In essence, AJC is its members, and we need every member -- to extend our influence, multiply our achievements, add to our strength. This year, in response to increased costs, AJC raised its basic dues to $75.00. However, as a member who joined during the past three years, you have the option of renewing at the old rate. But whichever rate you choose, please renew your membership now to reaffirm your support for vital AJC programs and research projects such as these:

ANTI-SEMITISM IN THE FARM BELT

The existence and spread of anti-Semitism and organized hate-group activity in the heartland of America was addressed at a press conference earlier this month at AJC's national office in New York. Presenting statements to the press were: Bishop Maurice Dingman of the Catholic Diocese of Des Moines; Rev. Donald Manwarren, Executive Coordinator of the Iowa Interchurch Forum; Rabbi A. James Rudin, Director of AJC's Interreligious Affairs Department; Thomas Kelly, Director of the Kansas Bureau of Investigation; Dixon Terry, a dairy farmer and Chair of the Iowa Farm Unity Coalition; and Leonard Zeskind, Research Director of the Center for Democratic Renewal.

The primary charge leveled by the speakers was that several right-wing groups, preying on the fears and frustrations of economically distressed farmers, were spreading propaganda alleging that "Eastern bankers" and an "international Jewish conspiracy" were behind the current rural crisis. Though specific recommendations varied, all six exhorted the federal government to move quickly to find answers to the farm crisis, and all called for programs to educate farmers about the viciousness of anti-Semitic propaganda and the falsity of the "solutions" presented by hate groups.

While the presence of anti-Semitism may not, in itself, be a phenomenon, especially for Jews, there are aspects of this current situation which warrant the attention of all religious groups, law enforcement officials and other concerned citizens. The hate groups now in operation are well organized, politically savvy, sophisticated in approach and presentation, and aware of the importance of manipulating the media as well as of disseminating their materials widely among the general public.

The farmers of the Midwest are victims of a financial crisis that has been building for three decades, and now they have become targets for right-wing paramilitary groups who claim to offer "solutions." In counteraction, AJC will do what it does best--research the issue, educate its members and the community at large, and form alliances with other like-minded groups--as it works toward a real solution.
**THE JEWS OF EAST BERLIN**

During the High Holidays each Jewish community looks towards renewal. It is also a time to reflect upon those Jews who are not in a position to celebrate and rejoice in their faith.

Rabbi Ernst Lorge of Skokie, Illinois, who last year became the first American rabbi to conduct holiday services in East Germany since World War II, traveled to East Berlin again this year to lead Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services in a restored synagogue. Rabbi Lorge's trip was made possible by an AJC project, launched in 1982, to help revitalize East Berlin's Jewish community. In 1983, an AJC delegation met with Dr. Peter Kirschner, president of East Berlin's Jewish community, and learned that the community had no rabbi. In response, the delegation arranged for Rabbi Lorge's historic visit in 1984.

Fewer than 600 Jews live in East Germany, most of them in East Berlin. Said Rabbi Lorge: "Even though the community is very small, we have to admire their steadfastness in carrying out Jewish life." Lorge, who was born in Mainz in 1916 and fled to the United States in 1936, was ordained to the rabbinate in 1942. In 1967 he was invited to West Germany to lecture to several university educators on the Holocaust, and said: "My philosophy is that we should not award Hitler a posthumous victory by allowing Germany to be devoid of Jewish life and influence."

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING: NOVEMBER 7-10**

The National Executive Council (NEC), AJC's corporate body, will hold its annual conference in Miami, Florida, November 7-10. The meeting will feature plenary sessions and workshops enabling members who attend to participate in shaping AJC's programmatic agenda for the year ahead.

Some of the highlights planned for the meeting include: Professor Egon Mayer on "The Impact of Intermarriage;" a panel discussion on "Perspectives and Prospectives of Catholic-Jewish Relations;" a debate on "Pay Equity - The 80's Social Justice Issue?" featuring former Secretary of Labor, Raymond Marshall; Wolf Blitzer, Ehud Springzak and Dr. Yoram Dinstein discussing "Toward Peace in the Middle East," following a presentation by Samuel Lewis, former U.S. Ambassador to Israel. Author Charles Silberman will speak on "Jews in the Mind of America," while "Central America - What Role for the U.S. and AJC?" will be addressed by Dante Fascel, Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Denver Mayor Frederico Pena will speak on the "Acculturation of Immigrants;" and the gala, community-wide dinner on Saturday night will pay tribute to Maureen Reagan, Ambassador Allan Keyes and Dame Nita Barrow, in recognition of their contributions to the United Nations Conference on Women in Nairobi this past July.

The issues to be addressed are critical, the level of discussion, absorbing, and the opportunities for formal and informal exchanges among AJC members, limitless. All members are welcome. If you are interested in attending, contact your area director or call Nancy Merjos in New York, 212-751-4000, Extension 201.