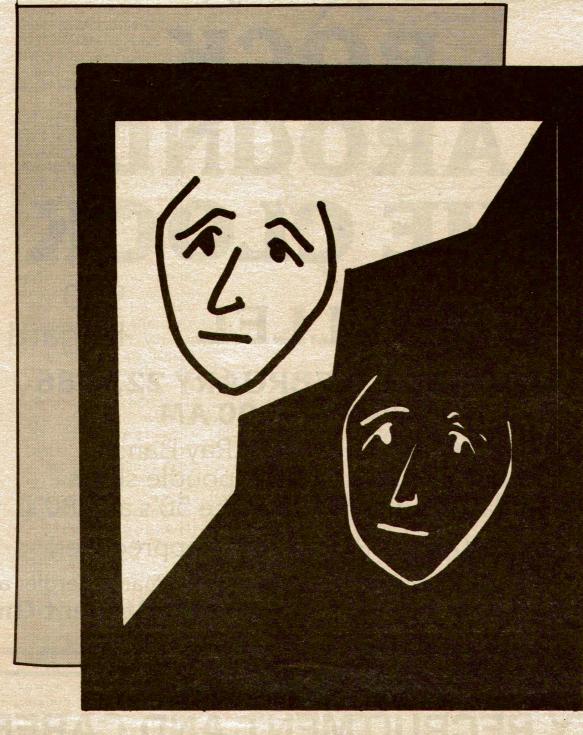
HOSTILITY — THE ONLY ANSWER?

by Mitchell Bard

At UCLA, some of the most anti-Israel and sometimes anti-Semitic rhetoric and programs come from black student organizations. In general, it seems that the most vociferous opponents of the State of Israel are not Arab students but members of other minority groups. Why is it that Jews on the UCLA campus and other campuses around the country are unable to get along with other minority groups? Why is it that the interests of blacks, hispanics, and other groups are not seen as compatible with those of Jewish students?

I was at a meeting a few months ago with a local black congressman who tried to play down the rifts between blacks and Jews and pointed out that the two do not have mutually exclusive agendas. The problem with his analysis is that "establishment" blacks, those who have been elected to public office, tend to see the agendas of blacks and Jews as being compatible, partially because they are compatible and partially because they are old enough to remember the Holocaust, the founding of Israel, and, more importantly, they remember that Jews march- pressions of communism in message does not seem to be ed side by side with blacks its kibbutzim should be dein the civil rights protests of nounced by leftists who call the 1960's.

Jews have historically been at the forefront of civil developing world - today, economy. many liberals associate Israel Israel should be seen as a Israel.



for just such organizations in other countries.

Israel is not an imperialist rights, not just for Jews, but country as some black stu- see it as some kind of lackey for blacks, hispanics, and dents insist on portraying it. of the United States. Israel women; yet, college age Israel is not imposing its will is seen as America's surminorities seem completely on an Arab majority nor is rogate arms supplier to unaware of this past associa- it involved in the subjuga- right-wing dictators in Cention, or at least tion of blacks in Africa. On tral America and the racist uninterested. Whereas the contrary, Israel was a South African regime. liberals of the 1940's and country that took in all These same people also tend 50's were pro-Israel because who wished to live there, to equate the South African that was the liberal issue - regardless of race, and was and Israeli governments Israel was the model for the able to build a modern because of the alleged op-

with the vestiges of Western model of what can happen imperialism. It is indeed in a Third World country when Israel took the heroic ironic that Israel, a country when the people apply action to save black Jews in with perhaps the strongest themselves and are given Ethiopia, the black comlabor movement in the support from more munity reacted with indifworld and the purest ex- developed countries. This ference or worse. Jesse

getting across to college-age blacks.

Instead of understanding, it is fashionable for liberals to dump on Israel and to pression of Palestinians in

Even in recent months

Jackson refused to help save Ethiopian blacks because he saw them as potential assets to the Israeli army and the settlement movement.

In fact, the day an article I wrote on that subject was published in the school newspaper, I was verbally accosted by one of my colleagues, a black graduate student, who still insisted that the Israeli Government was racist even as it was taking in thousands of black Jews and making them citi-

the current situation? build bridges between Jewish and black groups and other minority groups have usually fallen flat because of the hostility of the leaders

of additional special interests. Those individuals have difficulty seeing any compatibility between our interests even when it comes to speaking out against racism and other issues of mutual concern

Of course, when one looks at the attitudes of these students it is not that surprising. When they bring speakers like Kwame Toure (a.k.a. Stokely Charmichael) or a representative of the PLO to campus to talk about the "racist state of Israel," one wonders if there is indeed anything for us to talk about.

To use Jesse Jackson's favorite buzzword, we must continue to engage in dialogue, but there must also be a conscious effort to explain the cause of Israel in terms minority students can relate to. Many, if not most, know little or nothing about Israel and therefore are guided only by the misrepresentations of their leaders. We must somehow convey to other minorities that differences of opinion on affirmative action do not erase the common goals we otherwise share.

Just as Senator Levin has criticized Jews for becoming a single-interest group (or at least being perceived as such) and called for increased involvement in issues unrelated to Israel at the national level, so too must we take more visible positions on local and campus issues that are of interest to other minority groups. With regard to Israel, curricula, pamphlets, and speakers must be prepared to tell the story of Israel's development and its efforts to aid other developing nations.

This is a crucial long-term project for the Jewish community because opinion polls suggest that support for Israel among non-whites is considerably less than that among whites and with the increasing political par-What can be done about ticipation of these groups, a trend of indifference or Perhaps, nothing. Efforts to hostility toward Israel cannot be allowed to develop.

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