan ended with a report on Clarksdale, Mississippi, which he called "a BAD town." Byron De La Beckwith, Jr., the white supremacist from Greenwood, Mississippi, who murdered Medgar Evers, remained at large. (He was finally convicted in 1994 after two trials resulting in hung juries.) Kivie concluded: "I believe that for every incident there are a hundred incidents at least that go unreported."

The group returned to Memphis, Tennessee, where the local NAACP branch arranged a final press conference. Discouraged, the delegation returned to New York. Kivie resumed his vacation on Martha's Vineyard and, without delay, dictated the report on Bastille Day, July 14, 1964, a festival of freedom. Kivie Kaplan passed away in 1975, a little over a decade later.

### *The Selma-Montgomery March*

The following year, March 20 to 22, 1965, I participated in the famous Selma-Montgomery March with my father and my fifteen-year-old nephew, Louis Grossman. At that time I had begun my first year as a graduate student at Columbia Univer-

sity as a candidate for an M.A. and Ph.D. in French literature. By temperament I was not an activist, but I believed in the cause for justice, and, I must admit, I was thirsty for emotions. My training in literary analysis encouraged me to seek dramatic, meaningful images.

I wrote my report as a self-conscious twenty-three-year-old budding intellectual, familiar with the inner workings of the NAACP, inspired by the spectacle while maintaining a sometimes ironic distance. I was aware that public demonstrations, as inspiring and politically influential as they were, did not replace the painstaking legal processes of the NAACP—and in fact depended upon them. My mind kept slipping into Martin Buber's analysis of the I-Thou encounter, an intimate communication of a single person (a subject) in a world of objects.<sup>17</sup> I was trying to reconcile my fascination with individuals and the enthralling energy of the crowds.

The identity issue experienced was rather one of generation. My father was born in Boston. He did not go to college, but he built a successful tanning business with his two brothers, each of whom developed their own ethical projects. I was already beginning my doctoral studies in French literature—hardly a militant profession, at least according to American stereotypes. I was filling in my identity through books and, fortunately for me, encounters with numerous activists, some of whom were intellectuals. My father defined his Jewish guideline in one simple principle, "All men are created in God's image." He was incapable of analyzing the insight, but he lived it.

A self-educated man, my father was a true believer. I was (and remain) a seeker and enthusiastically Jewish. My young nephew, deeply moved, eventually became a businessman and lay leader in the Reform movement of Judaism. I became a university professor. Three generations, three temperaments.

My report was written almost fifty years ago. At the time, I felt that the march provided an extraordinary human opportunity for us, white liberals from the Boston suburbs. Unlike the NAACP fact-finding trip to Mississippi, this complex mass

demonstration was conceived as a national event supported by the media.<sup>18</sup> The Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., and his Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) were joined by all civil rights organizations and hundreds of progressive organizations around the country to march from Selma, Alabama, to the capital in Montgomery.

The Social Action Commission of the UAHC organized our participation. This group would join the march toward the end, about four miles from the capital of Alabama, where Rev. King and other black and white leaders would speak, all challenging the staunch segregationist, Governor George Wallace.

Joining the march at different stages was standard procedure. Years later, for example, I would learn that at the very beginning, Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel—soon to become my role model—marched next to Rev. King in the front row, returning to New York later that night. In this fashion, groups or individuals were picked up at the airport and, when possible, returned as previously scheduled. The Kaplans and the UAHC group joined the throngs toward the conclusion of the march.

*Edward K. Kaplan, 2011.*

*(Courtesy of Edward K. Kaplan)*

Since my report is rather specific and shorter than my father's, I shall add only brief explanations about people we met and some personal observations. Our experience began overnight in a New York hotel room as my father woke us up at 3:30 AM. The UAHC president, Rabbi Maurice Eisendrath, a fiery prophetic activist, drove us to the airport. UAHC publicist Gunther Lawrence unfurled our banner that read: "Justice, Justice Shalt Thou Pursue—UAHC." Our group included

*The civil rights march from Selma to  
Montgomery, Alabama, in 1965.  
(Photo by Peter Pettus, from Wikimedia Commons.)*

Rabbi Eisendrath, Al Vorspan, and Rabbi Phillip Schechter from Atlantic City. We were ready to bear witness and absorb the emotions of public protest.

Indeed, we were not alone. The chartered Saturn Airways plane was filled with clergy. After landing at the Montgomery airport, while finding the place for us to march, my father met several NAACP companions, particularly Claude Hudson from the Mississippi trip; Aaron Henry, a pharmacist and militant

organizer of the Mississippi Democratic Party; Mrs. Vera Pigeo; and a stranger who recognized Kivie from Mississippi Summer about eight months earlier. I do not recall whether Kivie or others from the UAHC group connected with other rabbis from either the South or the North.

We were aware of the symbolic value of our gesture, as we vaguely sensed its historical significance. My heart told me that we were living the “alliance” of whites and blacks, blacks and Jews, as literally true. Although future cynics might question its validity, for us as participants the slogan took on real meaning. As Heschel later remarked, “I felt that my legs were praying.”<sup>19</sup>

In Montgomery, we met several prominent people who would speak at the concluding rally, including A. Philip Randolph, venerable head of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters union; Ralph Bunche, a Nobel Prize laureate and undersecretary of the United Nations when the State of Israel was proclaimed, who had marched next to Heschel in the front row at Selma, Alabama; Roy Wilkins, head of the NAACP; Whitney Young, head of the National Urban League; and Rev. Edward Odom of the NAACP. I was especially thrilled to shake the hand of Rev. King, whom I had met in 1961 when he and my father were awarded honorary doctorates from Lincoln University, a historically black institution in Pennsylvania.

My narrative emphasizes the emotional impact of the march.

#### *Perceptions and Perspectives*

As indicated above, this report was written around fifty years ago by a young man, concerned with ideas as much as with actions, confronting the responsibilities of being a Jew. I was also struggling with my privileged background (a Jew from the Boston suburbs) and, even less consciously, sought to appreciate the unfamiliar culture of the South. A great many of the people we met—black and white Christians, friends and foes—had never before met a Jew outside of a business setting, another surprise for me that seemed to

portend a momentous responsibility. I was largely ignorant of these aspects of southern culture and sought meaning in the familiar.

As an aspiring but immature writer, I celebrated my "Jewishness" with some overblown images such as Dr. King, "the Savior of our Southern Seder," and by my assimilation of the freedom song: "We joined sweaty hands and croaked, groaned or sung the present avatar of Shema Yisrael: WE SHALL OVERCOME!" For those of us, oppressed and bored by religious services in suburban synagogues, this was a true liberation. Social action provided a concrete opportunity to invigorate abstract ethical or spiritual principles, familiar to us through sermons. Such are the realities of which the "myth" of the black-Jewish alliance is made.<sup>20</sup>

An additional anecdote offers perspective on the black-Jewish alliance. Around 1970 within the NAACP, a group of "young Turks," activists sympathetic to the emerging Black Power movement, wanted to remove my father from the national presidency to which he was elected in 1966 after having served as cochair of the Life Membership Committee.<sup>21</sup> Kivie listened patiently and then reminded them that the NAACP was a democratic, integrated organization. He refused to resign but welcomed their support of another candidate who was black. Kivie won reelection. Regardless of this confrontation, he never felt resentful, as did many white liberals during this period of black self-assertion. He understood that the need for black self-respect might collide with the needs of other groups.

Finally, I offer a brief comment concerning the encounter between Jews from the North and those from the South. It seems that the circumstances of their meeting, in the hostile environment of the rural South, along with the temperaments of the individuals involved, determined the different actions and perceptions of each group. My father formed a close friendship with Harry Golden, author and genial editor of the *Carolina Israelite* (which we subscribed to); Rabbi William B. Silverman, whose Jewish Community Center in Nashville, Tennessee, was

bombed; Rabbi Charles Mantinband of Hattiesburg, Mississippi; and many other activists. Kivie was quite aware that as white liberals from the North and visitors, we lived in relative safety.

Such documents as those that follow help flesh out the abstractions of sociology and politics. One of the duties of each generation is to transmit to our youth personal experiences such as these, creating living dialogue with the past, enhancing self-knowledge, and fostering even greater—and hopefully more lucid—commitments.

-o0o-

**Kivie Kaplan, "Report on Trip to Mississippi,"  
Vineyard Haven, Mass., July 14, 1964**

When we were at the Convention of the NAACP in Washington on Wednesday, June 24th, the entire Convention adjourned and picketed the Department of Justice on account of the Mississippi situation with the three missing boys. After that, a group of the National Board of the NAACP were invited to meet with President Johnson in the Cabinet Room and we met for about an hour and fifteen minutes. We had an off-the-record meeting and we were all sure of the sincerity of President Johnson and how he realized how serious the situation was. He told us that he had called the governor and the senators and other key people and had sent down a jetload of FBI people and investigators and Allen Dulles and that everything that was being done would be done.

Our National Board meeting was on Friday, the 26th of June at 5:00 PM and normally we were through by eight o'clock so that we could attend the evening sessions of the Convention. However, at 1:00 AM the following morning we were still going strong and it was unanimously voted at the Board meeting that a group of us would go as an investigating committee to Mississippi to see just what the situation was. I was one of those that volunteered that was chosen and there were a total of seven of us.

It was the sense of some that we leave immediately after the Convention but after a meeting after our Board meeting finished

of the committee we decided that plans would have to be made and an itinerary and mass meetings arranged and meetings with key people and people who had been subjected to police brutality and other indecencies, so that we were to hear from the staff the following Monday or Tuesday as to when we would leave.

At Vineyard Haven, Mass. I received a telephone call the following Tuesday that we would all leave Kennedy Airport early the morning of July 5th. This necessitated leaving Martha's Vineyard on July 4th, which I did and arrived in New York late that evening. We had, to bless us on the trip on Sunday morning, Monsignor Archibald [McLees] and Rabbi Jacob Polish and among others my son Edward was there, Mr. and Mrs. Albert Vorspan—Al is the Director of the Commission On Social Action—and many of the group's friends and relatives. It was a great send-off.

In addition to the Board members we had three staff members, Mr. Gloster Current, the Director of [NAACP] Branches, Mr. Robert Carter, the General [Counsel], and Mr. Maurice White of our Public Relations Department. At the airport the porter absolutely refused to take a tip and gave me a blessing besides.

Our first stop enroute to Jackson, Mississippi was Atlanta, Georgia and a group of our Youth met us at the airport, where we stayed for about an hour and a half and we had a great reception there from them and went over various matters.

We then proceeded to Jackson, Mississippi and had a wonderful reception at the airport, including press, radio and television interviews and I was pleasantly surprised to find Mr. Kenneth Guscott, the President of the Boston Branch, as well as Mr. Charles Evers, who is the Field Director for the State of Mississippi for the NAACP. He was arrested for speeding on the way to the airport, in spite of all the cars on the road passing him, but of course, these were white people.

We were able to desegregate the hotels and motels in Jackson except the Robert E. Lee, which chose to close its doors and go out of business rather than desegregate and we had plenty of police protection in Jackson wherever we met. However, everybody at the hotel was glaring at us and the situation was very tense. In

addition to the police there were plenty of plainclothes detectives watching out for us.

On the way from the airport our driver—a minister—was extremely nervous, being afraid of the cops because if they just go a little too fast or even within the speed limits they watch everybody like hawks. We had a warm welcome by all the Negro people and all the Negro officials of the NAACP.

Our people had met with the Chamber of Commerce, the police, the FBI and the city officials and they had agreed to open the hotels and restaurants and that was why we didn't have any trouble outside of this glaring experience. As you know, our investigating committee was to study the police brutality, murders, mobbings, the disappearance of the three boys, voter registration and other forms of discrimination, including what the Federal and State authorities are doing.

The first night at our mass meeting we had an overflow audience. All of us on the delegation, the seven Board members, spoke and I was very pleasantly surprised to see in audience Mr. Marvin Braiterman, a lawyer from Baltimore, who is a fellow member of the Social Action Commission of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and also there was a young girl by the name of Cooper from Boston and a lot of other boys and girls from the North were there. There was a great spirit and it was very, very moving and I sold five life memberships that evening alone. After the meeting we were escorted back to the hotel by the police and the police were on duty all night long and watched us when we came down for breakfast and were there with their guns in the dining room. I had invited the President and Dean of Tougaloo University for a very early breakfast and they asked me whether they would be served and I told them to come right along, which they did, and we were courteously served and treated with the greatest of respect.

The only incidents we had during the night were a few of our people were harassed by calls asking if there were any "niggers" in the room. I only received one call then had the telephone disconnected for the rest of the evening.

*Kivie Kaplan, "Report on Trip to Mississippi,"  
July 14, 1964, p. 1.  
(Courtesy of Edward K. Kaplan.)*

The temperature in Mississippi when we arrived was 97 degrees in the shade and it went from there to 115 during the time we visited the state. The population of the State of Mississippi is 42% Negro. However, in some of the towns the population would go as high as 75% Negro and the average income in the State of the Negro families is approximately \$700 per annum.

The people have been a beaten and harassed and intimidated people. It is actually a police state; a dog has more rights than a Negro because if they kill a dog the Society For The Prevention Of Cruelty to Animals will be after them, but nobody bothers them if they kill a Negro. However, our people are willing to give their lives for Freedom.

They appreciated us coming down very, very much, particularly the white people in the delegation.

We tried to get to see the governor and other state officials, unsuccessfully, but hope that we will see them before our trip was over.

There were three cars in the caravan of our people, NAACP, and nine cars of press, radio and television, representing all the major newspapers and networks all over the country. This gave both our group and the press a feeling of security as we were traveling around together.

Our Field Secretary in Jackson, Charles Evers, has armed guards around his home twenty-four hours a day.

Our people are having trouble on registering for voting and all types of obstacles are put in their way and when they finally do fill out the application they have to come back thirty days later and in most cases they are turned down.

The Negro members of the Religious Bi-racial Committee thought that they are making some progress and I received a report that in Jackson Rabbi Nussbaum has been very cooperative. However, most white ministers are afraid to come out too much in the open, as many have had their lives threatened by members of their churches.

We had reports on police brutality. A military policeman home on a visit wouldn't move to the back of the bus and he was shot dead by a policeman. No prosecution on this case and there

are cases of many other people having been killed and beaten to a pulp with no prosecution.

We drove to Canton, about forty miles from Jackson, to the headquarters of COFO. Had a press conference there and a meeting with our people. There are about 75% Negroes there and they are working very strenuously on voter registration. They also have a Freedom School and many young men and women from the North as well as all over the country are there.

They are also having plenty of trouble with beatings, intimidation and all kinds of delays on voter registration.

We then drove to Philadelphia, about sixty miles, and met with the county prosecutor to try to find out about the three missing boys. He told us they have 600 people working on the search, including the FBI and the sailors, and that they were doing all they could to find the three. He would not allow us to see the remains of the burned church or the burned car. His attitude was very antagonistic. The county prosecutor referred to our people as "Niggers" and was very rough and mean and we got nowhere with him. He called our attorney by his first name and the attorney, Mr. Robert Carter, and he had a verbal battle. He was finally willing to let one or two of us go to see the burned church. Our attitude was "all or none." By that time things were very TENSE and our people were afraid we would all be killed. A large crowd had gathered around the courthouse. THEY WERE VERY UNFRIENDLY and we were told to GET GOING QUICKLY. We were really scared and we were hustled out of town by a back road. There must have been 700 people that had rocks, bottles, guns and other things ready to throw or hit us with but we were just fortunate that God was on our side and we were on our way.

We could see on our way to Meridian that everybody had been alerted along the road—all unfriendly. If looks could kill we all would have been dead ducks. It was a tough day and night. We checked in at the police station in Meridian and had guards all the time. We had a large mass meeting in the evening and then a press conference a little after midnight. We broke the segregation in the hotels in Meridian and stayed at the Holiday Inn. We had been making history along the road. The next morning we are vis-

iting the Chane[y] home. This is the mother of the Negro boy, one of the three that are missing. This was a very sad visit. Mrs. Chane[y] had not heard from any state or local police or government officials. She had heard twice from President Johnson and also the FBI. She has five children and I presented her with \$50 for the family in behalf of Hazel Greenwald. She was very appreciative.

We then drove to Laurel, where we had a great reception at noon by a few hundred boys and girls. Their singing and reception was terrific. We were told of several incidents they had in Laurel. Two boys went to the Burger Chef and they were refused and when they left some men beat them and later another group went and they were greeted by some white men who beat them up also. The police arrested the ones who had been beaten and not the ones who did the beating. Several boys and girls gave us their experiences in desegregated restaurants. There were quite a few boys and girls here in Laurel from the North helping and they are also having serious problems here on voter registration. The potential number of voters in this town is 10,000 and they have 1,000 registered. They do not have adequate police protection, they do not have any Negro policemen on the police force and no desegregation in the schools. Many of our people have had their lives threatened. However, we were able to desegregate the restaurant at the best motel in the city.

We had a two-hour drive to Moss Point. This is where a girl was shot the night before we got there—an eighteen year old girl and was almost killed and they also shot into the car of a news reporter but just missed him. We had a lovely dinner at the church and then heard several cases about false arrest and police brutality. There is a shipyard in Pascagoula and there are many discriminations against the Negro. We had to adjourn our meeting, which we were having outdoors, as the heat was terrific indoors, as there were some men wandering around with rifles. At the mass meeting the sheriff, armed with two guns, sat at the foot of the pulpit to protect us. We had the largest and best meeting on our trip. Several hundred were out around the church, as it was packed. After the meeting we

desegregated four hotels and a few of us stayed in each one of them. We had supposedly police protection. There was one mean sheriff—about one and a half times as big as I was—and I thought he was a prosperous-looking business man and when I started to sell him a life membership I found out that he was a sheriff and what he said I wouldn't dare write. I got away from him so quickly after he put his hand on his guns that I never realized I could move so fast. I didn't even dare to give him a Smile Card.

We had also sold five life memberships in this town at the meeting at Moss Point. We desegregated Biloxi, Gulf Port, Pascagoula and Edgewater Park. You probably know that that evening there was a bombing in Macomb and we met with one of the boys that was involved in that bombing.

In trying to see the governor we flew from Gulf Port to Jackson. We had sent wires and we had called, asking for an audience and we never received an answer. We went to the governor's office and his secretary dismissed us. As we were going out and we wanted to deliver our message to the governor, we read it to the press and there was an angry, jeering crowd that threw spitballs and nuts, telling us that we should eat them, these monkeys and calling us Jews, Communists, white trash and other things that I wouldn't want to write. This was in the governor's mansion. All kinds of cat-calls and other derogatory remarks. We then proceeded to Clarksdale by car, which is a three and a half hour drive. We were greeted by the state police, taking pictures of us being greeted by our Negro friends. We had dinner at the church and at the end of the dinner a storm came up and all the lights went out. All of us sang Freedom Songs during the dark period of about half an hour. Later the lights went on and we proceeded with our program. Mrs. Vera [Pigee], a friend of Eddie's and mine, and her daughter, Mary Jane, were there and she and others were telling us about some of the experiences that they had. Vera had been beaten to a pulp when wanting to use a ladies' room in a gas station and just recently she was again arrested for passing a [car] on the right as a trumped-up charge and was going on trial the next day.

We had a fifteen year old boy telling us how he spent six months in jail and how he was beaten and he was beaten so badly that his hearing has been impaired — also on a trumped-up charge because he was a civil rights worker.

We met Rev. Charles Pend[le]ton, a white minister from Waterbury, Conn. He was the chaplain of twenty of the Northern boys and girls and he told us how he was intimidated by police chief Ben Collins and spoken to with foul language. He reported this to the FBI. Mrs. Brooks told of her arrest for picketing and her jail experience. She said she and thirty other women were put to hard labor. They were in a cell ten by nine and they put the heat on in addition to the normal heat for two continuous days and they put them out to hard labor with a scythe to cut grass, a scythe that was too heavy for a man to carry and they used to watch them when they took their showers and they used to commit other indecencies that I wouldn't want to print. It was 105 outside and 115 in the church. Many of the boys and girls told us about the intimidation from the police chief—these are white boys and girls from all over the country as far away as Los Angeles.

Beckwith, the man who killed Medgar Evers, is still out on bail and probably will continue free.

Clarksdale is having trouble desegregating, with very few [exceptions]. This is a BAD town. I stayed at a Negro home and had breakfast there and had a chance to learn a lot of what is going on. It is not good. People here have been killed for no reason at all. The plight of these people is very sad, being killed and beaten at will.

I believe that for every incident reported there are a hundred incidents at least that go unreported and that action should be taken by the Federal Government.

I am appending to this report copies of messages that we have delivered and sent along the road, which are self-explanatory.

We proceeded by car to Memphis, where we had a press conference and then a meeting with our Memphis Branch people on

all phases of our work and then proceeded on to New York and home.

KK:wb

Dictated but not read.

Vineyard Haven, Mass.

July 14, 1964

-o0o-

**Edward K. Kaplan, "Personal Report  
on the March to Montgomery,"  
March, 1965**

This concerns our encounter at Montgomery, Alabama: Kivie Kaplan, my father; Louis Grossman, my 15 year old nephew; and myself, Edward. The day in New York began quite early as Kivie came marching into our room at 3:30 AM, singing freedom songs, being rather jolly and round. At 3:50 Gunther Lawrence, from the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, dropped in to get us. Downstairs we met Rabbi Maurice Eisendrath, the president of the UAHC, who drove us to the airport at 4:30 AM.

At the airport we saw a crowd which resembled the Ecumenical Council with a few strays from a Joan Baez concert. The waiting room was already filled, mostly with ministers and priests, some rabbinical students and various assorted liberals of all shapes and colors. We had a big sign with "Justice, Justice Shalt Thou Pursue—UAHC" on it. A few publicity pictures for the sake of the cause, and we took off at 8:00 AM, two hours late. We went with a flight chartered by the New York Protestant Council, on Saturn Airlines; this should have been a warning to the astrologically minded. On the plane we met more ministers, some funny ones seemed to be running away from their conservative bishops, others were quiet and determined, some were reading the Bible; I read *The New Republic*. Since we were sitting in front of the

---

*Edward K. Kaplan, "Personal Report on the March to  
Montgomery," March 1965, p. 1.  
(Courtesy of Edward K. Kaplan.)*

bathrooms, we had a chance to meet most of the travellers; it was a good occasion for Kivie to start with his "Keep Smiling" cards. With the aid of the clergy, we were all in good spirits.

We arrived at the Montgomery airport at 11:30 AM their time, losing an hour on the way over. We were immediately greeted by an old pal of Kivie, Dr. Claude Hudson, a 79 year old NAACP colleague; he had seen the "Smile" cards and concluded that Kivie was in town. There were city buses waiting to take us to the march site. Two SNCC fellows greeted us, one in the overall uniform of the group and the other in dungarees and a big cowboy hat; both were Negro. The latter drawled that he knew Kivie from somewhere; it turned out to be Mississippi last summer. At the field near St. Jude's hospital, where the 300 marchers had spent the night, were thousands of people—it turned out to be 25,000. A most amazing assortment of people which defied description. I was dazzled, numbed by the vastness, the singing, the determination, the mixture, the mud, age and youth, some with suits and ties, others in rags, side by side, under the same sun, the same clouds, marching to the same capital for the same reasons; priests and nuns, clergy of all sorts, beatniks, farmers, teenage tramps, Ivy League people. This was the exterior. The mud was sticky and I was speechless.

On the way to our places we met the Mississippi delegation. Dr. Aaron Henry, Mississippi NAACP leader, threw his arms around Kivie and made a big deal, and Mrs. Vera Pigeo gave us one of her inimitable smiles. It was a privilege to see these extraordinarily brave people; it was good to see friends in that crowd. We found a place and unrolled our "Justice" sign: Al Vorspan, Rabbi Eisendrath, Rabbi Schecter from Atlantic City, votre serviteur, Kivie and Louis. Evidently we were representing the Jews, along with hundreds of others, many of whom we knew. This was by far the most meaningful part of our itinerary.

We first marched through the Negro section of town. It was to be a march of 3½ miles, and the streets were unpaved and muddy, with deep gutters on the sides. The houses were small and gray, wooden and rotting, porches filled with old women and little children waving and smiling, one woman bowing, some

clapping, old geezers with canes and suspenders, hundreds of children of all ages, mostly small and cute, pathetically poor, dressed shabbily, some in ragged clothing. These poor people lined the streets. Some smiled; others just looked, seemingly bewildered. Other old women seemed to see a new age, new hope: Freedom. It was concrete, an invasion from the white Christian world; some saw Jews for the first time, talked with a friendly white for the first time—were human. We passed Negro schools with children hanging from the windows to see us—little black children, only black children. Louis was the first to burst into tears; Kivie was next as he saw some of the people by the side give cold drinks to the marchers who immediately passed them along after taking a quick gulp. It was hot and muggy in our city clothes. I was in a daze, looking as much as possible and deeply moved: trying to think and understand these feelings, trying to capture the distress and the hope, the misery and the truth, trying to find a common identity with these people from an alien culture. I shall never forget those dusky little faces, staring and clapping and singing, mouthing barely understandable words, words too big for their little hearts; overwhelmed by the numbers, the power which was theirs, which smiled back. Some day, I thought, these same children will be marching as citizens in a transformed culture.

The white section started with the poor folks, a subtle transition in space, characterized only by the color of the faces—and the quality of those faces: they were not very happy, not as curious. Most of them stayed on their porches and just looked, immobile and uncommitted, almost frozen with indifference, it seemed. Some of the “teddy boys” with cowboy boots and blue eyes (no doubt) said some nasty things as we passed by; their looks expressed more than their words, a hollow and insignificant hatred seemed a mere diversion to them, the joy of active aggression had been stifled by habit. The streets began to be paved, with buildings and commercial enterprises, office workers, the functionaries of this little metropolis, some workers as well: these people were more angry and sullen; they were protected by numbers and bourgeois respectability. One of these creatures, a human bullock

worthy of Daumier or George Grosz, shook his fist and jowls at us, babbling incoherently: just a patient in the asylum, shaking his fist at the wall, trying to shut off the waterfall. I wasn't really impressed by dramatic hatred in this commercial district, mostly ironic indifference. (All the while, Kivie was passing out his "Keep Smiling" cards to the marchers, and to the Negro spectators when they were available. They were neither articulate nor manifestly committed in the presence of whites; they stood apart on the sidewalks.)

As we approached the Capital, we saw a gigantic poster on a building showing M. L. King "in school with the Communists" (sic). A group of skinny white ladies spotted the Jewish theme of our sign and gave us an extra nasty look. They shouted slogans which, though unheard, increased by [a] sense of Jewish identity. Of course, this is one reason why we were there.

Along the way hundred and maybe thousands of [troops], armed with rifles, were stationed to protect us. These fellows frightened me more than anything else, along with the constant egg-beating of the helicopters overhead. Most of them were nationalized National Guard units; some wore Confederate flags on their uniforms. Their faces betrayed the disgust they felt. I was afraid that they might lose their heads and open fire on us, or that the helicopters would pour some Vietnam gas on us. Nothing of the sort. When we looked back we saw an endless line of marchers; we heard the rhythms of the freedom songs; we felt warm and happy to have such people on our side.

At the Capital the folksingers were at work. Some of the usual freedom songs, and the chanted liturgy of "What do we want?"—"FREEDOM!!!"—"When do we want it?"—"NOW!!!" As empty and sublime as a worn out prayer. The speeches were mostly long and windy. Brief and effective were Rabbi Eisendrath, A. Philip Randolph, Ralph Bunche and Roy Wilkins. Then came the long expected speech from Reverend Martin Luther King—the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

Dr. King's speech was a rhythmical masterpiece of oratorical geometry. We all shared commitment to the message; it remained to deepen the emotional experience, to engrave with energy and

devotion the idealism which has consistently motivated the Freedom Movement. His talk was a symphony in black and white, a Beethoven ecstasy, elevating the masses to the exaltation of screaming applause, and slamming us back to the reality of past hopelessness. *Hope* and *Freedom*, the emblems of our struggle, booming out over multitudes, bouncing off the lily-white walls of George Wallace's crumbling Confederate fortress; the pulse of hope quickens, the blood of freedom courses through our veins, revitalizing the spirit with the present communion of brotherhood, the desire for peace and (even) the possibility of love. Here was the Moses of our new mythology, the savior of our Southern Seder, the archetypal Jesus dressed in black. Here was a Baptist preacher injecting new meaning into the American Constitution, a judicial reality which is fighting for rebirth into human truth. Beneath the Confederate flag of the Montgomery dome, white and black together affirmed a common faith. The ritual sacrifice of the moribund Confederacy completed, we joined sweaty hands and croaked, groaned or sung the present avatar of Shema Yisrael: WE SHALL OVERCOME!

After the rally we were told to leave the city as quickly as possible, especially for those in cars. We met many of our friends too numerous to mention, among whom were Whitney Young, Reverend Odom, Charles Evers, Dr. Ralph Bunche. Just before they entered their plane, we talked with Dr. and Mrs. King, who asked for Mother. Kivie sold a Life Membership to one of my sister's old boyfriend[s] (they always come in handy) and so on. Six hours late, our Saturn airplane took off at midnight; we arrived in New York at 3:00 AM and flew back to Boston at 7:30, after having slept on the benches in the waiting room.

For the three of us, the trip to Montgomery was an intensely personal encounter, in Buber's sense. There we were, three fugitives from the comfortable middle class. Well-fed abstractionists, we witnessed a magnificently significant example of how our lofty Judeo-Christian ideals took on the reality of human flesh: black and white together.

Edward K. Kaplan  
March, 1965

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Both of these documents are preserved in the Kivie Kaplan Papers at The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio, Manuscript Collection No. 26.

<sup>2</sup> Seth Cagin and Philip Dray, *We are Not Afraid: The Story of Goodman, Schwerner, and Chaney, and the Civil Rights Campaign for Mississippi* (New York, 1988), especially chapter 11, "The Forty-Four Days," 336–402.

<sup>3</sup> Kivie is a family name, recalling Rabbi Akiva.

<sup>4</sup> See essays by Rabbi Richard G. Hirsch, Albert Vorspan, Rabbi William B. Silverman, and Rabbi Roland B. Gittelsohn in *Kivie Kaplan: A Legend in His Own Time*, ed. S. Norman Feingold and William B. Silverman (New York, 1976).

<sup>5</sup> Edward B. Muse, *Paying for Freedom: History of the NAACP and the Life Membership Program, 1909–1987* (Baltimore, 1986), and essays by Roy Wilkins, Gloster Current, James Farmer, and others in Feingold and Silverman, *Legend in His Own Time*.

<sup>6</sup> Rabbi and Mrs. Samuel Perlman, "S. Ralph Harlow's Influence," in Feingold and Silverman, *Legend in His Own Time*, 87–96.

<sup>7</sup> Charlotte Dubin, "NAACP President Applies Jewish Soul to Civil Rights," *Detroit Jewish News*, July 7, 1972.

<sup>8</sup> Feingold and Silverman, *Legend in His Own Time*, 19–20.

<sup>9</sup> See Edward K. Kaplan, "The Family Man," in Feingold and Silverman, *Legend in His Own Time*, 49–75, for the somewhat critical view of a young son.

<sup>10</sup> Gloster Current, "His Convictions and Courage," in Feingold and Silverman, *Legend in His Own Time*, 173–181; Roy Wilkins, "Kivie Kaplan and the NAACP," in Feingold and Silverman, *Legend in His Own Time*, 139–154.

<sup>11</sup> Current, "His Convictions," 173–181; Wilkins, "Kaplan and the NAACP," 139–154.

<sup>12</sup> Gary P. Zola, "What Price Amos? Perry Nussbaum's Career in Jackson, Mississippi," in *The Quiet Voices: Southern Rabbis and Black Civil Rights, 1880s to 1990s*, ed. Mark K. Bauman and Berkley Kalin (Tuscaloosa, 1997), 230–257; Scott M. Langston, "The Bible and Bombings: Southern Rabbis Respond during the Civil Rights Movement," *Southern Jewish History* 14 (2011): 155–200.

<sup>13</sup> Clive Webb, "Big Struggle in a Small Town: Charles Mantinband of Hattiesburg, Mississippi," in Bauman and Kalin, *Quiet Voices*, 213–229.

<sup>14</sup> Doug McAdams, *Freedom Summer* (New York, 1998).

<sup>15</sup> Current, "His Convictions," 181.

<sup>16</sup> For background on Pigea and many of these events, see, for example, Françoise N. Hamlin, "Vera Mae Pigea: Mothering the Movement," *Proteus: A Journal of Ideas* 22 (Spring 2005): 19–27; Deanna M. Gillespie, "'First Class' Citizenship Education in the Mississippi Delta, 1961–1965," *Journal of Southern History* 80 (February 2014): 109–142.

<sup>17</sup> Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Ronald Gregor Smith, rev. ed. (New York, 2000).

<sup>18</sup> Taylor Branch, *At Canaan's Edge: America in the King Years, 1965–1968* (New York, 2006), especially part 1, “Selma: The Last Revolution,” 5–202. For a parallel Jewish perspective, see Edward K. Kaplan, *Spiritual Radical: Abraham Joshua Heschel in America, 1940–1972* (New Haven, CT, 2007), especially chapter 11, “A Prophetic Witness,” 197–213, and chapter 12, “We Shall Overcome,” 214–234. See also Gilbert Jonas, *Freedom's Sword: The NAACP and the Struggle against Racism in America, 1909–1969* (New York, 2007); James W. Silver, *Mississippi: The Closed Society* (New York, 1963–1964); Patricia Sullivan, *Lift Every Voice: The NAACP and the Making of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York, 2009).

<sup>19</sup> Quoted by Susannah Heschel from a memorandum written by her father, this has become a powerful (and often misquoted) slogan: “[H]aving walked with Hasidic rabbis on various occasions, I felt a sense of the Holy in what I was doing. . . . Even without words our march was worship. I felt my legs were praying.” Susannah Heschel, introduction to Abraham Joshua Heschel, *Moral Grandeur and Spiritual Audacity*, ed. Susannah Heschel (New York, 1996), xxiii. See also Kaplan, *Spiritual Radical*, 225.

<sup>20</sup> The literature concerning the history of black-Jewish relations and the existence (or lack thereof) and extent of an alliance or coalition is extensive. See, for example, Cheryl Greenberg, *Troubling the Waters: Black-Jewish Relations in the American Century* (Princeton, NJ, 2010); and John Bracey and August Meier, “Toward a Research Agenda for Blacks and Jews in United States History,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 12 (Spring 1993): 60–69.

<sup>21</sup> “Black Backed for N.A.A.C.P.,” *New York Times*, June 30, 1972.