

goes into Russian history, the better case can be made for this approach. Read in this light, Hans Lamm's article does not seem so unsatisfactory to me as it does to Brickman. The article does, after all, suggest that what is involved is "culturecide" rather than genocide, but before we condemn the former absolutely, we would do well to remember that genocide has been practiced on the Jews by nations with strong Christian traditions and that certain aspects of Jewish culture (from a Soviet point of view specifically Zionism) are quite definite reactions to that fact. The way in which Lamm has dealt with Soviet Jews and Judaism makes his article one of the most important in *Religion and the Search for New Ideals*. From a Soviet point of view all religions are parochial—they set up artificial divisions between people. Anti-Semitism is inherent in the entire Christian world view, insofar as Christianity claims exclusive knowledge of the truth. If, therefore, Communism asserts that it is another, more viable alternative to the way of life presented by either Christianity or Judaism, Communism can tolerate neither anti-Semitism (in this context the ideology of "Christian culture") nor Jewish culture (a defense mechanism against anti-Semitism). Under Soviet conditions there has been a certain convergence among all religions, although it is a moot point whether this convergence has helped to eradicate anti-Semitism as effectively as Soviet nationality policy. It seems to me that Hans Lamm's article discusses the effect (or lack of effect) of the Soviet nationality policy on religion, and is therefore very much to the point, though by no means easy to read.

Finally, if Brickman is doing more than—to paraphrase the editorial—emitting the customary angry snort of protest, I wish he would say why he thinks that Lamm's unfamiliarity with Jewish life leads him to feel that "only a small remnant cares for Jewish life." Serious theoretical issues are at stake, issues that serious scholars should document rather than dismiss with yea or nay. Zvi Gitelman's summary paragraph in his review of the question ("The Jewish Question," *Survey*, January 1968, p. 83) indicates how complex the problem is: "The decision taken in the 1920s to eliminate religious education has probably sealed its [Judaism in the USSR's] fate. Many young Jewish people are intensely interested in Jewish culture and history, but few are religious believers. The thousands who dance in the street near the synagogue on the holiday of *Simkhat Torah* do so because they are Jewish, not because they are religious. They are affirming their national identity, not their religious faith. Only in the unlikely event of the Soviets permitting a general revival of Jewish culture might some religious forms and practices survive—and they would survive as national customs, not as religious ritual. . . . If such a revival does not occur, then it must be assumed that the eclipse of the Jewish religion in the USSR will become total." Lamm speaks of "Jewish life" and Gitelman makes a distinction between Jewish religion and Jewish culture. Whether or not such distinctions can be made, I wonder if Brickman really has enough data at his command to be able to tell when an author has or has not failed in his task.

March 26, 1968

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TO THE EDITORS:

In disagreeing with my appraisal of Hans Lamm's chapter, Mrs. Dunn first calls attention to his discussion of the concept "Jews." However one wishes to consider it, the term "Jew" has a basis in the religious tradition of millennia. Some Jews have become assimilated, and their descendants have ceased to identify themselves as such.

Those who continue to think of themselves as "Jews," national, emotional, or otherwise, have some sort of relationship, even if residual or marginal, to the religion. Consequently, it is logical to expect that an essay on "Jews and Judaism in the Soviet Union" (*italics added*) in a book entitled *Religion and the Search for New Ideals in the USSR* would deal primarily with religious problems, issues, and developments. This has been the case with the other chapters. Hence, I have characterized a treatment that emphasizes matters other than religious as having "little to offer on religion" and as "but vaguely related to the theme of the book."

Mrs. Dunn's annotated bibliography of selected brief references to Jews in Soviet writings is interesting but irrelevant, in my opinion, to Lamm's article and to my review. One cannot obtain reliable information on the religious life of Soviet Jewry from books that are dedicated to opposition to Judaism. Interestingly, Mrs. Dunn omits T. M. Kichko's *Iudaizm bez prikraz* (1963) and other recent attacks on the Bible and the Talmud as "scientific" references on Soviet Jews. Specifically, she might have mentioned Belen'kii's *Chto eto Talmud?*, an attack upon Judaism and the rabbis, published by the Akademiia Nauk SSSR in 1964. I see no point in commenting on other points mentioned by Mrs. Dunn, such as Communist intolerance of anti-Semitism.

Lamm's treatment of the impact of the Soviet nationality policy on religion adds very little to our knowledge of the situation of Judaism in the USSR. The information adduced by him is familiar and accessible. This was my basic point.

Mrs. Dunn, whom I consider one of the "serious scholars" (her term), states that "he [Brickman] thinks that Lamm's unfamiliarity with Jewish life leads him to feel that 'only a small remnant cares for Jewish life.'" She calls for documentation. In the first place, the serious scholar should note that I wrote: "Largely because of *his apparent unfamiliarity with the Jewish religious scene in the Soviet Union . . .*" (*italics added*). I have read some of Mr. Lamm's writings in German and I am aware of his familiarity with Jewish life. What I simply said is that his survey in the USSR was based on secondhand and superficial data and observations.

Mrs. Dunn ignores two sentences in my review in which I mentioned Talmud study circles and indicated that religious education of Jewish youngsters has been taking place in the USSR. For reasons of safety, it is not wise to provide documentation. Other visitors and I have reported such educational activities in the literature. The existence of classes in Tanach, Mishnah, Talmud, and other sacred Jewish studies can be observed by any traveler who takes the least bit of trouble. To write about Jewish religious life without discussing the adult education is not to do justice to the subject. This is one reason why I felt that Lamm's paper does not measure up to the requirements of the subject. If he did not observe religious activity in depth, he might have referred to reports published in Hebrew, Yiddish, and English journals and newspapers.

May 20, 1968

WILLIAM W. BRICKMAN
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TO THE EDITORS:

In the March 1968 issue of this journal there was a review by C. Jay Smith of my book, *Communism in Finland: A History and Interpretation*. Both the tone and substance of Professor Smith's review lead me to make the following comments.

In his first paragraph Professor Smith summarizes the contents of my book. But it should be noted that even here there are misleading statements. The readers of the