

Le Verseau, Le Mée/Seine (S. et M.), France December 7, 1960

Dear Friends:

Please pardon this poorly typed missive which we are sending instead of cards.

We have been in France since the end of June. I had received a grant from the American Philosophical Society to work with the Saint-Simonian papers in the Arsenal Library in Paris during the summer and a grant from the Guggenheim Foundation to continue work during the academic year on a book on the idea of progress in recent historical thought. With apartments very difficult to find, and rents prohibitively high in Paris, we rented a house in a small village thirty miles from Paris in the direction of Fontainebleau, fortunately with good train connections to Paris. Living out here has been advantage, with some disadvantages, the greatest being the distance from Paris. It takes me about an hour and a half each way by train and metro to the Bibliotheque Nationale; however, I try to read at least on the train. For Wilma, however, it is difficult to go to Paris unless I stay home from the library, and in the evenings it is almost impossible to go. We have, however, explored Paris with the children on Thursdays (schools are closed that day) and Sundays — there is always more to see and we are far from having exhausted the museums which fascinate the children — and some of the Paris plays come to Fontainebleau, only ten miles away.

But the great advantage of living in Le Mée has been that we have had a good opportunity to observe French life. Contrary to what we had been led to expect, it has been quite easy to meet people here. Our landlady, a widow school teacher, active in almost every educational and every left-wing non-Communist political group in Melun, has been very helpful in introducing us to the organizational life here. Our neighbors, also school teachers, introduced us to a sort of family hiking and discussion group, where we have met quite a number of people. So we have been invited to observe meetings of the PTA, the Ecole des Parents, the Ligue des Droits de l'Homme (Human Rights League), a meeting of the Parti Socialiste Unifié, and in the opposite political direction I heard Poujade address a mass meeting yesterday in Melun.

Jeremy and Danny have been going to school since September. For Jeremy the linguistic and academic adjustment was very rapid. After being permitted provisionally to remain in the fourth grade, he emerged after several weeks as one of the best students in the class although the work was considerably more advanced than in New Orleans. Danny's adjustment has been a little slower but he is making rapid progress now. Jonathan after two short visits to the école maternelle (kindergarten) refused to go. Not only was the language strange to him, but the discipline and the pedagogy in an overcrowded class room in which a teacher with one assistant attempted to keep fifty children quiet were so different from the nursery school he had known. Schools here have changed much less than we had thought, and much less than they apparently have elsewhere in Northwestern Europe. Levels of academic performance are surprisingly high, although there is very much memory work. However, there is still an atmosphere in which children (although not ours) are afraid of the teacher, children are beaten not only for misconduct but for poor performance, overly great emphasis is put on examinations which qualify children for the lycée, and children in some class rooms are seated (or shifted) in terms of rank. Within the very traditional

system, some of the teachers we spoke to seem very imaginative while others seem strikingly little so.

Indeed in contrast to other Northwest European countries and the U.S., one is struck here by the conservatism of institutions and the lack of flexibility. Except on the technological level, relatively little seems to have changed in the past decades, while in Britain and particularly in Germany one is constantly struck by the profound changes which the catastrophes of ~~the~~ this century have wrought. However, there is a great deal of self-criticism in France, of the educational system and of other aspects of French life, a feeling that something ne marche plus and that fundamental reforms are required. Here in contrast to other Northwest European countries, one is still aware of extensive poverty in the midst of the new prosperity and of the existence of a proletariat which seems to have rapidly disappeared elsewhere in Northwestern Europe. If the conception of the "grande nation" still looms large in the Palais de l'Elysee, it has been considerably modified among the people who seem mostly to have a much more realistic view of France's position in the world today. Everyone speaks about the Algerian war; almost everybody opposes the war, generally very bitterly so, and feels that the age of colonialism is over. The complaints of what 21 years of war have done to French democracy and economic development recur, and the war in Algeria has become a matter of conscience for most Frenchmen (although not, of course, for M. Poujade). The stream of self-criticism here as well as in regard to other spheres of life may be a hopeful portent for the future. One sign of the Europeanization of the French spirit is the very striking decline of anti-German sentiment.

We are now planning to go to Göttingen on May 1, the beginning of the summer semester when we can have an apartment for the summer months. Unless unexpectedly a grant should materialize for the coming academic year, we intend to return to New Orleans the end of August. We have followed the developments in New Orleans with a heavy heart. It is disheartening how few people, so many fewer even than in Little Rock, have had the courage to speak out for decency. New Orleans shows again how deeply wrong from a practical as well as a moral standpoint the false type of gradualism is which aims at token integration rather than at honest compliance.

With best wishes for the holiday season and the New Year,

the five Iggers

Georg, Wilma, Jeremy, Danny, and Jonathan

Göttingen-Geismar
Sandersbeek 15
Germany
November 1961

Dear friends:

Please forgive us for resorting again to this impersonal form of a mimeographed letter to communicate with you at this time of the year. As you see from our address, we are still in Europe. A grant from the Rockefeller Foundation enabled me to continue my work here for another year.

We left Le Mée sur Seine in May for Goettingen. As Jews and refugees from Nazism, returning to Germany was not without emotional overtones for Wilma and me, even if we had left Europe at an early age. Although we did not expect to experience any anti-Semitism (and have not) and we do not harbor any prejudice against Germans as such as some refugees do, we did to our own surprise feel increasingly uneasy as the time grew nearer to go to Germany. Our first impression of Germany, however, was quite positive. The break with the past is very evident in almost all aspects of life. Germany's peculiar romanticism seems to be dead. And while some desirable aspects of the past have been lost, the new much more matter of fact orientation of particularly the younger generation seems much preferable to those German traditions which in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries became so closely intertwined with Germany's peculiar nationalism. Germany today must be much more sober and sane than in the days of the Weimar Republic, but also a good deal duller. The break with the Romantic past is very conscious and manifests itself even in such things as the fact that few Germans hike today, once a favorite pastime, that the folksong and even interest in music as such have declined, and that pigtailed have disappeared almost completely. Emigration and twelve years of Nazism have also loosened the ties with other intellectual and cultural traditions; thus, with the Wirtschaftswunder (the miracle of economic recovery) the TV, which incidentally maintains a very high level of programs, has replaced the bookcase. The students we talk to for the most part are democratic and European in orientation, much more pronouncedly so than their elders. They are serious and hardworking but extremely career-conscious with few interests outside their areas of specialization. The attitudes in the schools are much more humane and understanding, even in the Gymnasium Jeremy is attending, than they were in Wilma or my days. In the Volksschule to which Danny goes and in Jonathan's kindergarten, the teachers are much more aware of the emotional needs of the children without going to the extremes of many American educationists. The universities have been affected least by the reforms of the schools, but the atmosphere has changed, too.

After a few months, the links with the past which had been blurred by our first impressions of radical change become more apparent. This is true of political life too. Although totalitarianism has probably been more thoroughly discredited here than in some other Western countries (the extreme right wing groups which have mushroomed in the US. would be unthinkable here today), one wonders how deep the democratization of German life really is. There is remarkably little discussion of political questions. Too many Germans burned their fingers and feel

today that politics should be left to the politicians. In talking to some older Germans during the Eichman trial, we had the feeling that the trial confirmed their conviction that the crimes of the Second World War were almost wholly the responsibility of a small group of sadists, Hitler, Himmler, Eichmann, etc. They often fail to understand the relationship between the gas chambers and the total pattern of developments under the Third Reich. Therefore public opinion reacts less strongly than might be expected against the relatively large number of former Nazi officials who again (or still) occupy important positions in government, army, justice or economic life. Particularly depressing is the newspaper situation. There is no press censorship here, as there is in France, but very much in contrast to France one is struck by the virtual absence of controversy on all major issues. The degree of unanimity on questions of foreign policy is frightening. News coverage is highly emotionalized, even more so than in the United States, and particularly since August 13 there has been a lot of appeal to nationalist sentiment, effective because of the failure of many Germans to understand what brought about the division of Germany and the loss of the Eastern provinces. There is no Humphrey, Fulbright or Walter Lippmann, to offer an alternative. Only the weekly Der Spiegel, or occasionally the weekly Die Zeit, bring a note of dissent. On the other hand, the TV, operated by the regional governments but quite independent in programming, has done a remarkable job of democratic, political education, both in critically examining the German past and in maintaining discussion of present day problems. On the whole the outlook does not appear discouraging despite some disturbing signs.

Life for us has been quite pleasant here. Although we know quite a number of people socially, we have encountered fewer congenial souls than in France. The children's adjustment in school here is in reverse to what it was in France. While Jeremy left there as the best in his class, he finds it difficult here in Gymnasium to have all his things in order, his homework done, and chiefly just to swim as one among many. He has some friends, but still dreams of the golden past of Le Mée. Danny had a fairly good report card, has lots of nice friends, and does his best to be nasty to the girls in his class with whom he seems quite popular. Jonathan, who was thrown out of three kindergartens in France, is extremely happy in the one in Geismar. They all speak German quite fluently, though with mistakes. Wilma is kept busy -- worn out is more accurate -- supervising the homework of the two big ones. In France they came home at 6 p.m. with their homework done; here they come home at noon, and after lunch the all-afternoon session starts. Wilma is taking a seminar and attending lectures, as far as time permits. For my own work, the library here is very adequate and the atmosphere much less bureaucratic than in France. We are sailing on the Statendam the middle of August and after some family visits expect to be back in New Orleans in early September.

With best wishes for the holiday season and the New Year,

Georg, Wilma, Jeremy, Danny and Jonathan Igers

3582 Virgil Boulevard
New Orleans 22, Louisiana
December 17, 1962

Dear Friends:

Our last annual letter came from Germany. We shall not repeat our analysis of German political conditions which it contained, suffice it to say that we arrived in Germany in May 1961 with a good deal of mixed feelings -- it was difficult to forget what had happened -- and that we left with a good deal of regret. As regards the political scene, we continued to see both the encouraging and the discouraging signs we described in our last letter although we remained moderately optimistic regarding the stability of democratic institutions in Germany. The arrest of the Spiegel editors occurred after our departure from Germany. In retrospect neither the highhandedness of the government in the case nor the strong public reaction in defense of freedom of the press and legality surprise us. On the personal level, however, we thoroughly enjoyed our stay. The queasy feeling in our stomachs with which we entered the former Vaterland soon disappeared. We met not only an awful lot of people of whose decency we were convinced but also many more kindred souls than at home. We were surprised at the cordiality we met at the university and among neighbors. We soon became convinced both from conversations and from watching the mass media that despite apathy among some what happened during the Nazi period has been a matter of soul searching for many more Germans than we had thought. We left Germany missing the conversations, the walks in the forests surrounding Göttingen, the town, its bookstores, its theater, and particularly the friends and acquaintances we had made.

From Göttingen we drove via Marburg, the Rhine and Moselle valleys and Luxemburg to Paris where we once more visited friends from our previous year's stay in France. On August 15 we sailed to New York and after a brief visit with Georg's parents in Richmond arrived in New Orleans on August 31 after an absence of almost twenty-seven months. At the station we were met by the heat and a delegation of mosquitoes. Our first few weeks at home consisted of a series of minor calamities, none of them serious fortunately. Wilma became sick the first day we were back. The storage people returned our furniture broken, promised to replace our refrigerator and let us sit without refrigeration in the heat until we finally handed the matter over to a lawyer. Our car was still on the ocean. Our children were denied admission to the schools for several days because their birth certificates stating their racial identity required by Louisiana law were among our baggage which had not yet arrived. They finally were admitted with an affidavit from A.P. Tureaud, the NAACP lawyer, that they and their parents were white. However, these initial difficulties were soon overcome and Wilma back on her feet again. Slowly we returned to our old routine. Georg by previous arrangement taught a reduced load at Dillard University to enable him to finish his book manuscript.

manuscript. Wilma to her delight was invited on short notice to teach a graduate seminar at Tulane on Karl Kraus, the Viennese literary and cultural critic on whom she had written her dissertation. Next semester she will teach a seminar on "The Literature of Social Protest in Germany." In addition she also teaches elementary and intermediate German at Dillard. Jeremy and Danny complain how easy school is in comparison with Europe but actually keep quite busy with Hebrew school several afternoons a week and Jeremy with clarinet lessons besides. Jonathan is enthusiastically pursuing the studies of the first grade.

On the racial situation, there have been significant changes since our departure. We left in the early summer 1960 as the sit-in movement was in its beginning. The token integration of New Orleans schools began while we were in France in 1960 accompanied by riots. The week after our return to New Orleans this fall, we witnessed the integration of the Catholic schools. Two days later approximately 100 Negro children were admitted to the first three grades of previously all-white public schools without incident. Lunch counters in chain stores desegregated a few weeks later. This past week Tulane University announced that it will accept qualified Negro students beginning this coming February. There is still quite a bit of tension in the community but nevertheless a turning point seems to have occurred during the two years we were away. We have taken up our old activities again. Georg has been re-elected to the board of the local NAACP and as chairman of the education committee of the local branch and a member of the education committee of the local Urban League is again engaged engaged in studies of inequalities in the school system. However, even more important than the solution of racial problems appears to us at this point the problem of preventing another world war. We have both been active therefore in the recent formation of the New Orleans Council for Peaceful Alternatives which is to serve as a forum on questions of foreign policy and nuclear disarmament.

It's time to close this letter. We wish you all the best during the holiday season and the coming New Year and hope that we shall hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Georg, Wilma, Jeremy,
Danny, and Jonathan Iggers

5527 Dorchester Avenue, Apt. 1
Chicago, Illinois 60637
December 17, 1963

Dear Friends:

This time our Christmas letter comes from Chicago. We moved here in September to assume positions at Loyola University in Wilma's case, at Roosevelt University in mine. Our decision to leave the South was not an easy one. We had taught there continuously since 1950—excepting only our two year stay in Europe—and all but one of these years in predominantly Negro colleges. Yet Chicago appeared to offer not only more challenging academic situations and access to better research facilities than Dillard University or New Orleans did, but also a situation in which we would continue to have an opportunity to work with the type of social problems which have concerned us in the South.

We were not sorry, however, to have returned to Dillard and New Orleans for one more year after we came back from Europe in September 1962. As we wrote you already last year, much had changed in the two years we were overseas. The "massive resistance," supported by state and city authorities, which had stalled important changes in race relations before 1960, had crumbled. The rate of change had become ~~more~~ rapid, even if it was still painfully slow. Public facilities were being desegregated, e.g. lunch counters, even if at a slower rate than in many other Southern cities. Most extensive and encouraging was integration on the university level, with all universities finally open and over three hundred Negro students enrolled at LSU in New Orleans, a situation which made the role of Negro colleges, such as the ones at which we had taught, increasingly problematic. Most shocking to us, especially after our return from West Germany with its problems of labor shortages, was the sharp rise in unemployment among Negroes in New Orleans which affected the families of many of our students, a situation of which few of our white friends were fully aware. While the Negro middle classes had benefitted by the advances of the past few years, this seemed much less true of the economically deprived classes whose economic standing had in some ways deteriorated in the midst of a society of plenty.

The year in New Orleans turned out to be a very busy one for us. I had arranged for a reduced teaching load at Dillard to give me more time to complete a manuscript I had begun in Germany. By the second semester, both of us were teaching a graduate course at Tulane as well—Wilma had also taught a seminar on Karl Kraus there the first semester—and we were becoming involved again in the activities with which we had been concerned before our departure for Europe. I was again asked to be chairman of the education committee of the NAACP in New Orleans, and the committee this time succeeded in a project in which we had failed three years before, the admission of gifted Negro children to Benjamin Franklin, the high school for superior children. The committee also brought up to date its 1960 statistical study of tangible inequalities in the school system, which even to our surprise showed a much sharper ~~in~~ overcrowding and other inequalities than we had anticipated. We also became involved in the organization of the New Orleans Council for Peaceful Alternatives which remained quite active until the signing of the partial nuclear test ban treaty. Jeremy and Danny's readjustment to American schools was easy, Jonathan's less so. But Jeremy and Danny were kept quite occupied by homework, Hebrew school, and in Jeremy's case music practice.

We moved to Chicago in stages. From mid-June to mid-August we were in Fayetteville, Ark. On our way, we stopped in Little Rock where we visited friends. Many familiar faces were gone in both Little Rock and Fayetteville, some having left under pressure during the period of political tension. This pressure has relaxed now, in the state at least although not at the University which seemed more segregated and provincial than when we taught there in 1956-57. Fayetteville, however, is still a beautiful and friendly place and the two months there were a relaxing interlude between our busy lives in New Orleans and Chicago. Our children swam a lot; I did a fair amount of writing, and all of us found time for at least a few excursions into the Ozarks.

After a pleasant visit with relatives in Canada in late August, we arrived in Chicago in time for school to start. We had not looked forward to the big aspects of living in Chicago, particularly as they would affect the children. Actually living here has turned out to be much more pleasant and less complicated than we had anticipated. We found a spacious apartment within easy walking distance from the University of Chicago, the Museum of Science and Industry (where Danny and Jonathan spend much of their free time) and the I.C. electric train to the loop. Our children go to Ray school, the public school in the shadow of the University of Chicago. In many ways the Hyde Park section in which we live seems more like a self-contained university town than like part of a bustling, disorganized metropolis. So far we have had little time to take advantage of the many cultural offerings of Hyde Park. The presence of the U. of C. library has, of course, been a great convenience. Since we left Chicago fifteen years ago, Hyde Park has changed greatly and together with adjacent Kenwood and the nearby Lake Meadows Prairies Shores complexes has become the only larger stable integrated community in Chicago, an area with an extremely heterogeneous population, racially, ethnically, religiously, and to an extent even socio-economically but with an intense community spirit reflected in a multiplicity of neighborhood organizations. There are, of course, problems -- the politics of the urban renewal project have been viewed by some as a deliberate attempt to reduce the extent of integration, by others as the only way to maintain a stable, integrated neighborhood. At Ray school, 49.7% of the children are Negro, but ability grouping within the school has established de facto segregation in many class rooms. Nevertheless Elinor Richey's recent article on Hyde Park in the Saturday Review seems to us to give a distorted picture of the situation. Otherwise, most of the city is rather thoroughly segregated in housing and schooling, and attitudes are often only somewhat different, but neither more enlightened nor more humane than in New Orleans. The city administration, under the pressure of Negro and liberal opinion, has followed a relatively enlightened policy in racial matters; the Board of Education, more sensitive to real estate and conservative business influences, has followed policies not too different from those of many Southern school boards. I have been a member of the Educational Advisory Committee of the Chicago branch of the NAACP since October. I do not yet understand the complex forces well and also suspect that the role which the individual can play in social change in a highly structured city like Chicago is very much more restricted than in the South. That economic opportunities and other conditions making for individual dignity even if they are not good are at least better than in the South is reflected by the large migration to Chicago. We have already met several former Dillard colleagues and Dillard and Philander Smith students in Chicago.

This letter has become longer than we intended. We wish you all the best in the Holiday Season and the New Year. And if you come to Chicago, please look us up.

The five Iggers -- Georg, Wilma, Jeremy, Danny, Jonathan

5527 S. Dorchester Ave., Apt. 1
Chicago, Illinois, 60637
December 16, 1964

Dear Friends:

Again we come to you with greetings for the Holiday Season and the New Year, and in many cases with apologies for not having written during the year.

This year, which promised to be relatively uneventful, actually turned out to be an extremely crowded one. When we last wrote you, we had just begun to settle down in Chicago. The last curtains and pictures were hung; Wilma had mustered the courage to take her Illinois drivers' test; and we had settled down in the routine of teaching at Roosevelt and Loyola Universities respectively which left little time for other activities. The same mail in February brought two pleasant items of mail, an invitation for George to teach summer school at the University of Arkansas and a grant from the Newberry Library in Chicago, providing George with much needed research time during the fall semester to make the final revisions on his book on German historicism and to return to an older, uncompleted manuscript on the idea of progress.

Early in July the two of us and Jonathan drove to Fayetteville while Jeremy and Danny went to camp for the first time before joining us at the end of the month. We always, the kids included, like to return to Arkansas. The years in Little Rock were very meaningful ones and in the year we spent at Fayetteville we felt very much a part of the community. The summer was very pleasant despite the heat which was unusual even for Arkansas. The university has suffered a great deal, also academically, from the interference by Faubus and the state legislature which followed the Little Rock Crisis. It has been difficult to replace many of the stronger people who left. Nevertheless, the atmosphere among the faculty and the students continues to be generally liberal although a much more conservative administration has resegregated dormitories and imposed restrictions on outside speakers. In the city of Fayetteville, by contrast, many public facilities, including the swimming pool (closed in Little Rock and Pine Bluff this summer) were integrated already before the enactment of the Civil Rights Bill.

Upon our arrival, a letter reached George which had been sent to New Orleans months earlier inviting him to read a paper at a conference in Salzburg in September. The American Council of Learned Societies agreed to pay his trip despite the lateness of the date and he spent most of his spare time in the air-conditioned basement of the library writing his paper. As a result we did not even spend the few days in Little Rock on which we had counted. September then became a hectically busy month. We returned from Arkansas on the eve of the Jewish High Holidays; Wilma left three days later to read a paper at a meeting in New York from which she returned just in time for George to leave for Europe. George flew first to Richmond, Va., to spend the following day, his father's seventieth birthday, there, and then proceeded to France where he briefly visited friends in Le Mee sur Seine and environs, where we had spent a year, on his way to Salzburg.

The most interesting part of the trip was the week in Czechoslovakia which followed his stay in Salzburg. Wilma has been corresponding over the years with Czechoslovakia school friends but was afraid to visit them when we were in Europe despite their repeated invitations. There was no difficulty in obtaining a visa this time. It was a very nice week. Wilma's various friends, whom she hasn't seen since before the war, received him with a cordiality and hospitality rare in our more restrained world. Living with a family in the small town in Western Bohemia where Wilma went to school, he was able to get a glimpse at Czech everyday life. He was surprised how traditional many aspects of life still were despite (or perhaps because of) the Communist regime. The social by-products of the economy of abundance prevalent in Western Europe and the U.S. are largely missing. Suddenly one is freed of the many aspects of a commercialized mass culture. The result is that the youth seems much more unspoiled and idealistic (and less sophisticated) and that life goes at a much slower pace. There is much charm in this. Nevertheless these positive aspects of Czech life seem inextricably interwoven with dictatorship and cultural control and the failure of the government through its doctrinaire economic policies to attain a higher

standard of living. The government is, of course, not interested, nor is the population, in maintaining this simpler way of life but in overtaking the West in efficiency and production and in this way it has, of course, miserably failed in terms of its own values. Actually, real poverty which existed before the war, and which still exists in many corners of our own country, has virtually disappeared except among some of the elderly who have been cruelly neglected in Czech social legislation. George was also surprised at the extent of political conversation on the trains, in the streets, everywhere, most of it critical of the government. There has been a considerable relaxation in the last few months. In general Czechs are confident that there will be further liberalization. There were Czech scholars at the meeting in Salzburg and in George's discussions with them as well as with historians in Prague he was impressed by the extent to which Czech social scientists in conversation, even if not yet in print, have emancipated themselves from doctrinaire Marxism. "Marx was no economic determinist," he was told at the Czech Academy of Sciences.

On his way back, George briefly visited friends in Cöttingen and Denmark and arrived in Chicago in time for the preparations for Jeremy's Bar Mitzvah. Jeremy's Bar Mitzvah came after several years of Hebrew and Jewish study accompanied by doubts and questioning. The Reform service was dignified and meaningful and we were pleased by the many relatives and friends of the family who came to be with us on the occasion.

Since then we have settled back into our normal routines. Wilma enjoys especially the literature courses she teaches at Loyola. George is about to hand the final chapters of the book to the typist. Jeremy has been busy with his science fair project for which he won first prize in his school. His main pursuits have been less intellectual, however, neighborhood club, coin collecting, scouts and listening to disk jockeys on the radio way after we think that he is asleep. Danny, now eleven, is still very much of an individualist, reads, follows his own interests, but neglects his school work with disastrous effects on his grades. In contrast, Jonathan, now nine, has become ambitious in his school work and seems much more grown up now.

The last few weeks have brought a very attractive offer from a large Northeastern state university and we shall have to decide very soon whether to pull up our stakes again. Our choice is complicated by the likelihood that there will be an opportunity of staying in Chicago under similar conditions, even if perhaps in a less challenging teaching situation. The children are eager to go to a smaller (although this would be by no means a small) city. In some ways, we have liked Chicago, especially our teaching, the libraries, and the liberal atmosphere of Hyde Park, although the impersonality of the city (and of Hyde Park especially) and the long commuting in Wilma's case annoy us. We miss the challenges of the civil rights situation in Arkansas and Louisiana. The problems exist and are acute, but the contribution which we can make here as individuals in this highly complex situation seems to be a much more limited one than in the South.

With best regards from all of us,

the five Iggers

100 Ivyhurst 100 Ivyhurst
Amherst, New York 14226
December 17, 1965

Dear Friends:

It almost seems as if we have become a family of nomads. Once again we are writing you from a different city. Shortly after we wrote you last year, I accepted a position at the State University of New York at Buffalo. The decision to uproot the children again was not easy. We had just moved to Chicago in September 1963 after having returned to New Orleans from Europe only the year before. Nevertheless there were several considerations in addition to the professional advantages of the Buffalo position which made us decide to move, particularly the school situation which not only we but also the children felt to be unsatisfactory and the commuting which kept both of us away from the children more than we liked.

The move to Buffalo prevented us from accepting an invitation to spend the summer again at the University of Arkansas. Instead we spent a wonderful week at the American Friends Service Committee's family camp at Lake Geneva, Wis., which combined relaxation with serious discussion, and Jeremy and Danny later spent several weeks with the Thompsons in Fayetteville, Ark. We arrived here the middle of August and have been very pleased with our move in most ways. The university is going through an interesting phase. Until 1962 this was the private University of Buffalo which as an urban university served Buffalo in many of the ways Roosevelt serves Chicago. Since 1962 this has been the largest and most important unit of the relatively new State University of New York. Since then the university has grown by leaps and bounds as the state has attempted to transform it into a major university and graduate school. Faculty has multiplied; the library appropriation has increased twentyfold; and student admission standards have become increasingly selective. The transition is far from completed and years will yet be required before the university will have the research facilities, reputation, and appeal to graduate students which it hopes to acquire. My own professional position is very much preferable to Roosevelt. I enjoyed the congeniality and liberality of Roosevelt but find the State University no less congenial or liberal. For the first time in my career, my teaching is closely related to my research. In addition to a lecture course in German history I teach only one seminar in an area of intellectual history of my choice. Actually lecture preparation and consultation with graduate students have left me somewhat less time for my research than I had expected. Wilma is teaching at Canisius College ten minutes down Main Street from the university. This is a Jesuit college, as Loyola University in Chicago was, which with 1,700 students has a much more intimate small college atmosphere than the Lewis Tower commuters' campus in Chicago did. Wilma unfortunately has less opportunity to teach German literature here; but she has a lighter load than at Loyola and the German language courses she teaches require much less preparation and thus leave her more time.

Life is undoubtedly more relaxed for all of us here than it was in Chicago. Buffalo is a quieter and friendlier city. Unable to find a rental near the university, we bought an older, quite spacious house with a large yard in the suburb of Amherst, almost midway between the present State University campus approximately $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles ^{away} and the new campus in Amherst to which the university will move in a few years. This is the first time that we have lived in a suburb and we would have preferred living in the city itself had we not been discouraged about the Buffalo schools. Buffalo is one of the two most poorly financed of New York's several hundred school districts and has many of the problems of urban schools in a severe form. Amherst has most of the advantages of an affluent suburban school district as well as the usual disadvantages. The schools have a good academic program. Classes are small. Much more attention is paid to the individual child than at Ray School in Chicago where the needs of the children seemed often subordinated to the conveniences of the staff. On the other hand, the pressures for social and political conformity are much greater than in the socially more heterogeneous school setting the children knew in Chicago. Their one complaint about school in Amherst is that they still feel as outsiders and have not made any friends yet. We too have not gotten to know any of our neighbors who are even more impersonal than our Hyde Park neighbors in Chicago were. The university, on the other hand, is a surprisingly friendly and sociable place despite its size and incidentally has a very rich program of cultural events -- concerts (the Budapest String Quartet is in residence here), plays, lectures, and movies of which we have taken ample advantage.

100 Ivyhurst Road
Amherst, N.Y. 14226

-2-

One of our hesitations in moving to Buffalo was that we had hoped to move from Chicago back to the South where for so many years we were engaged in the civil rights movement. It is true that the problems of the South have migrated to the North, but the contribution which the individual citizen can make toward their solution is a much more limited one. Here, as now also increasingly in the Southern urban centers, the problem is not legal segregation, which can be more easily combatted, but the much more complex pattern of discrimination. Housing and schooling (at least on the elementary school level) are even more segregated than in Chicago. The fact that there are virtually no Negro students at the State University although about 20% of the population of Buffalo is now Negro is a reflection on the poor quality of ghetto education. Buffalo Negroes lack the leadership and organization of Chicago Negroes. Great hopes are being placed on raising sufficient money to bring Saul Alinsky here to organize the Negro community along lines similar to The Woodlawn Organization in Chicago. I have been working with the NAACP here in an as yet not very successful attempt to reactivate the education committee which has not functioned for some time. But the NAACP plays a much less central and effective role here than in the Southern communities we knew. This past year in Chicago and also here we have actually been more involved in the peace movement. We were active in organizing teach-ins in Chicago last spring and in collecting names for protest ads by Chicago and Buffalo area professors against the war in Viet Nam. Wilma participated in the march on Washington last month. We have no illusions about the effectiveness of these protests on public policy but see in them an expression of conscience in the face of what seems to us not only an unwise but especially with the barbarization of the war against the Vietnamese civilian population an immoral policy.

In the hope that the coming year will see a lessening of international tensions in the Far East and elsewhere, we wish you all the best for the holiday season and the New Year,

Georg, Wilma, Jeremy, Danny, and

Jonathan Iggers

Alles Gute im Neuen Jahr!

100 Ivyhurst Road
Amherst, New York 14226

December, 1966

Dear Friends,

For your address book's sake, you will be pleased to note that we are still in Buffalo. This has been a crowded and busy year for all of us, including the children. Jeremy likes the more adult atmosphere of senior high school compared with last year's junior high school and has become involved in a variety of activities such as debating, chess club, and his science project involving work with a computer. For the time being his interest in athletics has declined. Actually all three children are extremely busy with school work. We are quite pleased with the academic level of the childrens' schools, less so with the social atmosphere in the suburban setting. The alternative would have been moving into the city, where the schools are underfinanced and therefore notoriously poor, or as many of our colleagues do, sending the children to private schools. Nevertheless Jeremy in high school is now encountering a group of interesting kids, which Danny, also active in debating, misses in junior high school. Jonathan feels very much at home in school, seems much more challenged than in Chicago, and concentrates on reading and writing book reports to the detriment of his other subjects. His interests have shifted from Custer's last stand via the Civil War to World War II--but he still considers himself a pacifist.

Wilma enjoys Canisius College. While her teaching involves there now some literature, she has found some time for outside literary interests, including some research and writing. She had been working on the sense of self-identification of the German- and Czech-language Jewish writers in Bohemia. At present she is reading the page proofs of her book on Karl Kraus which was the topic of her moth-eaten doctoral dissertation. Both of us have been very much concerned about the war in Viet Nam and a good deal of our time has gone into activities in opposition to the war, which we feel not only politically but also morally wrong. We realize how little effect such protest has had on prosecution of the war. Nevertheless we consider it an important expression of conscience, which in the long run may yet have some consequences for national policy. Wilma has worked very closely with the Buffalo chapter of the Womens International League for Peace and Freedom and Georg has been active in campus peace activities.

For Georg the State University has been in many ways a new experience. This is the first time in his many years of teaching that he has been free of teaching survey courses and has been able to relate his teaching to his research. He teaches five hours a week--in New Orleans he generally taught fifteen to eighteen, at Roosevelt twelve--a lecture course to advanced undergraduates and graduate students in German history and a graduate seminar in European historiography or German intellectual history. The university is in the midst of rapid transition. Since the University of Buffalo was absorbed by the State University of New York three years ago, the enrollment has doubled, and the history faculty tripled. If the University of Buffalo was an institution which drew its students almost entirely from the Buffalo area, a serious attempt is being made now to create a major state university. Indicative of the changes is the increase of the library book purchasing budget from approximately \$40,000 four years ago to \$900,000. The undergraduate student body now comes from all over the state--last year about one third of the students came from New York City--nevertheless it will still be some years before the university will be able to achieve a reputation as a major graduate school and attract outstanding graduate students. Georg finds the atmosphere at school intellectually and personally congenial. He himself is being drawn into departmental and university affairs to a greater extent than elsewhere and perhaps more than is good for his research.

George received a grant from the State University to go to Göttingen this last summer to make final revisions on his manuscript on German historicism which will be published in about a year by the Wesleyan University Press. We took the occasion to accompany him. After several days' stay in Paris and Seine-et-Marne, where we visited friends we made during the year we spent in France, Wilma and the kids spent a week in Holland traveling on a railroad pass while Georg proceeded to Göttingen. In Göttingen the boys at once again found their old friends and at least Jeremy and Danny very quickly spoke German again passably well. Although Georg was under quite a bit of pressure to complete his work in the limited time we had in Göttingen, we managed to find some time for interesting cultural events and more importantly people. All over West Germany, but especially in Göttingen, we have acquaintances, many of whom we consider good friends, coming from all walks of life. Although we heard and read a good deal about the resurgence of right-wing nationalism, we ourselves ran into few

expressions of sympathy for it among the many people to whom we spoke. Similarly Georg was very much impressed, as he was four years ago, by the democratic orientation of the younger generation of historians, the men now in their thirties, who have become much more critical of German national traditions than their elders. The recent successes of the NPD should of course not be taken lightly. Even more we are disturbed by the strong currents of nationalism which extend over much broader segments of the population and have been encouraged by official policy, a nationalism which expresses itself in the emotionalization of all issues of foreign policy as they affect the division of Germany and the refusal to recognize even such political consequences of the second World War as the Oder Neisse line, or to realize, as recently some German political leaders have begun to admit, that the division of Germany, whether right or wrong, is here to stay for quite a number of years and requires a policy of reconciliation and détente with Eastern Europe if the two parts of Germany are not to be totally estranged. Although we would be frightened, as would many Germans, to see nuclear arms in German control, our observations lead us to believe that democratic government has much more stable foundations in West Germany today than it ever had in the Weimar Republic.

Early in August we left for Czechoslovakia, the high point of our trip. We had assumed that we would have to go via Bavaria but found out to our surprise that it would be possible for us to cross East Germany on a regular tourist visa. It was a strange feeling when we turned from the busy Autobahn connecting West Germany with Berlin onto the almost deserted road to Magdeburg. We traveled very freely in East Germany and were not stopped once for identification, not even when we made an illegal U-turn in front of what we suddenly realized was a police vehicle. Nevertheless Western tourists are still very rare--in contrast to Czechoslovakia--and almost everywhere we parked we were engaged in conversation by passersby who stopped to admire our car. We were struck again, as we had been on our visit to East Berlin four years ago, how freely people spoke on the streets, in museums, in hotels and how very critical even the young people were of political and economic conditions. Economic conditions seem, however, to have improved considerably since the wall went up. We were impressed by the amount of construction. At least the downtown sections in Magdeburg, Erfurt, and Leipzig no longer looked drab. Downtown traffic was much heavier than it had been in East Berlin four years ago. There were still lines outside fruit and vegetable stores. Our first longer stop was in Halle, where we were cordially received by the historians at the university whom Georg had written only a few days before our departure from Göttingen. The pro-rector, chairman of the historical institute, had postponed his vacation by a day to be able to meet us. While a car from the institute took Wilma and the children sightseeing, Georg met several of the historians who were very willing to exchange views, although they themselves were very firmly committed to Marxist doctrine. In contrast to their Czech colleagues, East German historians are still relatively isolated from historians elsewhere but are not adverse to re-establishing contacts. Georg was invited to come back to Halle next summer for several weeks at a time when the university is in session. In speaking with East German historians of the older generation, Georg was struck how central a role the Nazi period and their own experience of resistance played in their emotional commitment to the Communist state. Much more than in West Germany, the public is constantly reminded of the crimes of the Nazi period. The Buchenwald concentration camp near Weimar, which we visited, has been made into an impressive national memorial to the victims of Fascism. There is regrettably a tendency to oversimplify the whole question of guilt by claiming that the German Democratic Republic has made a complete break with the past while in West Germany the unreformed forces of the past are firmly re-established. From Halle we drove leisurely through the beautiful Cathedral town of Naumburg to Erfurt with its well preserved medieval city to Goethe and Schiller's Weimar where we spent a day. After a morning in Buchenwald and an afternoon at the Institute for German Historiography at the Karl Marx University in Leipzig, where we were received as cordially as in Halle, we left for Czechoslovakia.

The difference between Czechoslovakia and East Germany is striking. The economy appears stagnant but the political and cultural atmosphere freer. Even since Georg was there two years ago, remarkable changes have taken place. The political banners, omnipresent in Communist states, have disappeared. Prague is filled with tourists, both Western and Eastern. Czechs, too, are beginning to travel again abroad in increasing numbers. Culturally the country seems very much again a part of the West from the Beatles to the many translations of serious Western philosophical and sociological works. In movie theaters movies are shown from all over the world; the Soviet films which dominated a few years ago are now the exception. On the other hand, Western non-Communist newspapers, now available in some Eastern capitals, are still banned. The historians with whom we spoke, who two years ago still felt constrained to speak in Marxist terms, now have for a large part freed

themselves from ideological considerations. The normalization and de-ideologization of life which has occurred in the last few years is encouraging. In our conversations with young people, including the hitchhikers we picked up, we were amazed how little influence twenty years of ideological training have had on the youth, and how critical they remained. As in East Germany, morale is low, especially as regards the economy, and people are perhaps even more outspoken.

After thinking, and even more, emoting, about a trip to Czechoslovakia for many years, we crossed the border near Cheb in early August--it was Wilma's first visit in twenty-eight years. It was getting dark as we drove into the Bohemian Forest, peaceful and quiet and, after all that time, actually very familiar: the hills on the horizon, the tall fir forests, the mushrooms in the wet moss, and the deteriorating roads as we approached Trémešné pod Přimdou, the village where Anita lives with her family, and where we then spent a few days. The village is typical of many: it used to be German-speaking until the expulsion of the Germans in '46; now it has four hundred inhabitants, less than half of the pre-war number, quite a few of whom live in the high-rises built for the employees of the consolidated state farm. Therefore many of the old farmhouses and other buildings are standing empty as ruins, or have disappeared completely.

We visited various families in the village, the all-day nursery school, an apartment in the high-rise, and had a very Czech, good, substantial, and plentiful lunch at the "House of Culture", where people now go to drink.

We spent an evening--until midnight--carrying and heating and disposing of water, washing about five loads of clothes in a three-pound wringer-type machine, and then hanging them by moonlight on the fence post in the chicken yard, while the boys watched a Western Western on TV at the neighbors', and then slept in the tent in said chicken yard. We stuffed ourselves with a whole hamper full of fried mushrooms the size of a saucer, and Wilma with stag-liver in sour gravy with dumplings. (Anita's husband also shot twelve wild boars last winter, but they were out of boar meat.)

With Anita we also went to Horšovský Týa-Bischofteinitz, Wilma's home town. Although it never was a bustling metropolis, it did seem very quiet, but in good shape. The town administration is showing more awareness of the treasures of baroque and older architecture in the town square than the pre-war ones ever did. Especially in visiting the Renaissance castle, which has partly been converted into a museum, and the truly beautiful park, one becomes particularly aware of the many reminders of what seemed feudal characteristics, even in Wilma's time, on the one hand, and the almost totally new population which has no roots there, nor for the most part elsewhere, on the other. We ate in the House of Labor, formerly Hotel Traube, and then, after satisfying ourselves that the roof of the railroad station on which we used to sun ourselves hasn't changed, we climbed, boys and all, up the Schmalzberg and along the crest to the lovely old pilgrimage church, St. Anne's. It is in deplorable condition, apparently a victim of the fury of people who saw in it the burial ground of the Trauttmansdorffs, a symbol of the German, capitalist and Catholic past.

"Our" house has been completely transformed--into a mouse-gray box, used as the office building of a co-op dairy. The dairy itself stands in what used to be the garden. We walked around it as far as we could, hoping to find a tree--or anything--left from before.

On the way back to Trémešné we stopped in Mirkov, in the house where Wilma was born, and had a long talk with the manager of what is now a two-thousand acre state farm. We also stopped in Neuhof, which she had last seen with her father in September '38. The buildings looked aged out of proportion to the years, and although there has been quite a bit of building, the farm gives the appearance of neglect--something of which the present inhabitants and even the manager are well aware.

We walked to the pond, Suchana, just as the sun was beginning to go down. With the seven hills in the background, it was not less beautiful than Wilma had remembered it. Máná, the manager's wife, whom I knew from school, told me that they had finally solved the riddle of the wooden hut, which, except for an essential feature, looked like an outhouse--and there it was: the little shelter we used to use to undress to go swimming. I don't know why these little man-made things from the past stand out so much in my memory. There was also the bridge my father built with me in 1933 across the Radbusa for my use, now a public thoroughfare.

We went back another day, also visiting the farms in the surrounding area where our relatives used to live, and speaking to laborers there. Although they must be better off than in the past, they, too, spoke nostalgically about the good old days when, also according to them, the farms were in much better shape.

By then we were visiting Wilma's friend, Iva, a widow who lives with her teenaged daughter and her parents in a beautiful large garden--her father is a gardener--at the foot of the Ryzmberk. The best part of our visits was feeling so much at home with people--this was actually also true of Georg and the boys who consider Czechoslovakia the highlight of the trip. Iva arranged a gathering for us with as many of our classmates as she could get together at a friend's house in Domažlice. They and most of the people to whom we talked seemed to emphasize and agree on several things: the Stalinist period is over, thank God, but some are not sure if it is so for good. One can talk and criticize rather freely, but the government pays little attention to criticism.

With regard to overall economic policies as well as the many instances of detail, lots of mistakes are being made which result in the general deterioration (from a never too-high level) of the economic conditions, and very poor morale. I am not commenting as an outsider, but rather paraphrasing what I have heard numerable times when I say that one important fault is that there is no reward for initiative--that, in fact, individual initiative seems to be discouraged.

We also spent a few days with Wilma's friend František and his family in Nyrsko and from there explored Devil's Lake and the southern Boh. Forest, as well as Chodsko, the folkloristically unique villages where Wilma's grandparents lived, and Ronsperg, where her grandparents were buried. If moss-covered tomb-stones, demolished by the Nazi, were not lying around chaotically, the cemetery would look like a thick primeval forest.

The Prague part of the trip was a little less gustily sentimental, but very nice and very interesting. There we met and enjoyed relatives, some of whom Wilma had not known before either, and met several people with whom we hope to stay in touch. We even became acquainted with a couple of communists.

Since Wilma was on the lookout for good recent Czech libraries, and soon found that publishing policy there is such that, also thanks to the avidly reading Czech public, books are quickly sold out, she decided to go directly to several publishers. In spite of vacation time, and of the suddenness of this idea, she had a very interesting day talking to editors, and is now supplied with Czech belles some time to come.

Between Georg's discussions with historians, sight-seeing with the boys, and people, there was no time for theater, movies or political cabarets, which, we were told, are worth seeing. Very reluctantly we tore ourselves away from our alternating diet of sour craut and duck, Svickova and dumplings! We passed through the beautiful, completely quiet town square of Budějovice, wondering if one would have a similar feeling in Pompei. Our last hitchhiker, a student, insisted that we go with him to a village where they sell ice cream which he recommended as made by private enterprise. A few hours later we saw the lights and traffic of Linz, Austria. From there we drove without further extended stops over the Austrian and Swiss Alps and Northern Italy and through France to Paris, where we took charter flight, said good-bye to Europe on our last day from Vezelay, the romanesque abbey overlooking a large area in Central France, and then once more, late at night with the Herzfelds in Nemour, by the light of flaming crepes suzette.

Shortly after our return from Europe, there was Danny's Bar Mitzvah, which turned out to be a very nice family reunion. In the last few months Georg has become increasingly involved in an exchange program between the State University of New York at Buffalo and Philander Smith College, the college in Little Rock at which we both taught from 1950 to 1956. Ever since we left the South, Georg has tried to establish a relationship between a predominantly Negro institution in the South and a major university in the North. Both Buffalo and Philander Smith College which now has an administration which is much more realistic about the limitations of the school than its predecessors, expressed an interest. Georg negotiated an agreement between the two schools last spring and this fall, with a major grant from U.S. Office of Education, the program got under way. The purpose of the exchange is to strengthen the level of instruction at Philander Smith College. This year a steady exchange of persons will take place to establish contacts between departments at the two schools. The education departments are cooperating in the development of an extensive remedial education program, an honors program, and a lyceum series in Little Rock. Beginning this June, Philander Smith College faculty members will come to Buffalo for further graduate work during the summer and the regular school year, and Buffalo graduate students,

and possibly some faculty members, will go to Little Rock to teach. The interest in the project among faculty members both here and in Little Rock and graduate students in Buffalo has been very gratifying. The role of the predominantly Negro college is, of course, changing at a time when higher education is becoming rapidly integrated in the South. Philander Smith College will, however, in our opinion continue to have a function to fulfill in the next years both because no public college exists as yet in Little Rock and because institutions are needed which will enable students to make the transition from disadvantaged, segregated elementary and secondary schools to the competitive demands of an integrated society.

We had better stop. With best greetings for the Holiday Season and the New Year to all of you,

Georg and Wilma Iggers

and the boys.

100 Ivyhurst Road
Buffalo, New York
14226
December 15, 1967

Dear Friends:

Once again the time has come when we are looking forward to hearing from our friends whom we left behind in Canada, Arkansas, Louisiana, France, Germany, Czechoslovakia, and elsewhere.

Wilma enjoys her teaching at Canisius College. This year for a change she has no beginners' German courses, but literature courses instead. The academic atmosphere at this Jesuit college is increasingly open and ecumenical -- even the theology department has now changed its name to the department of religious studies and a rabbi has been added to the faculty. The political conservatism of the students and much of the faculty has given way somewhat under the pressures of the Viet Nam conflict and an active peace movement has come into existence on the campus. Despite her responsibilities at home, and at school, Wilma is finding some time for research. Her book on Karl Kraus appeared this fall. She has become increasingly interested in recent years in the Jewish writers, both Czech and German, in Bohemia at the turn of the century and is currently working on a paper on Jewish themes in Czech literature since 1945.

Georg continues to be pleased with the university. Rapid strides are being made in building what is hoped will become a major graduate school. Despite the nominally light teaching load, committee involvements, mainly related to the expansion of the university and the department, leave less time for research and writing than one would expect. Nevertheless, Georg was able to complete revisions on his manuscript on German historical thought which he began during our year in Germany some years ago, and which is finally in press.

Jeremy, now 16, and Danry, $14\frac{1}{2}$, are growing up quickly. Both are taller than Wilma. Both demand more independence than we are quite ready to grant. The social isolation which all three experienced after our move to suburban Amherst has now been broken at least for the older two. Jeremy encountered a circle of likeminded friends when he entered senior high school. During the last school year he was involved with the debate team and the chess club. Chess is still his passion, but much of his spare time is occupied with editing an unofficial -- the kids like to call it "underground" -- high school paper called the Dissenter. He has little free time this year. The academic demands of the advanced placement courses he is taking often keep him up till late. He has suddenly expressed an interest in entering college after this year -- he is in 11th grade but will have completed all requirements except 12th grade English which he wants to take this summer -- and while his desire makes some sense, the idea of his possibly leaving home already next September came to us as somewhat of a shock.

Danry and Jonathan are much less ambitious students. Danry has one good friend. He is very much interested in automobile designs and is constantly modeling cars. He has expressed an interest in studying architecture. Jonathan is a faithful supporter of the library club at his school and captain of his bowling team. His tremendous consumption of books on history -- particularly military history -- has now given way to an interest in sports, unfortunately almost entirely as a passive spectator rather than as an active participant.

The high point of the year was again our trip to Europe. Georg, who has worked extensively on West German historiography since 1945, expressed an interest to historians during our brief visit to East Germany last year to become better acquainted with the status of historical scholarship there. The result was a promise of an invitation to visit the University of Halle and lecture at the Karl Marx University in Leipzig. Despite the skepticism of some of our American colleagues, the invitations came through. Georg went in mid-June -- the children were still in school -- to attend the weeklong celebration of the 150th anniversary of the merger of the Universities of Halle and Wittenberg, an occasion which gave him marvelous opportunities to meet historians and philosophers from all over East Germany and Eastern Europe. At Halle he was invited by a group of Polish historians to lecture at the University of Poznan next May; one of the Poznan historians has since then been invited to lecture in Buffalo. Wilma and the children joined Georg ten days later and accompanied him to East Berlin, where Georg interviewed historians at the Academy of Science and the Humbolt University and both of us spoke with writers, saw two Brecht plays at the Berlin Ensemble and went to Die Distel, the satirical cabaret. Jeremy and Danny, whose German is still quite fluent, spent a day in an East Berlin high school. From Berlin we proceeded to Leipzig where Georg delivered two lectures, both followed by heated discussions. It is still rare for a non-Marxist historian to speak in East Germany and attendance at both of these lectures was restricted to professors and a select group of students. From Leipzig we went to Dresden which has been very nicely rebuilt, and the Zwinger restored. Before crossing into West Germany, we stopped in Eisenach and hiked up to the Wartburg.

Our visit to East Germany was both encouraging and discouraging. The reception we received everywhere, whether in university circles or elsewhere, was extremely cordial. We saw everyone we wanted to see. It was Georg's impression that historical scholarship has become more sophisticated and less dogmatic. The university people, who represent very much of a privileged class in the supposedly classless society, seemed on the whole much more satisfied with conditions than non-university people, but even here the morale appeared somewhat improved since our previous visits. The economy is finally getting on its feet. There is construction everywhere, reflecting beginnings of an air of prosperity. On the other hand, the cultural and intellectual scene still seems bleak. There is little sign of a thaw. Censorship and travel restrictions not only isolate East Germany from the West, but also from the cultural ferment in the more liberal of the Communist countries. Writers unwilling to conform told us that they could no longer publish their manuscripts. We were particularly dismayed by the character of the anti-Israel campaign which was being waged by press, radio, TV, and street banners. On the whole, this campaign was unpopular, even among party members with whom we spoke. It is hardly fitting for a German state to identify the Israeli government as the heirs of the Nazis and compare the Israeli conduct of the war with the Nazi crimes at Auschwitz. Explaining Nazism as a function of "monopoly Capitalism," the East German government holds that it has completely cleansed itself of the sins of the past. There is none of the serious soul-searching which strikes one in West Germany.

After four pleasant weeks in Göttingen, where Georg used the libraries, we spent a week in Czechoslovakia. The contrast with East Germany is striking. The economy, collectivized to a much greater degree than in East Germany, is still stagnant despite reform plans to decentralize production and introduce some of the aspects of a market economy. Criticism of the government is even more general than in East Germany on economic and political grounds. On the other hand, political relaxation has gone much further than in East Germany. Culturally and

intellectually Czechoslovakia is alive and again very much a member of the international community. Ideology plays an increasingly small role in the arts and in scholarship. In spite of severe restrictions on the export of currency, Czechs travel again abroad. Prague is full of tourists from East and West, but mostly West. On each successive visit -- Georg was there in 1964, both of us in 1966 -- we have been struck by changes. This summer, however, relaxation reached a critical point. Everyone was talking of the Writers' Congress in early June which had led to a direct confrontation of intellectuals, demanding further liberalization, and the government. This confrontation, however, revealed the limits of intellectual freedom. Later in the summer, after we had left, the government disciplined various writers and took control of Literární Noviny, the excellent and outspoken weekly of the Writers' Congress.

Buffalo like many other American cities had its riots this summer, not comparable to the explosions in Newark or Detroit, but nevertheless expressive of the deep frustrations which exist in the Negro community. Georg is still a member of the executive committee of the Buffalo branch of the NAACP but the branch has been relatively inactive. There are few other channels of interracial communication left. Georg is still very much involved in the exchange program between the University and Philander Smith College in Little Rock, which is now beginning its third year. During the past year a regular stream of consultants traveled between the two campuses, Philander Smith faculty members came here on short-term visits and for study, and two Buffalo graduate students have gone to Little Rock to teach. With help of the School of Education at Buffalo, a center for remedial education has been set up at Philander Smith College. A major part of Philander Smith's freshman class is taking non-credit courses in this center in preparation for admission to regular college courses. For most students at Philander Smith College this will ultimately mean a five year B.A. The Committee at this campus concerned with this exchange is now trying to establish similar exchange arrangements with other colleges and to maintain close touch with SEEK programs preparing disadvantaged students in Buffalo for college work.

All of this seems almost irrelevant in the face of the stark tragedy of the war. And in the face of the war, our actions, whether contributing to ads or signing protests, appear so impotent, more expressions of conscience than effective opposition. At present both of us are helping to organize a draft counseling center in Buffalo and preparing to become counselors ourselves, a concern particularly close to our heart with three boys approaching draft age. Wilma has given a good deal of her time to the Buffalo Branch of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, of which she is president this year. This has not been easy because the members of the organization, like those of many peace and civil rights groups, are today very much divided on questions of aims and tactics. After having been for so many years in the left wing of the civil rights and peace movements in the South, we now find ourselves in the strange position of having to defend ourselves against the criticisms of the left. Under the pressure of the war and the tensions of the ghettos, portions of the anti-war and civil rights movements have moved into directions which we cannot follow. We were deeply disturbed by the resolutions adopted at the New Politics conference in Chicago, both because of the nihilism and the lack of political realism implied by these resolutions. While there are many signs of sickness in American society, we still believe that there are elements of humanism and

democracy in the American tradition which leave hope for evolutionary change to a more humane society. Perhaps this is too optimistic a view in the face of the horror of the war and the misery of the ghettos. But violent confrontation is likely only to lead the protest movement to isolation from the main currents of public opinion and reduce it to political ineffectiveness. And violence, even where successful, has a tendency to corrupt the ends for which it is used.

In this difficult time of searching for meaningful action, our friend Heide Friedrich together with other Göttingen pacifists has initiated a tangible project. After a year of negotiations, they have succeeded in obtaining free places in Göttingen hospitals for four Vietnamese children so seriously wounded, both legs gone, lower jaw shot off, napalm burns, etc., that they cannot be adequately treated in Viet Nam. Göttingen is a major university medical center. Money is needed to transport the children from Viet Nam to Germany. If you would like to contribute, please make your check out to Frau Heide Friedrich, 34 Göttingen, Rasenweg 11, West Germany.

With best wishes to all of you for the Holiday Season and the New Year,

the Iggers Family

100 Ivyhurst Road
Amherst, New York 14226
December 15, 1968

Dear Friends:

It is a Sunday, a real Buffalo winter morning, snow, wind, 10° temperature, a pleasure to be indoors. The family is still asleep and I shall take this opportunity to write this letter which should have been ready already for days.

As usual this has been a busy although for the most part a satisfying year for us. Wilma was particularly occupied, combining the duties of teaching fulltime at Canisius, with the household, some research and writing, and civic activities. She enjoys teaching at Canisius College. The atmosphere at this Jesuit school is quite open, even more so than when she came, and the Jesuits are probably even more liberal on religious and political questions than the lay faculty. Wilma has tenure now. She is teaching more literature, including a graduate course, and less elementary language than in the past. She has been using much of her limited academic leisure to read current Czech literature. The end of August she read a paper at a meeting in Washington on Jewish Themes in Post-World War II Czech and Slovak literature. Despite the decimation of the Jewish population by the Nazis and the extinction of the rich Bohemian German and Czech-Jewish culture, the past ten years of cultural normalization in Czechoslovakia have seen a surprising interest in Jewish themes in novel and film. A steady flow of books from Prague arrives at our house. For this coming summer, Wilma has received a grant from Canisius College to go to Prague to study the reception of German literature in Czechoslovakia since World War I, although she is particularly interested in the period since 1945. Wilma decided not to run for another term as president of the Buffalo Branch of the Women's International League of Peace and Freedom but is still quite involved in their activities.

Of our sons, Jeremy has been the one involved in the largest number of activities, academic and non-curricular. He is seventeen now, a senior in high school and making applications to colleges. He has done very well on the various scholastic aptitude tests and is a National Merit Scholarship semi-finalist as well as a winner of New York Regents scholarship. His grades at school have been respectable but not as good as his test scores would indicate. He does not let school work interfere with his many interests. Having been editor of the school's now extinct underground newspaper last year he now has joined the establishment to become editorial editor for the official school paper. This takes a fair amount of time. In addition he is on the school chess team, has gone out for track although he is not a particularly outstanding athlete, and goes fencing. He reads quite a bit of good, especially recent literature. Ever since he started senior high school he has been in the midst of a circle of friends with similar interests. Like Danny, but much more so, he has become very independent so that we see very little of him. We were not very happy about his long hitchhiking excursions last summer although we consented to them. Twice he hitchhiked to Fayetteville, Arkansas, with a friend to visit the Thompson family and once to Washington, D.C. He wants to become a journalist and may major in English or history in college. We shall

know in April which college will take him. But he wants to be and should be in a stimulating atmosphere.

Danny is fifteen and a half and a sophomore in high school. He has grown tremendously in the last year and is now taller than any of us. He spends most of his free time with his friend Mike. One of his current interests is automobiles. He bought himself a brokendown Fiat-600 for \$40 which he wants to put into running order. Danny goes to judo class twice a week and to a swimming course once a week and now during the winter uses his spare time to go skating frequently. He also reads a fair amount, likes to write, and does particularly well in his English and history courses, less well in courses which interest him less. He shows quite a bit of imagination in his writing and this summer wrote us beautiful and very sensitive letters from camp. He spent the summer at Shaker Village Work Group where he engaged in agriculture, carpentry, and pottery and helped rebuild an old Shaker Village. He thoroughly enjoyed it. A friend of ours at the University of Nottingham in England has invited him to participate in an archeological excavation being conducted by the University of Nottingham next summer and he is very much looking forward to going.

Jonathan just turned thirteen. Last month was Bar Mitzvah, an occasion for a very pleasant family reunion with relatives and friends coming from Canada, California, Illinois, and my father coming from the South. The Bar Mitzvah was almost to the day on the thirtieth anniversary of the arrival of the group of refugees, including Wilma, her family and many of her relatives and friends, who fled Czechoslovakia together shortly after Munich and settled in the Hamilton, Ontario, area of Canada. Many are still there and with the proximity of Hamilton, Toronto, and Brantford to Buffalo we see quite a bit of them now. Jonathan has changed quite a bit in the last few months. He is very big for his age and is taller already than Wilma. He is no longer as fat as he was. He is a very pleasant but very quiet child. Unfortunately he has not yet succeeded in making friends -- he always had a circle of friends before we came here. He reads quite a bit, listens to the radio, and spends some time at the Y. Like Danny, he does well in the subjects which interest him, social studies and English, and less so in science which he finds boring. He, however, very much enjoyed the nature study camp he went to in Northern Ontario last summer, his first camp experience, and would like to go again next summer. His main interests right now are books, bowling, radios and sports although he is much more a spectator than a participant.

I myself enjoy the University as much as ever. The university, which became part of the state system six years, is still in a process of rapid growth. There is much room for experimentation and new ideas both in the university and in our department. Our department is more than twice as large now than when I came; the number and quality of graduate students has risen while on the undergraduate level the huge lecture classes which existed when I came have now with added faculty been supplemented by undergraduate seminars. My teaching assignments have been interesting. Until now I taught the lecture courses in German history; we are now adding a German historian so that I can devote myself more to my main interests in intellectual history. This year I am teaching a graduate seminar the first semester on Marx, the second on Problems of Contemporary Marxism. The seminar in which I have several very articulate members of the New Left as well as several who very much disagree with them has been very lively. I am also teaching an experimental sophomore course on methodology and interpretation of history and next semester shall be teaching the senior honors course

in historiography. My book on German historicism finally appeared. I am now continuing my work on ideas of progress and decline in modern historical thought and also working on a history of historiography which will deal particularly with the impact of social science methods on recent historiography.

My main committee responsibility has been as chairman of the Committee on Co-operation With Predominantly Negro Colleges. The co-operative arrangement with Philander Smith College in Little Rock, about which I wrote you in last year's letter, is continuing into its fourth year. It is difficult to judge whether it has been a failure or a success. There has been a good deal of activity, PSC faculty studying here, consultants going down, etc. We have been particularly interested in working with the compensatory education program at Philander Smith. Philander Smith College cannot become a strong liberal arts college at this time. Its main function must be to help graduates of disadvantaged schools to overcome their educational gap and prepare them to enter the competitive main stream of American life. The impact which we can have on the school is, however, a very limited one. This year we shall very critically review our participation, compare it with other similar programs, and possibly move in other directions.

Our social action commitments have continued to center around the issue of peace and racial equality. In both, the contribution which we can make as individuals is distressingly small. Wilma has, of course, been involved in the various peace activities of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. She also participated in a walk across the Peace Bridge last winter sponsored by the Quakers to bring money and medical supplies to Canada for transshipment to the Red Cross organizations of North Vietnam and South Vietnam and the National Liberation Front. The Women's International League has co-operated with the Friends and other peace organizations in setting up the Buffalo Draft Counseling Center which in contrast to the Resistance explores legal alternatives to the draft, including conscientious objection, but will counsel on the alternatives of prison and emigration if all other channels have been exhausted. I have been a counselor for the Center since it began functioning last March, a work which I have found very satisfying. I have also become somewhat more involved in Buffalo integration problems. Unfortunately many channels of communication between the white and black communities have been broken with the increasing separatism, the result of black disillusionment, and the failure of integration has led many persons in the black community to favor school decentralization and local control of segregated schools. Since this summer I have been chairman again of the Education Committee of the Buffalo Branch of the NAACP, a function I held in Little Rock and New Orleans. The NAACP has been unfortunately inactive in the past but remains an organization committed to integration. I myself try to stay in the background as I did in Little Rock and New Orleans. The school problems are in many ways similar. The Common Council which has fiscal control over the schools has effectively stymied the very incomplete plans for racial balance adopted by the Board of Education under an order from the State Commissioner of Education which resulted from an NAACP action. Any further move toward school integration will now require legal action, as it did in Little Rock and New Orleans when I was there.

We watched with great suspense the developments in Czechoslovakia in spring and summer. A steady flow of letters and newspapers came from Wilma's old friends and relatives as well as from acquaintances we have made on our recent trips reflecting the euphoria as well as the premonitions of disaster of people there. After a break of several weeks after the invasion, this stream has continued.

The events of August 21 are saddening not only because of what they mean in terms of individual lives and the political and cultural development of Czechoslovakia but also because they destroyed the hopes for a more rapid liberalization of conditions generally in Eastern Europe and the end of the Cold War atmosphere. If conditions permit, we hope to spend several weeks in Prague next summer where Wilma will be working on her grant and I on trends in Historiography in Eastern European countries since World War II.

We were saddened by the passing of my mother in September. Although she had been ill for many years, her death came at a time when she had shown considerable recovery and we expected it least. We have suggested to my father who is now 74 to move to Buffalo but for the time being he intends to continue his work as a salesman traveling through the entire South and keep his apartment in Richmond.

This more or less sums up the main events and involvements in our life this past year.

We wish you a happy holiday season and a Happy New Year. The last year, marked by the continuation of war in Vietnam and Nigeria, by the invasion of Czechoslovakia, increasing tension in the Near East, and assassination in this country had its fill of violence and suffering. Let us hope that the coming year will see an advance toward a more humane, rational world.

Georg, Wilma, Jeremy, Daniel,
and Jonathan Igers

100 Ivyhurst Road
Amherst, N.Y. 14226
December 19, 1969

Dear Friends:

We are sorry that our annual letter is reaching you so late this year. Pressure of work kept us from turning to it earlier. Last Sunday I finally locked myself in my office in school and when I came out several hours later, I found to my own embarrassment and horror that I had written nine single-spaced pages, most of them to be sure on the impressions from our trip to Czechoslovakia, East Germany, and Israel this past summer. A family council which included the kids decided firmly that we could not impose such a letter on our friends. The letter had to be cut and we decided to append a shorter version of the observations about our trip as a P.S. to this letter. You may conveniently detach it from this letter and drop it unread into the circular file under your desk or read it, as you please.

The one important change in our life as a family has been Jeremy's departure for college. He is a freshman at Carleton College about forty miles south of Minneapolis. Danny, now 16½, is a junior in high school and is already being subjected to the first battery of college board tests. Like Jeremy he has found a congenial circle of friends and activities in senior high school. Jonathan, just turned fourteen, has shot up remarkably this past year, is as tall as I and weighs a good 200 lbs. Wilma continues to enjoy teaching at Canisius. She is on the faculty committee which recruits and counsels minority group students; is faculty advisor of Students for Peace and Involvement, the student activist group which by comparison to other campuses is still relatively moderate; and is president this year of the North East Modern Languages Association, which has been planning the program for the meeting of the association at Canisius College this coming April. I am able to teach courses increasingly close to my area of interest as the faculty in my department has doubled from 19 to 38 since my arrival here four years ago. While I was earlier teaching mostly German history, I am now teaching courses and seminars in intellectual history and historiography, including two seminars this past year on Marx and Marxism which led to a very lively dialogue among various shades of political thought on campus. My teaching responsibilities seem a good deal lighter on paper than they are in reality, but I do find somewhat more time for research and writing than in the past. I am still co-chairman of the university's Committee on Co-operation with Predominantly Negro Colleges. The exchange program with Philander Smith College in Little Rock is coming to an end this June and the committee is beginning to develop a somewhat broader program of recruiting minority group graduate students.

In the community, our main activities continue to revolve around the issues of peace and race. Wilma continues to be active in the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom which among other things has supported the efforts of the Draft Counseling Center of Greater Buffalo to provide information on legal alternatives to the draft. I have been counseling for the

center. The issue of the draft as a question of conscience is coming particularly close to home now that Jeremy has passed his eighteenth birthday and Danny will soon approach it. Both Wilma and I have continued to be active in the NAACP. The NAACP is the one predominantly black action group in Buffalo which continues to welcome white members and remains committed to racial integration. The problems of Buffalo are not that different from those which we knew in the urban South: unequal educational facilities, discrimination in employment and housing, police brutality. I am still co-chairman of the education committee of the local branch which has been concerned with accelerating the pace of school integration both by negotiations with the school board and by legal action and most recently has become quite concerned in involving the suburbs in the integration program. Right now we are preparing a suit against the so-called state anti-bussing law. This law, passed last spring by the New York legislature, forces the Buffalo school board to obtain written authorizations from all parents of children who are assigned to schools to achieve racial balance. Segregationists and black separatists expected that the law would cripple bussing in Buffalo. To their surprise almost all parents of children involved signed the authorizations while other parents took up the few places left vacant, thus demonstrating that there is still broad support in the black community for integrated schools despite justified frustration at the slow pace and the token manner with which it has proceeded. Danny in the past few weeks has become quite involved in a tutoring program sponsored by the NAACP for children who are being bussed out of the inner city and has found considerable enthusiasm among his friends whom he has recruited as tutors.

Both Wilma and I had research grants this past summer to go to Europe. Wilma has been working on various problems in contemporary literature in Czechoslovakia and East Germany; I was working on the impact of the social sciences on contemporary historiography in Eastern as well as in Western Europe and also revising my book on German historicism for a West German edition now in preparation. It was a very busy but interesting summer. (Wilma and I proceeded from Amsterdam to Czechoslovakia childless, where we spent about three weeks, to East Germany, and to Göttingen.) Jeremy and Danny acquired bicycles upon our arrival in Amsterdam and started out on their own. They rode along the Rhine and Mosel, through Alsace into Switzerland, staying at youth hostels. In Switzerland they disposed of their bicycles and continued by a combination of thumb and train to Vienna, Bratislava, and Prague, and Göttingen where they rejoined us in early August. Jeremy acquired a beard on the trip which he is still wearing. Jonathan in the meantime was in camp in Canada. He joined us in Göttingen in early August after incredible complications caused by the irresponsibility of a charter line which postponed its flight by a week without notifying us. From Göttingen, or rather Frankfurt, we all flew to Israel, the vacation part of the trip, where we spent two weeks. Danny left us again upon our arrival in Tel Aviv and on his own

hitchhiked to the Negev, Beersheba, and Masada on the Dead Sea. Our paths crossed again in Jerusalem, where Danny, however, stayed in a youth hostel in the Old City. From Jerusalem he went to a kibbutz in Galilee to which he had been invited. For a description of our trip, see the attached P.S. From Israel Wilma, Jonathan and I went once more to Prague, where I participated in a conference on Fascism sponsored by the Academy of Sciences while Jeremy and Danny proceeded straight to Amsterdam. The atmosphere was particularly somber in Prague the end of August after the new repressive legislation which had followed the August 21 demonstrations, commemorating the first anniversary of the occupation. Nevertheless, there was nothing in the conference to indicate that it took place in a Communist country. Interestingly, while Poles, Hungarians, and Western European historians and social scientists were well represented, there were no Soviet or East German participants. Once again we left Czechoslovakia with more friends and tokens of their friendship, and this time with a feeling of pessimism about the future of that country which has been born out by events since.

We hope that you, too, will write if you have not already done so, and wish you a good New Year.

Georg and Wilma Iggers

P.S. From Amsterdam Wilma and I traveled slowly through West Germany--where we interviewed various historians, and in Wilma's case persons knowledgeable on Czech literature--on to Prague where we spent the major part of July. The atmosphere in Prague was both exhilarating and very depressing. The intellectual and literary scenes were still very much alive and anything but gleichgeschaltet. We spoke with a large number of people, historians, writers, as well as relatives and friends of Wilma from all walks of life, in Prague and in the countryside. There is a certain warmth and openness among Czechs which I have found in no other country. Perhaps the inefficiency of the Communist economic system has unwittingly contributed to a certain relaxed pace which is unknown to us in the hustle and bustle of our lives. Nevertheless, in many ways, the atmosphere was very bleak. There was a feeling of utter helplessness about the political situation which was rapidly deteriorating during the summer and has deteriorated even further since then. When we were there, the press had already been muzzled again and many of the old Novoay men were back in office. On the other hand, book publishing was still relatively free, a film very critical of the Czech past in the post 1948 years was being shown to record crowds, travel to the West was still open with thousands of Czech tourists abroad, and the universities were still untouched. Everyone, however, feared the worse, and a good deal of it happened since then, the emergency laws following the August 21 demonstration which destroyed the remnants of civil liberties and gave the government complete power summarily to dismiss teachers and students--a power they did not have in this unlimited way even in the Stalin period--and in October the restrictions cutting off almost all travel West by Czechoslovaks were imposed. "Socialism with a human face" which had enthused the masses of Czechoslovaks during the Prague Spring of 1968, now seemed a distant dream. The main form of opposition of the population seemed to be economic slowdown. Morale, including working morale, was terrible. The economy tottered. Public services, including the post office, trains, street cars, etc., functioned increasingly inefficiently. Industrial and agricultural production went down. Long lines outside of stores appeared as shortages developed. Persons desperately tried to dispose of their Czech crowns at any price or invest them in houses, or prepayments for automobiles not to be delivered for years to come, as everyone anticipated the collapse of the currency. Nevertheless, the almost complete unanimity of the population in opposition to the occupation and the passive resistance seemed unlikely to change the political situation.

From Prague we made a week's excursion to East Germany, where we spent an afternoon in Dresden, three days in Leipzig, and four in Berlin. The contrast with Czechoslovakia was striking. The economy functioned. We could tell the progress since our earlier visits in 1966 and 1967, not to mention 1962. There was a real air of prosperity. Dresden has been beautifully rebuilt--the Zwinger and some of the historic buildings restored, the rest of the city rebuilt in the 1960's, in a modern international style which contrasts sharply with the drab Stalin

style of much of Leipzig and East Berlin rebuilt in the 1950's. On a Sunday afternoon Dresden with its well dressed, prosperous looking citizens, jamming the elegant coffee houses reminded one of many a Western German city. New building was visible everywhere in Leipzig and Berlin. The intellectual and cultural scene on the other hand, seemed more rigid and arid than even on our previous visits. The Czechoslovak developments have led to even stricter controls. When entering East Germany from Czechoslovakia the customs official spent half an hour going through my brief case, a search which was continued once more in the Dresden station. We felt badly that a Dresden friend, who met us at the station and who had recently lost his position at the university after having made some remarks about the need for socialist pluralism at a faculty meeting, had his name noted down by the passport police. The university and academy people in Leipzig and East Berlin were extremely cordial and helpful, like on our previous visits. Unlike their Czech colleagues they identify with the establishment. With a few exceptions they are intellectually much less sophisticated and more parochial than their colleagues in Czechoslovakia. One interesting experience was a visit to a reading by a young East German author, deBruyn, from his recent controversial novel, Buridan's Donkey, before a meeting of foreign, mostly Eastern European, summer students in Berlin. The reading was followed by a very lively discussion of the merits of socialist realism. Two moderators from the Humboldt University were very much embarrassed as first a Czech and then a Soviet student, to the applause of the assembled students, tore into the concept of socialist realism, indication that the younger generation is much better informed and sophisticated than one might expect from a highly regimented educational system.

From Berlin we returned to Prague and then after two days in Wilma's old home region, visiting friends in the beautiful and peaceful Bohemian Forest, went on to Göttingen, our old stamping grounds in West Germany where we spent a very pleasant, but very busy two weeks. Despite all that has been written in this country about the new right in West Germany, we have quite a bit of confidence in the democratic orientation of the young generation. Some of this confidence was, of course, confirmed by the West German national elections.

From Göttingen we left on August 9 for a two week trip to Israel. This was the vacation part of the trip. A trip to Israel, of course, has many more emotional overtones to us than a trip to any other country. We had always wanted to go there for a visit but had always postponed it because I did not want to go as a tourist for two weeks, but hoped to spend a semester or a year there teaching to get to know the country. This opportunity never arose and it seemed was unlikely to arise, so that we finally decided to go, the last time probably that we could all go as a family. As a matter of fact, ironically, when we were in Israel the possibility was raised that we might spend our sabbatical year there. Two weeks, of course, were much too

short and we left with surface impressions and many questions unanswered. Our inability to converse in Hebrew turned out to be much more of a handicap than we had expected in communicating with the young native born generation, whom we unfortunately had little opportunity to meet.

Our first impression was that this country, which we expected to know so well from all we had read and heard from friends and relatives, turned out to be so strange. The first impression of the street scene and the population was a much less European and more Oriental one than we had expected. Somehow we had expected it to be much more a mixture of Central and Eastern Europe and had thought that we would still hear quite a bit of German and Yiddish. This, of course, was unrealistic. Half the country is of Near Eastern origin and a generation or more has elapsed since the great waves of Russian, Polish, and German settlers came. A new, uniquely Israeli culture has developed in the meantime. Surface impressions are annoying at first. In no country we have visited have we encountered as much discourtesy--in hotels, post offices, bus stations. Central Tel Aviv which I, from photographs, had pictured as an elegant modern city, something which applies to the suburb of Ramat Gan, seemed noisy and rather dirty and shabby. Going south to Yaffa, we ran into bad slum sections in the southern part of the city. Leaving Tel Aviv, the picture changed. Haifa on the slopes of Mount Carmel overlooking the Mediterranean, is a beautiful and despite its industry, clean city. Here we visited a cousin of mine, whom I hadn't seen since we left Germany before the war, and her husband and two adopted children, one a beautiful dark-skinned little Yemenite girl, who communicated with us in almost perfect German. From Haifa we went on a two-day bus tour of Galilee. The contrasts are impressive; the ruins of ancient Meggide, modern Arabie Nazareth, Sfad, the city of scholars and artists, Kibbutzia, new industrial cities which have sprung up almost overnight, the subtropical city of Tiberias, below sea level, along the beautiful lake and the new part of the city 2,000 feet above the lake. The countryside is rugged, mountainous, dry, rocky. Out of the rocks orchards and vegetable gardens have been won. The ethnic mixture is impressive, settlements of Hungarians, Germans, Rumanians, Algerians, Iraqi, Moroccans, older Sefardic, Jewish settlers, Christian and Moslem Arabs, Druses. On our return to Haifa, we took the bus at 6:30 a.m. to Afula to make the connection with the only daily bus which goes the length of the occupied West Bank to Jerusalem since we wanted to see as much of the occupied areas as possible. Most of the bus passengers were armed soldiers going to their posts on the West Bank. The cities, Janin, Nablus, Ramallah, seemed as if they came from the Arabian Nights. The country side was rugged as in Galilee, but not as intensively cultivated. Jerusalem, of course, was the high point of the trip. There is no city like Jerusalem, especially now that the city has been reunited. The cultural diversity of the country exists here in concentrated and accentuated form. Ultra-Orthodox and secular Jews, a variety of Christian denominations, Moslems coexist. The Old City, with

its holy places and its teeming Arab masses, had a special attraction for us. But we also admired the New City, including the new campus of the Hebrew University and the magnificent Israel National Museum.

Thanks to a good American friend of ours who had migrated to Israel and his Israeli wife, we were able to make excursions in the surroundings of Jerusalem as well, to visit two Kibbutzim, in one of which interestingly, twenty non-Jewish Finnish families had settled, and an Arab village, where we were very cordially received, invited into two homes, fed tea and coffee, and conversed extensively about the political situation, with one host in English, with the other with our Israeli friend, who speaks Arabic, acting as interpreter. The country side is breathtaking in its rugged beauty.

Our last five days were spent somewhat against our intentions in a seaside resort on the Mediterranean near Natanya. The travel bureau was supposed to have put us up at a kibbutz, but slipped up. We didn't particularly appreciate the tourist atmosphere, but made excursions to Wilma's nearby cousin, who until recently, had lived on a kibbutz, and whose husband took me on an extended tour of a nearby moshav, a co-operative settlement in which farmers own plots of their own, in contrast to the collectively operated kibbutzim. We met some of the local people. On the morning the AlAqsah Mosque burned--we were not aware of it--we went to nearby Tulkarem, an Arab city of about 25,000 just inside the West Bank, where we were clearly by our clothing, the only Westerners except for the Israeli military patrol which came circling every few minutes in its jeeps. Again we were received with much friendliness, served coffee, had considerable difficulty in communicating but finally found a teacher and later a young man who spoke English and with whom we discussed the political situation at length. There were several things which surprised us. How relaxed the occupation was, for example. There were no checks at the border. There was completely free movement wherever we went on the West Bank, except that Danny was ordered out of Hebrom, where there has been considerably more tension and where he went by himself by Arab bus, by the Israeli patrols by sundown, because they did not consider it entirely safe. The Arabs we talked to seemed all much more conciliatory than we had expected. They disliked being cut off from the Arab world, complained of not being able to visit relatives in Jordan, although some travel is permitted, and the two men we talked to in Tulkarem made it very clear that they did not want to be a part of Israel. The one wished the return of the area to Jordan, the other the creation of a Palestinian state. All however, believed that there must be co-existence. They had few complaints about the occupation, except that they wished, of course, that the troops would go away--two Armenian students we spoke with in Old Jerusalem, one of whom interestingly was a medical student in Soviet Armenia, home on vacation, considered the new status of Jerusalem an improvement. The men in Tulkarem stressed the economic advantages to the population from employment

in nearby Israeli industry with its much higher salaries, which outweighed some of the negative economic effects of the separation of the country from the East Bank. The areas we visited were perhaps not entirely typical and the atmosphere in other areas, particularly the Gaza strip, where there have been nightly curfews, appears to have been more tense.

We left Israel with mixed impressions, mostly positive, some negative, all admittedly very superficial. I was impressed by the tremendous economic energy of the country which exceeded anything I expected. There is a high level of industrialization, an extremely efficient agriculture, and a standard of living which is not far behind Western European levels, although some pockets of poverty continue to exist. Again and again, in talking to Israelis, one is reminded of the persecution which brought them here, the refugees from Hitler, the survivors of the holocaust, the immigrants from the ghettos of Morocco. The country has enabled thousands to rebuild lives with dignity. The other side of the coin is, of course, the conflict and the dislocations of other tens of thousands, which the establishment of the state of Israel produced. I was impressed by the lack of conflict between the ethnic groups within Israel and the lack of resentment among North African immigrants with whom we spoke towards the older European settlers. On the other hand, power and status is still very much concentrated in European hands. At the Hebrew University we were told that approximately 85% of the students are of European background, although 50% of the population is of Near Eastern origin. Israel faces the problems of overcoming the lack of Western skills of many of the North African immigrants and the educational and cultural disadvantages which are being transmitted to an Israeli born population, despite the de jure equality of educational opportunities, and the conscious efforts to extend these opportunities to all citizens.

I was least pleased with the attitude of many Israelis---I suspect they represent a majority in government and in the population---on the question of borders. Wilma disagrees with me on this point. She feels that Israel has no alternative but to hold on to the occupied territories at least until the Arab states are willing to negotiate. I agree that Israel has few alternatives, that Israeli moderation will not by itself overcome Arab intransigence. I am, however, disappointed that Israel did not make it very clear after the Six-Day War that she had no intention to keep the occupied territories. Most Israelis, distrustful of the rest of the world, believe that only military strength will preserve them from certain destruction. The memory of the holocaust is still very much alive. They fail to recognize the role which political factors will play in the long run in Israeli security. Admitting that Israel may be entitled to certain border revisions such as perhaps, the Golan Heights, in contrast to the Golan Plain, or Latrun, or even Sharm el Sheik, and that there should be open access to the entire city of Jerusalem (something which I do not think has to

be identical with annexation of the Old City), I nevertheless think that an irredentist Arab minority is of much greater danger to Israel both domestically and in her foreign affairs, than the presence of jet planes, three rather than ten minutes from her cities. The Arab diehards have not left Israel much choice; but Israel has made an almost hopeless situation even more hopeless for the few voices of moderation among the Arabs-- and probably contributed to the fall of moderate governments in Lebanon, for example. It would be unfortunate if a permanent state of war should in the long run poison Israeli society as it is threatening to poison ours. I was encouraged to find that some Israelis see this danger. At the Hebrew University, we met a group of professors who expressed very similar opinions and there is apparently an active group of students and professors at the Hebrew University organized in a society for "Security through Peace." It is also encouraging that Israeli society still permits a high degree of dissent, even in the midst of a state of war, and that the Jerusalem Post, for example, was able to carry advertisements by Jewish and Arab intellectuals and notables openly criticizing the dominant attitude on the border question.