

100 Ivyhurst Road
Buffalo, NY 14226
December 5, 1980

Dear Friends:

It is twenty years since we sent out an annual letter for the first time. We were in France that year, in the village of Le Mee sur Seine -- we could not afford to live in Paris on our small grant -- with our young children and sought in this way to share our experiences with our friends.

Since then time has flown. For Jeremy this has been an eventful year. For a number of years he has been freelancing restaurant and food articles in his free time while working on a doctorate in philosophy at the University of Minnesota and teaching parttime. In May he was offered a staff position on the Detroit Free Press as food editor. The decision to leave Minneapolis and interrupt his studies was not easy, but then Jeremy has always liked to write. You will enjoy the introductory article he wrote for the Free Press. In the meantime another of his leisure time hobbies paid off. You may remember his cheese cake baking enterprise some years ago. This fall Barron's published The Joy of Cheesecake, a cook book coauthored with his friend from his Carleton College days, Dana Bovbjerg, the only cook book I know with a footnoted historical introduction. The book has received quite a bit of publicity -- it is on a Book of the Month ^{club} alternate list -- and Jeremy is spending two weeks traveling through the country from Los Angeles to Charleston, S.C., publicizing the book on local talk shows.

Daniel, who was admitted to the Canadian bar last year, spent a year working on the staff of the Ontario ombudsman in Toronto. The job, which involved primarily research, was not funded for a second year and Dan has just started a job with a lawyer who specializes in criminal law. It is almost two years now since he and Maggie separated and there is no likelihood of the two coming together again. Both are now going their separate ways and Dan since this past summer has been going seriously with a new friend, Janet, who worked with him in the ombudsman's office. We see a lot of Sarah, our granddaughter. She was three in October, is lively, communicative, and affectionate. Sarah spends weekends with Dan. About once, or more often twice, a month Dan comes down to Buffalo with her. Maggie in the meantime has moved to Orillia, where her parents live, eighty miles north of Toronto, and is working again as a social worker.

Jonathan is at home. He has now completed all requirements for the BA at Canisius College and is waiting for a position. Last winter and spring he worked for the county Division of Social Services. This was a temporary job and he is now on the list of persons who took the civil service examination and expects to be called back. The job very much corresponds to his interests. For his BA he had a minor field in urban studies. In the meantime, while waiting, he worked for the U.S. Census and has kept busy with a magazine distribution business he has built up on regional college campuses.

Wilma has been quite busy. Enrollment in Modern Languages at Canisius College, particularly in German, continues to decline. She has very few students but four preparations, and in addition administrat-

ive duties as the director of the office counseling students on graduate school opportunities. Despite this she continues to make progress on her history of the Jews in Bohemia since the Enlightenment. She is planning two volumes, one an anthology of Bohemian Jewish writings, now almost complete, the other a collection of her own essays. I continue to have a group of interested and interesting graduate students, although the number of students in our graduate program is declining as the employment prospects for historians become bleaker. My own research continues to center around the history of history as a discipline since the eighteenth century.

We spent the summer in Göttingen, again staying with Irmgard Bokemeyer in Rauschenwasser. We know Göttingen so well now that we feel very much at home there. It was a very busy summer, much of it spent in the library, but with many opportunities to see good friends and acquaintances. Wilma went to Czechoslovakia the beginning of August both to see friends in her old home region in Western Bohemia and in Prague and to do research in Prague. I picked her up in Prague and we proceeded on the Orient Express, now an incredibly delapidated train, to Romania to the World Historical Congress in Bucharest where I participated in the formation of an international commission devoted to historiography.

Last week for Thanksgiving we had all three boys here. Dan came with Janet and Jeremy was joined by his friend Gail from Minneapolis whom we thus had an opportunity to get to know better.

We are, of course, very much worried what the coming year will bring in the Middle East, in Poland, and elsewhere, including at home. Although we continue to have active concerns with civil rights and peace causes -- I am still on the board of the Buffalo branch of the NAACP and continue to counsel persons in the military on questions of conscience -- we feel much less effective than in the more optimistic days when we were in the South.

Our very best wishes for a peaceful and satisfying New Year and a happy Holiday Season,

George, Wilma
Jonathan

100 Ivyhurst Road
Buffalo, N.Y. 14226
December 1981

Dear Friends,

A few lines to keep you up to date.

Our most important news is Dan's upcoming marriage on January 23. In our letter last year we mentioned his friendship with Janet. They have been together now for well over a year and they seem very well suited to each other. Dan met Janet when he worked at the Ombudsman's Office where she was then a researcher and is now coordinator of research. Both have a lot of common interests, intellectual, cultural, and not least important, Sarah. Sarah and Janet have a good relationship. Sarah lives with Maggie in Hamilton during the week but spends three weekends a month with Dan and Janet. Sarah, who just turned four, is bright, cheerful, and affectionate and seems to reflect no scars of her parents' separation. We see quite a lot of her and of Dan, who brings her to Buffalo frequently. In June Sarah upon her initiative spent a week with us and will be staying with us again during the spring vacation. Dan, who is not very fond of legal practice, worked briefly with a law firm after leaving the Ombudsman's Office and since spring has been working as an editor for a legal publisher in Toronto, a position more to his liking.

Jeremy enjoys his work at the Detroit Free Press. He writes a weekly food page with much wit and imagination. The cheese cake cookbook has been a success, over eighty thousand copies have been sold to date. He is less pleased with being in Detroit where he is isolated from his Minneapolis friends, particularly Gail, and manages to spend a fair number of weekends in Minneapolis. He is now negotiating with the Free Press about released time to enable him to complete his dissertation. Given the difficult employment situation in philosophy and his desire to write, he will undoubtedly stay in journalism. Jeremy's latest idea for a book is a cookbook written jointly with Wilma. Jeremy devoted his Mother's day column to Wilma's cooking. The idea is to collect recipes from Wilma's relatives and reproduce them with a narrative reflecting something of the Bohemian-Jewish milieu from which she comes. It should be a fun project and should produce an interesting book. Wilma is already at work on it.

Jonathan, who is at home, completed his last requirements for the BA and received the degree from Canisius College in May. Since the employment situation is extremely difficult, he has created his own job. He continues to do postering for magazines, courses, and trips at the various area colleges, which brings him a modest income. His main activity, however, consists in renting housing to students. With a very small capital together with a friend he has bought a number of old houses with small downpayments and large mortgages.

The houses, four so far, are all within walking distance from the Main Street campus of the university. With the acute shortage of student housing, he has had no difficulty finding tenants.

Wilma remains very busy. In addition to her courses, she has continued to direct the graduate fellowship advisement office at Canisius. As the enrollment in modern languages has declined, the school has assigned administrative duties to the members of the modern languages department. Wilma has been quite active with her scholarship. In the last several weeks she has given papers at conferences in California, Wisconsin, and New York state and is now preparing a discussion she is to lead at the Leo Baeck Institute (for the history of the German - Speaking Jews) in New York City this March. We were very pleased when she received an acceptance from C.H. Beck, one of the most prestigious German publishers, for the annotated anthology on the history of the Jews in the Czech lands on which she has been working for the past several years.

I enjoy my teaching. Despite the dismal employment prospects for our doctoral candidates, I still have a number of very good graduate students and my Monday night seminars, held in our living room, continue to be lively. An exchange program, begun several years ago on a very modest scale between our graduate department and one of the German universities (T H Darmstadt) has brought a steady, even if small, flow of students from Germany, all of whom we have gotten to know very well, to Buffalo and taken our students to Germany. My own research is progressing more slowly than I would desire. I am particularly interested in the history of historical writing since the Enlightenment and have been writing a number of essays which will ultimately form the basis of a book. An outgrowth of my work in Göttingen two years ago was an international conference this summer in Göttingen on Enlightenment historiography in Germany. My main involvement in the community has been the NAACP, of which I have been an active member for over three decades. I have worked very closely with the Health Committee this past year which has investigated health conditions at the famous, or rather infamous Attica prison near Buffalo and succeeded, much to our pleasant surprise, in interesting both the Attica authorities and the Buffalo medical school in establishing a clinical program for advanced medical students. Since this September, I have been chairman of our department, really my first administrative experience of any sort. It took a good deal of persuasion to get me to consider the chairmanship at a difficult time for the department which has been badly split in the past. So far the chairmanship has been a relatively pleasant experience. I have an excellent administrative assistant who has handled most of the bureaucratic paperwork so that my duties have not been as time consuming as I had feared. And relationships in the department have been quite harmonious so far.

In May I went to Little Rock for two days at the invitation of Philander Smith College. It has been twenty-five years since we left Little Rock and I am pleased that our relationship with the school continues including the almost annual visitation. In June Wilma and I drove to Champaign, Ill. to combine a

visit to Wilma's sister and brother-in-law with a use of the library. It was a very pleasant visit notwithstanding that Bob was receiving treatments in preparation for an operation later in the summer for what was thought to be a very localized malignancy. Little did we anticipate that he would not survive the operation. At the end of July we flew to Germany. We did not stay with Irmgard this time in Rauschenwasser although we saw quite a bit of her but for convenience sake we stayed in Göttingen itself at the house of friends who were on vacation. I remained in Göttingen during most of our stay preparing my paper for the conference. Wilma went to West and East Berlin and Munich to use archives and libraries. She did not go to Czechoslovakia this time but visited friends from her childhood days who had been relocated to Southern Germany after the war and two of whom she had not seen since her emigration from Czechoslovakia in 1938. As you know, after these many years we feel very much at home in Göttingen where we have both good friends and opportunity to do our research. Both Wilma and I have grants to return there next summer.

We look forward to hearing from you. Our very best wishes to you and your families for a happy holiday season and a year of peace and well being.

The Iggers Family,

Georg, Wilma + Jonathan

We seem to have misplaced your home address.
How is your mother? It was good to see you last

December.

All the best,

Gay and Wilma

100 Ivyhurst Road
Buffalo, NY 14226
November 25, 1982

1982

Dear Friends:

It is Thanksgiving. Wilma just left for a weekend conference in New York, and I shall fill out the loneliness of the evening by communicating with you.

This has been a full year, but personally for all of us a good one. The year began with Dan and Janet's wedding in a blizzard in Janet's parents' country house in the hills north of Toronto, a simple ceremony, which they had selected, with the closest family and friends there. Sarah was there too, all excited, and sang "Let There be Peace on Earth." Sarah seems to live well with the idea that, as she says, she has two sets of parents -- Maggie has also remarried. Sarah lives with Maggie in Hamilton but spends three weekends a month with Dan and Janet in Toronto. We see quite a bit of her and Dan and Janet, and Sarah feels very much at home here. She just turned five now, is articulate, intellectually curious, and affectionate. Dan is still working as an editor for Carswell, the Canadian legal publisher, enjoys the work more now than he did at first and prefers it to practicing law.

Jeremy continues as food writer for the Detroit Free Press. He does it with a good deal of imagination and humor. Some of his columns have been syndicated throughout the country, and you may have seen them. He enjoys his writing, is less fond of Detroit and manages to spend a fair amount of time in Minneapolis where his circle of friends is. He would like to work part time for the paper, in order to follow his various projects which include completing his dissertation on journalistic ethics at the University of Minnesota and other writing plans. The Joy of Cheesecake continues to do well, and he is now working with Wilma on an ethnic cookbook which will seek to capture the lost atmosphere of the Bohemia she knew.

Jonathan, who still lives at home, is quite busy with his houses and with postering advertisements for magazines, travels and courses in colleges throughout this part of the state. He began buying houses together with a friend on small down payments and high mortgages in the area near the old university campus. At present he owns and manages seven older houses which he rents to students. He had begun this after his job with the county division of social services was discontinued two years ago. He has now been offered a new position with the division of social services and is scheduled to begin this coming Monday.

Wilma has received a contract from G.H. Beck, a leading West German publisher, for her anthology on the Bohemian Jews since the Enlightenment. She has been extremely busy, too busy, with the manuscript which she hopes to submit in summer. In addition she has a full load of classes at Canisius College and some administrative responsibilities. She has a wealth of material for her volume and now faces the painful task of eliminating texts. The volume will have a quite extensive historical introduction. Her relaxation consists of working on the

cookbook with Jeremy and visiting every possible garage sale. And, of course, she enjoys spending time with her granddaughter.

I am now in the middle of the second year of my three year term as chairman of my department. The department had been badly split in the past, and I accepted the responsibility with some apprehension. Actually I have found my work in the chairmanship quite pleasant. I have been able to delegate power and have had very good support from my colleagues and an excellent administrative assistant. My own research has been proceeding slowly. This summer in Göttingen I continued writing new concluding chapters for my two historiographical volumes which are reappearing. I continue to have a small circle of good graduate students with whom I work very closely. On Monday nights my graduate seminar meets here in our living room, by now an old institution. My community work is now mostly restricted to the Buffalo branch of the NAACP and an occasional military counseling case.

This summer we were in Europe again. We had hoped to go to Italy together where I attended a conference on theory of history in Turin. Something came up, however, which made Wilma delay her trip, the installation of her father, who had died twenty-eight years ago, into the Ontario Agricultural Hall of Fame, an occasion for a family gathering which I unfortunately missed. Wilma joined me right afterwards in Germany where, as usual, we met our circle of students in Darmstadt, both Buffalo students who are studying there, and the Darmstadt students who have been here in Buffalo as part of an exchange between the two history departments which has functioned very well. The students have become good friends. We arrived just in time for the wedding of two Darmstadt students who had spent two years in Buffalo. The major part of the remaining summer we spent in Göttingen which has become almost a second home to us. We again stayed with our good friend Irmgard Bokemeyer in Rauschenwasser, but spent several weeks apartment sitting in Göttingen for two sets of friends on vacation. Irmgard, who was full of energy and enthusiasm this summer despite her 76 years, has unfortunately been quite disabled since our departure, with a very painful bone condition. Our basis of operation was the Max Planck Institute for History where we always find a very congenial and stimulating circle of discussion partners. In Göttingen, as usual, we combined intensive work with a good deal of sociability. In early July we went to East Germany for several days where I lectured in Leipzig and Berlin. Again we appreciated the human and scholarly contacts. I have been a frequent guest in Leipzig, and I was pleased we could reciprocate this October when colleagues from the GDR (East Germany) came for lectures and discussions to Buffalo. Incidentally, this semester we also have had a visiting professor from Peking in our department, a remarkably open, well informed scholar, who has interacted very well with our colleagues and whom we have come to know well.

As usual our house has been a lively place. The children have been here often. Sarah spent a week with us in spring. We have had a steady flow of visitors from Germany. In turn we seldom spent a night in a hotel over there. In September my cousin visited us from Australia with his son and, although we had not seen each other since we were children in Germany forty-four years ago, we immediately realized that we shared very similar values and interests.

Our best wishes to you for the holiday period and for a New Year which will hopefully see progress towards international reconciliation.

George Wilma Jonathan
the Igers Family

100 Ivyhurst Road
Buffalo, NY 14226
December 4, 1983

Dear Friends:

It is a quiet Sunday morning and I am sitting in the empty departmental office practicing on the new word processor. This is my second attempt on this ingenious machine. I had almost completed the letter yesterday when I hit a wrong key and lost it.

This has again been a busy year. Wilma in particular has been very occupied. In addition to a full teaching load at Canisius College, she continues to be graduate fellowship advisor, a task which involves a good deal of counseling, which she enjoys but which also takes much time. She is still busy with her book on the Bohemian Jews. She has a complete manuscript, but it is much too long and she is now making final revisions. The book is to appear in German in 1985 with C.H. Beck, one of the most renowned German publishers. This is a work of love but also a memorial to a community which no longer exists. On the less scholarly side, Wilma is working with Jeremy on a Bohemian cookbook which combines recipes with her recollections of the world she knew.

This is my third and last year of my term as chairman of my department. I accepted the position with a good deal of apprehension, since I had no administrative experience and no inclinations in this direction. Actually I have enjoyed my term. I have had very good cooperation from colleagues who in the past have often been badly divided and the guidance of an excellent administrative assistant, who has been with the department for over twenty years and has not only handled much of the bureaucratic work but given me valuable advice. But the chairmanship has taken a good deal of time. I have had relatively little time for my writing and reading. Further time has been taken up with close work with a number of interesting graduate students. I look forward to our sabbatical 1985-1986, which we intend to spend in Goettingen and Berlin, to return seriously to my research and writing.

We have been fortunate that we have seen a lot of our children and our granddaughter. Jonathan still lives at home. He too is very busy. He has been working for over a year now in the county's division of social services as a welfare examiner, often a very taxing job. In his sparetime he continues to manage the student housing he acquired when he was without a position and to handle the postering of advertisement material at the various colleges in the area. Daniel in Toronto started a new position in spring with the Law Society of Upper Canada which he enjoys. He is secretary to the society's discipline committee and sits in on all disciplinary hearings and then formulates the opinions. Janet, his wife, has resigned her position as a director of research in the Ontario ombudsman's office and is expecting a child in April, our second grandchild. We have a very nice relationship with

Sarah, our granddaughter now six years old and in first grade. She spends every other weekend with Dan and Janet; the rest of the time she lives with her mother in Hamilton with whom we are on friendly terms. Sarah is alert and affectionate. Dan and Janet bring her to Buffalo approximately once a month and in between we see her occasionally in Toronto or Hamilton. Jeremy continues as food writer for the Detroit Free Press. He has negotiated an arrangement with the paper by which he works a reduced schedule. This permits him to turn to his other interests. He freelances. He is working on a book on journalistic ethics which may become the basis for his dissertation. He has been fascinated by the idea of founding a small brewery and in connection with this has visited not only small breweries in this country but in Europe. For the time being the idea seems too risky but will probably result in a book on beer. His cheese cake cookbook continues to do very well. At the latest count over 135,000 copies had been printed.

We again did a fair amount of traveling. In May I was in Little Rock on my annual visit as a guest of and consultant to Philander Smith College. It has been twenty-seven years since Wilma and I taught there and I am very pleased that this relationship, strengthened by our involvement in the civil rights movement at the time has continued. During July and most of August we were in Europe. Upon our arrival in Frankfurt we were met by various of our students from Darmstadt with whom we spent two days. Buffalo has had a small but active exchange initiated at the Buffalo end by me with the Technical University in Darmstadt. We have become good friends with most of the German and American students who have participated the exchange. Next we went to nearby Offenbach to visit our good friend Irmgard Bokemeyer with whom we lived in Rauschenwasser on our various stays short or long in Goettingen. Irmgard as a result of poor health, she is now in her upper seventies but still very actively interested in family and friends but also her many peace and social justice concerns, has moved to her son in Offenbach. She accompanied us nevertheless to Goettingen. In Goettingen this time we stayed with the Friedrich family, the children of Heide Friedrich, a survivor of Nazi prisons very active until her death two years ago in civil liberties and pacifist concerns and in Jewish-Christian reconciliation. We have known her since our first stay in Goettingen and her children have since then become good friends. Dagmar Friedrich, herself an editor for a publishing house, helped Wilma edit her manuscript. Goettingen, as you know, has become a second home to us over the past twenty years both in terms of human contacts and scholarly relations. I again, as in previous years, enjoyed the hospitality of the Max Planck Institute for History which has been very valuable to me not only as a place to work but also to discuss my own work. Our stay in Goettingen was interrupted by two trips, one to a small international conference on historiography, well attended by Western and Eastern scholars, in Montpellier in Southern France, the other as guests of the Academy of Sciences of the German Democratic Republic. I have been instrumental in arranging visits of GDR scholars to the United States and this trip gave us an opportunity to continue and expand scholarly contacts and to see friends. Next summer we shall probably not go to Goettingen. I have been invited to go to China on a lecture trip as part of an exchange between the Peking municipal

university system and Buffalo. Wilma will accompany me and hopefully lecture too. We expect to be in Peking from the middle of May to the end of June.

I cannot complete this letter without expressing our deep concern about the international situation. We are deeply worried about the impasse in the nuclear talks and the beginnings of a new armament race, and about the attempts by all sides, whether in Poland, Central America and the Carribean, or the Middle East, to solve political problems by military force. And finally, we are troubled as Jews with an attachment to Israel by the settlement policy which denies the right of self-determination which should be guaranteed to Jews, Palestinians, and Lebanese alike.

To all of you, all the best for the holiday season and the New Year.

The Iggers Family

George, Wilma

Jonathan

100 Ivyhurst Road
Buffalo NY 14226
November 23, 1984

Dear Friends:

These letters are perhaps a lazy way out. Yet they do give us an opportunity to communicate with you at least once a year more extensively than is possible by individual letters. This has been a very full and interesting year for us. Briefly our main family news. The most important event was the birth of Kelly Anne, our second grandchild, to Daniel and Janet in Toronto. Kelly arrived, five weeks early but perfectly healthy, three minutes after midnight on March 6, the sesquicentennial of the City of Toronto. As the first child to be born on that memorable day she was greeted in the morning to the surprise of her parents by the Mayor of Toronto in person, TV cameras, and presented with a savings account of \$1.800 by a Toronto trust company. We have seen quite a bit of her and Sarah, who just turned seven, since then. Sarah lives with her mother in Hamilton but spends every second weekend with Daniel and Janet. We see them either here or in Toronto once or twice a month. We very much appreciate the close relationship which we have with Sarah. We also are on good terms with Maggie, Sarah's mother, and her new husband and occasionally meet Sarah with them in Hamilton or in a restaurant halfway between Buffalo and Hamilton.

Our children are well. Jeremy has very recently worked out an arrangement which permits him to work half-time as food writer for the Detroit Free Press and the other half as restaurant critic for the Minneapolis Star and Tribune. He has always wanted to return to Minneapolis, where he still has a large circle of friends from his student days and where he wants to renew contact with the university. Jonathan, who continues to live at home, continues to be very busy with his triple occupation, his job as a welfare examiner with the county, his houses, and a magazine distribution business he has had since his student days. Daniel enjoys his work on the discipline committee of the Law Society of Upper Canada. Janet two weeks ago returned to work part-time in her former position as a researcher for the Ombudsman of Ontario.

We had promised many of you an account of our trip to the Far East. Such an account necessarily has to be very subjective. We knew too little about China and Japan to be keen observers. Nevertheless here are our main experiences and impressions. We visited China as part of an exchange agreement between the university in Buffalo and the Beijing (Peking) Municipal System of Higher Education. On May 12 we flew from Toronto to Hong Kong where we stayed with a friend of Jeremy and where I gave a lecture at the Chinese University. One of the Hong Kong Chinese students accompanied us on an excursion to Portuguese Macao. On May 17 we flew to Beijing. At the airport we were met by Prof. Qi Shirong, who had become a good friend when he spent half a year in Buffalo as a visiting professor in our department on the exchange, our interpreter Zhou who had earned an M.A. in American history at SUNY Cortland and very quickly became a good friend in Beijing, my Buffalo colleague Roger Des Forges who had spent the year in Beijing with his family, and our

graduate student Rodney Becker who too had spent the year in Beijing. These personal contacts were very helpful in enabling us to establish contacts with Chinese scholars and students and to gain some sort of understanding of our Chinese surroundings. It was very good to have the Des Forges there, who all four spoke Chinese fluently -- Alison had taught African history at Beijing University during the year, and the children had attended a Chinese public school-- and who spent a lot of time to show us various aspects of Beijing and to introduce us to their many Chinese acquaintances. We obtained a lot of insights into Chinese life from our interpreter Zhou who was very candid and often critical of Chinese conditions. Another very useful contact was Zhang Zhilian, a professor of history at Beijing University, a highly cultured person and scholar of the old school, educated in France and England before the revolution, whom we had met in Europe last year, and who not only spent time with us in Beijing but had me speak in his classes.

Qi had arranged a very full schedule of lectures not only for me but also for Wilma who was not officially a part of the exchange. This was good because it gave us an excellent opportunity to meet colleagues and students. Both Wilma and I lectured at Beijing University and Beijing Teachers College, our formal host, I also at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and Wilma at the Foreign Languages Institute, four very different institutions in terms of level and constituencies, undergraduates at the teachers college and the foreign language institute, advanced and graduate students at the university, and researchers at the academy. In my case my hosts were particularly interested in having me talk about current trends in historical studies in the West. I was also asked at all three institutions to give a lecture I had proposed but which I thought would be too sensitive on the role of Marxism in contemporary Western historical studies which also involved an examination of the tradition of Western Marxism. I had my largest audience, perhaps three hundred with persons standing in the hall, on this topic at the teachers college. There were very lively discussions and at Beijing University I was invited by the students to an all afternoon discussion session. The discussions were open and undogmatic. Wilma was asked to speak on themes in modern German literature in German to the students in the German program. She spoke on Stefan Zweig, Karl Kraus, Thomas Mann and the Prague Circle and was surprised not only about the proficiency of the students in German but about their acquaintance with German literature and the general sophistication. She also gave a lecture in English on her work on the Bohemian Jews, which must have seemed exotic to the Chinese but attracted a good audience and was followed by good questions. The lectures gave us an opportunity to meet colleagues on a formal level at the numerous banquets given by the various institutions in our honor -- we have never been hosted that well anywhere-- but also to meet students informally. A fair number of students came to see us at the hotel to continue discussion although the authorities discouraged such contacts and the students had to fill out long forms at the gate to the hotel to be permitted to see us. A number of these students have written to us since our return.

We were able to move freely within Beijing and for our purposes in the country. Almost all cities are open for travel; only travel in the

countryside is still carefully restricted. In Beijing we were housed in the Friendship Hotel, a large campus of buildings built in the 1950's by the Soviets, old fashioned but comfortable, somewhat isolated in the northwestern outskirts of the city but easily accessible by bus. In this compound hundreds of foreign experts live and eat, some on short term exchanges like us, others who are almost permanent. In other cities too we were put up in special hotels for foreigners. With the very minimal conversational Chinese we had learned we were able to move freely through the city. Our interpreter accompanied us only on a few occasions, a trip to the Great Wall and one to an urban commune which we had requested. In the country too we moved freely and made an excursion on a local bus to a tea growing village near Hanzhou. We had been told not to expect to be invited into any homes, but this turned out not to be true. We actually visited eight. Homes are tiny and often in state of poor repair, too small to entertain, although a couple at the teachers college fed us a wonderful meal in their tiny apartment in which the living room also served as bed room. On two occasions we were invited out to a restaurant and then taken to the home to meet the family. A student at Beijing University sent us to visit her family on our trip to Xi'an. A family spoke to us in English in a park in Beijing and invited us to visit them. In fact frequently people began conversations in English on the street. In Hanzhou we spent most of the evening with two students who talked freely about everything from student life and politics to the relation of the sexes in China.

Most of our stay was spent in Beijing. After three and a half weeks there, we went on a two week trip through the country. We were completely free to plan our trip. As a matter of fact an itinerary, as required in some Eastern European countries, was impossible because the limited booking facilities permitted one only to book one stretch of a trip at a time. Advance reservations at hotels were generally not possible. Travel therefore was an adventure in a country where few people speak Western languages. In a few cities we were able to arrange to be met at the station by a representative of the travel agency, in most we managed with our virtually non-existing Chinese and the friendly assistance of the people whom we asked for directions. From Beijing we flew to Xi'an, the ancient capital, where we also saw the terra cotta soldiers, and then proceeded East by train. Again we had an opportunity to meet people. In Kaifeng, the center for many centuries of the now non-existent Jewish community, Roger Des Forges met us and introduced us to colleagues with whom we had long conversations; in Nanjing (Nanking) I lectured; in Shanghai we were met by one of the students who had come to my lectures in Beijing. Our stops in Suzhou and Hanzhou were essentially tourism. We walked for hours and hours through these two cities in which the beauty of classical Chinese landscaping is best exemplified. From Hanzhou we took a twenty-seven hour train trip back to Beijing which permitted us an interesting look at the Chinese countryside, thousands of men and women working in the fields, with no machinery and only an occasional water buffalo.

We are hardly in a position to make broad observations about Chinese society. Let me, however, sum up some of our very subjective impressions. We were very much impressed by the cordiality with which we were received. Some of this cordiality took on a very formal form, in

some of the banquets, but much of it went beyond this. Considering how different and unique the culture is, we felt very much at home. China is a very poor country. The relative lack of technology as exemplified by the heavy loads pulled in the streets not only by animals but by people reflects this poverty. But one sees no poor people -- at least in the cities and the one village we visited. Everywhere there are masses of people moving on the street; they are simply but well dressed and look remarkably healthy. We saw no beggars as we did in Macao. Food seems to be adequate. There are undoubtedly pockets of privilege but this relatively equal distribution appears as an achievement of socialism. The one area in which there is still real deprivation is in housing, which is often squalid and crowded -- mostly one story houses built around court yards along lanes -- despite the tremendous amount of building, mostly functional but unaesthetic high rises, which takes place everywhere. Sanitary facilities are still inadequate. Our interpreter, who has a two room apartment in a high rise with his wife, two teenage children and his parents -- he shares kitchen and toilet with several other families -- regretted that he could not invite us into his home but did manage to take Wilma to his aunt's house.

On the political and economic level a lot is changing. Again our observations are very impressionistic. Discussion appears to be much more open than it must have been a few years ago. Almost everyone talked with horror of the period of the cultural revolution. We, of course, associated with a relatively restricted group of people, at the universities, those who were most directly affected by the cultural revolution. Not only were the older academics and teachers affected -- families were separated for many years -- but we met a number of students in their thirties who had been taken out of middle school at the time and only recently returned to their studies. There is an unusually large number of unmarried persons in their thirties as a result of the upheavals, a social problem which is regularly discussed in the press. There is unanimous consensus that there must not be a return to the intellectual repression and the arbitrary invasion into personal life which marked the cultural revolution. Discussion now is very open. Even the official English-language China Daily carries extensive criticisms of party and bureaucracy as did the one Chinese movie we saw (with translation on ear phones). The students certainly did not hesitate to speak openly and critically. On the other hand much of the old political infrastructure is still in place. Every Chinese is attached to a work unit which has considerable control not only over his work but his personal life. Within the universities, and I understand in industrial and agricultural enterprises as well, there is a party administration parallel to the ordinary administration. Almost all Chinese are expected to go to political orientation sessions once a week. One disturbing note are the many executions of persons accused of crimes, some of which according to our discussants involved sexual behavior which was considered deviant. On the economic level too there are marked changes. Small private enterprises are flourishing from the large free markets which are everywhere to the small stands on the street. The China Daily almost every day discusses large scale economic reforms, competitive bidding, stress on efficiency, production for the market. The communes have been dissolved, or rather reorganized, to permit peasants to produce for the market. Consumer goods are still in

very short supply but increasing and according to the China Daily approximately 90% of Beijing households now have television. Washing machines and even refrigerators are no longer rare. Most persons we talked to agreed that there had been a remarkable increase in the standard of living in the last few years. There is still considerable youth unemployment -- officially not identified as unemployment but as waiting for employment. Everywhere there is talk of the need of modernization. It will be interesting to see what sort of a synthesis of socialist planning and a market economy will emerge in China and whether China in its rush for modernization will be able to avoid the dislocations which have marked this process in the developed world.

On Friday, June 29 we flew to Osaka for a one-week stay in Japan, which while very different from our stay in China was also fantastic. At the airport Prof. Akira Hayashima, whom we had met only once in Germany many years ago but with whom we had been corresponding, was waiting for us. Again we were overwhelmed by the cordiality with which we were received. Prof. Hayashima took us to his apartment in suburban Osaka for a wonderful Japanese supper with his family. The next morning he picked us up from our ryokan (Japanese inn) and showed us both modern and ancient Osaka. In Osaka and generally in Japan we were impressed by the way in which the ultramodern was blended everywhere with the traditional with a strong sense for the aesthetic. On Sunday morning Hayashima accompanied us to Kyoto, the ancient capital where we spent the next four days. Our stay there was very well planned. We were met by colleagues who showed us the city and its surroundings. On Monday afternoon I spoke to the Japanese association of historians of Modern Germany on recent German historiography - a two hour lecture (with Japanese interpretation) which was followed by a two hour discussion in German and by a further discussion in the evening after a sumptuous Japanese dinner. After a day of sightseeing in Kyoto, we left on the bullet train for Tokyo where we were met by Prof. Yamanouchi, with whom I had been in correspondence over the years, and his colleague Prof. Goldberg who has taught in Tokyo for many years. Here I spoke to a group of historians interested in contemporary Western historiography, several of whom were particularly interested in the social history of the French Annales circle. Here again there were long discussions followed by a dinner and further discussions, this time in English and French. Sightseeing in downtown Tokyo on Friday, including an exhibit of Chinese and Japanese art, concluded our visit.

Since then we have returned to our normal routine of work. A few days after returning from Japan, I flew to England for a brief meeting of a small international commission on historiography of which I am a member, an opportunity to see both friends and relatives. Unfortunately I did not have time, as I had hoped, to combine the trip to England with a visit to Germany to see friends. Just before going to China I had been to Little Rock again as a guest of Philander Smith College, the school where Wilma and I had taught in the 1950's at the time of the civil rights movement. In September my term as chairman of the department expired, a position which I had very much enjoyed in terms of the human relations aspects, although I had accepted it very reluctantly, but which also involved innumerable committee meetings which I was glad to relinquish. The burden of the administrative

responsibilities had been very much lightened by the very efficient work of our long time departmental administrative assistant, Kay Becker, without whose advice and assistance I would have found the chairmanship very difficult. Wilma is very busy, teaching three courses, administering the graduate fellowships office, and in addition working on her research. She has several commitments to read papers during this academic year. She is not very happy with her situation at Canisius College. She feels that despite her long tenure the administration has little understanding for her work. She was understandably very much disappointed that she was denied the sabbatical for the coming academic year to which she should have been entitled. Her book on the Bohemian Jews is completed and at the publishers, C.H.Beck, in Munich and she is now planning several smaller projects on Bohemian and German Jewish writers and on the Czech Nobel laureate Seifert.

I enjoy my own work. My teaching, although consisting of only two courses, one advanced undergraduate, the other graduate, takes considerable time, particularly since I work very closely with my students. I still have a relatively large number of graduate students working with me at a time when the number of graduate students is declining. I have also been very much involved in our exchange of graduate students with the Technical University in Darmstadt, West Germany, an exchange which is now in its tenth year. This exchange has been very rewarding also in human terms. We have had a regular flow of European and Israeli visitors, both guest speakers and personal friends, largely from the Federal Republic but in the last several years also from the GDR, exchanges which have been very fruitful. I continue to be active in the interracial work of the local NAACP and still counsel conscientious objectors in the military although the demand for such counseling has decreased in recent years.

During the coming academic year, we shall be in Europe. I shall have a sabbatical and Wilma will take a leave without pay. The leave will be particularly important for Wilma. She has been under considerate pressure of work and her health has not been perfect. This summer, after our return from the Far East, she was hospitalized with angina pectoris pains. She has led a very normal life since then but should undoubtedly avoid the heavy burden of work and particularly the stress to which she is subject at Canisius. We shall be in West Berlin at the Historical Commission from June to early September and then plan to spend the remainder of our leave in Goettingen. If my applications for grants are successful, we expect to stay in Goettingen for the entire academic year; if they are not we may return for the second semester. I hope to complete my reading and the writing for the nineteenth-century German section of my history of modern Western historiography. In any case we hope to return sometime during the year to see our children and grandchildren.

Our very best wishes to all of you for the holiday season and for a year of peace.

Faithfully,

George Wilma

Buffalo, December 21, 1985

Dear Friends:

Our annual letter this year will reach you late. I just returned from Europe a few days ago; Wilma is still on her way. For the past three months, we were in the GDR (East Germany). Wilma had applied for an exchange grant to Leipzig under the IREX program (which operates similarly to the Fulbright program, but with the socialist countries in Eastern Europe) to work in Leipzig on an early twentieth-century woman writer and feminist, Grete Meisel-Hess, born in Prague but active in Berlin, who was quite well known in her day but is almost totally unknown today. Wilma is interested in reconstructing the world in which she moved. She received the fellowship for a three month period from September 20 to December 20. I joined her for most of the period, interrupted only by brief trips I had to make to West Germany. We were put up in a private home in Taucha, a small town at the end of the streetcar line to Leipzig, so that we had a good opportunity to observe life in the GDR. The reception we received was truly overwhelming. Foreigners from the West are still a rarity. During our stay we met a tremendous number of people, both scholars directly related to our work and others. I also had an invitation from the Academy of Sciences in (East) Berlin and from the History Department at the Karl Marx University in Leipzig who arranged not only for formal lectures and discussions but also for meetings with scholars whom we wanted to meet elsewhere in the country. The academy and university arranged for two extensive discussions of my project which were not only very open but very useful. Both of us were invited to participate in ongoing study groups. For the first time I also had an opportunity to lecture to students in Leipzig and Jena. On previous visits I had always spoken to closed circles of scholars with few students present. At all times Wilma and I spoke very openly and critically from an outlook which, of course, differed fundamentally sharply from the established position. Particularly in front of students I contrasted the ways in which historical studies were pursued in the West, stressing the pluralism of viewpoints. There were always very lively discussions.

We met, however, other people quite apart from our scholarly contacts. On Rosh Hashanah we went to the services in East Berlin where we know the cantor very well. On Yom Kippur we went to the synagogue in Leipzig and after the

fast at a communal meal met most of the miniscule congregation, which now has only 41 members -- Leipzig before the Nazis had more than 17,000 Jews. The core of the congregation consists now of elderly survivors of the holocaust with very few younger persons. Many of the participants in the service were Protestants, including the superb choir, and in fact the Protestant community has in a sense adopted the Jewish congregation in Leipzig which is now barely viable. The Arbeitskreis Kirche und Judentum, which corresponds roughly to the Council of Christians and Jews here and the Gesellschaft für christlich-jüdische Zusammenarbeit is very active in seeking to keep an awareness of Jewish tradition alive in the GDR. We were very much impressed by the contacts we had with people in the Protestant Church, which now, that church membership can bring with it social and economic disadvantages, contains a very committed group of people, many of whom are young. The Church has been able to maintain a sphere of freedom which is absent in other sectors of GDR life. Whatever there is of a peace movement or an environmental movement takes place within the Church. Thus the Arbeitskreis was able to hold an evening with a retired bishop who had just returned from a visit to Israel and who spoke in an open and balanced manner which contrasted with the very one-sided line followed in the GDR media. There were several hundred persons in attendance. The highpoint of our stay was, however, the invitation we received to meet with young pacifists facing military service. This meeting, followed by an evening with parishioners in a small circle, took place in a church in a small town some distance from Leipzig.

On the human level the stay was exhilarating. We were shown tremendous hospitality and cordiality. Friendships which had existed from our previous visits were strengthened and many of our contacts will continue. We tried to spend as much time as possible in the Deutsche Bücherei (the German National Library) which was open until ten at night and incidentally is a very pleasant and in contrast to other national libraries a totally unbureaucratic place to work. But we were invited to homes on many evenings or were in the theater or at concerts. Culturally Leipzig is very much alive with music and theater in Leipzig, with almost all performances sold out well in advance but friends managed to get us tickets.

So far the positive aspects of our stay which also reflect positively on the GDR. But now to the negative aspects, which did not effect us directly, but which make life difficult for people in the GDR. At the core of these

problems is the dictatorship which effects intellectual, cultural, and economic life. The dictatorship is of course an expression of the lack of freedom of action which the government has as a part of its dependence on the Soviet Union. The Soviet presence is very much in evidence throughout the GDR even if there are almost no contacts on the personal level between the Soviet garrison and the population. There is a striking contrast between the official pronouncements and what people, even those closest to the party, not only think but say in private. There is almost a complete consensus among all groups of the population with whom we spoke on domestic policy. People speak with an amazing openness and lack of fear even in public places like trains and restaurants. The bitterest complaint is about the restrictions on travel. Almost no one takes the media seriously; virtually the entire population receives its information from West German TV or radio -- and watches "Dallas." Yet there are pressures for conformity. No open opposition is tolerated. The price of political nonconformity is professional discrimination, no access to the university or to apprenticeship, for example. You must be a Marxist, and in almost all cases a party member, to be able to teach history at the university. The one professed non-Marxist historian I know, a scholar of international renown, teaches at a very modest salary at a theological faculty financed by the church. At the same time, many historians are doing very solid scholarly work and the communication between historians in the GDR and in the Western countries has become much less polemical and increasingly productive for both sides. There is also consensus that the narrowminded policies of government and party have resulted in economic inefficiencies and backwardness. The GDR is by no means a poor country. GDR citizens enjoy a comfortable standard of living, even if one not comparable with West Germany or the U.S. Despite the proletarian exterior, there is much in the life of at least the professional groups which reminds one of the solid middle classes in an older pre-consumerite age, particularly in their concern with classical culture, the love of books, music, and theater. The basic commodities, rent, and transportation are amazingly inexpensive; luxury goods such as automobiles, for which there is ten to fourteen-year waiting period, and color TVs are extremely expensive but many people have them. At the same time, the distribution system is erratic so that many items are often unavailable. Working morale is low because there are few incentives for initiative. The small private sector tends to be

immeasurably more productive than the public one. Repair services are unreliable and often have to be lubricated with West German Marks, the second, even if unofficial, currency. The center of Leipzig has been rebuilt very tastefully; the rest of the city is drab, with facades of once elegant buildings crumbling and many houses boarded up. The pollution is terrible, intensified by the extensive mining and burning of brown coal. Any open citizens initiatives for environmental protection are out of the question. The apartments we visited behind the dirty facades were almost all attractive, the work of the tenants. On the positive side, the GDR has eliminated the pockets of poverty which we have taken so much for granted in this country -- although some of the pensioners live close to the poverty line -- and there is no unemployment. On foreign policy there is also a remarkable consensus, from supporters and critics of the regime, a fear of the armament race, and a particular fear of the impetus which SDI will give to this race. It is unfortunate that the regime remains so rigid. An opening towards greater civil liberties and economic pragmatism would undoubtedly strengthen the support for the state without sacrificing its socialist structure.

Like last year, this letter concentrates on travel. In spring, over the Easter vacations, we were in the Far East for the second time in a year, this time in South Korea and Taiwan where both of us lectured. This was an interesting time to be in South Korea, shortly after the elections in which the opposition did so well. On request I gave lectures on the same topics on which I had spoken in the People's Republic of China, on trends in recent social history including the role of Marxist theory in contemporary Western historical studies. The discussions in Seoul and Taegu were lively and reminded me of those I had in Beijing which too were very open. In fact the intellectual atmosphere at the universities seemed remarkably critical and invigorating considering the repressive political atmosphere. Again our hosts were wonderful. The trip itself had been organized by a professor of German social history whom we had known in Göttingen many years ago. It was good to see again the circle of Korean scholars whom we had met in Germany. Unfortunately we had only ten days in the country but these days were well planned so that we saw quite a bit. The industrial development is impressive although we were also told of the problems which accompany such rapid industrialization. From Seoul we flew to Taiwan to visit a doctoral student of mine, his wife, who is also in the doctoral program in Buffalo, and their children who had all

been in Buffalo. Again the reception was overwhelming. Our short three day visit was very well planned, with one day of lectures in Taichung, where my student teaches, one seeing something of the countryside, and a final one in Taipei where we saw the marvelous palace museum and met some of the younger Taiwanese historians. The country makes a prosperous impression. On the other hand, students and professor, we were told, felt that they had to take great care in what they said in public. I also managed to attend a community seder in Taipei -- Wilma unfortunately had a flu -- which was attended by approximately 200 American and Israeli Jews.

We left Buffalo for Germany in late July. I have a sabbatical supplemented by an NEH grant, Wilma took a leave without pay after Canisius had denied her request for a sabbatical. She subsequently received a sabbatical for the following year. We rented our house to a very nice Israeli family with four children -- he is spending the year as a visiting pediatrician at Children's Hospital. Jonathan consequently had to move and found himself an apartment nearby. As usual we were picked up from the Frankfurt airport by our friends in nearby Darmstadt, where we spent our first few days in West Germany. Buffalo has had an exchange of graduate students with the Technical University of Darmstadt for the past ten years which I helped to organize and we now have quite a circle of friends and acquaintances among students who came to Buffalo on the exchange, Buffalo students who are currently there, and persons at the university with whom I have worked closely. From Darmstadt Wilma went briefly to Munich to see her publisher -- her book on the Bohemian Jews is now in galleys -- and to Czechoslovakia while I spent two weeks in Göttingen. We then met in West Berlin where we lived for six weeks in the very pleasant setting of the Historical Commission where I helped to prepare a symposium on German historical writing in the Weimar period.

Little has changed professionally in the lives of our children. Jeremy commutes between Detroit and Minneapolis while contributing articles on food, written with a good sense of humor and a social conscience, to two newspapers. You may have occasionally seen his articles in other newspapers throughout the country. He is now seriously considering taking a leave of absence this spring to return to Minneapolis to complete his Ph.D. Dan continues to work with the discipline committee at the Law Society of Upper Canada in Toronto. Janet again worked part-time for the Ombudsman's office. Jonathan is very busy, continuing his job at the Department of Social Services for Erie County

here in Buffalo but also maintaining the work with his rental property and his advertising postering.

As far as the third generation is concerned, Janet is expecting to give birth any day. We saw quite a bit of our grandchildren before we left for Europe and look forward to spending time with them next week in Toronto. Dan and Janet managed to come down here at least once a month or we met them in Toronto or half way. Sarah is already eight and very alert. Kelly, who will be two in March, is now really beginning to talk. One of the fringe benefits of Buffalo are blizzards which make for very cozy, unexpected vacations at home. Sarah visited us with her mother, Maggie, Maggie's new husband, Rick, and their baby for a day only to be caught by a snow storm so that we spent four very nice days together. On one of the days I drove with Rick, who is a nurse, in our four-wheel drive Toyota for the Buffalo police on emergency missions.

Wilma and I shall be returning to Germany on January 6. This time we shall be in Göttingen where I shall again be a guest at the Max-Planck-Institut für Geschichte. Mail will reach us until approximately August 15 at

Georg und Wilma Iggers
Schillerstrasse 48

D-3400 Göttingen, West Germany.

We shall have a telephone, but do not know the number yet. However, we can be reached via our good friends, the Friedrichs, who live downstairs and whose number is 0551-706299; or, if you call from North America, 011-49-551-706299. From August 15 to December 15 we shall be in Buffalo, where I shall teach during the fall semester, and then both return to Germany in the middle of December for eight months, until August 15, 1987, at the Center for Interdisciplinary Research at the University of Bielefeld.

During our present stay in Buffalo, until January 5, mail will reach us c/o our friends the Heberles, 54 High Park, Buffalo NY 14226; tel.: (716)-835-6180. Mail will also always be forwarded by the Department of History, SUNY/Buffalo, Buffalo NY 14261.

This letter will not reach you in time for the holidays. We wish you all the best for a satisfying, healthy, and peaceful 1986.

As ever,

Georg and Wilma

Dec. 27: Our grandchild arrived last night, a healthy 7 1/2 lb boy. Janet had an easy birth.

*FAMILY
enshortened*

until Dec. 13 247 Cimarand Ct.
Getzville, NY 14068
Tel.: (716)-688-4248
November 9, 1986

Dear Friends:

Our season's greetings will reach you earlier than usual. We are spending the fall here in Buffalo before returning to Europe for another eight months. We wrote you last year during our brief visit to Buffalo over the holidays. At the time we had just returned from a three month stay in Leipzig in East Germany where Wilma had been on an exchange fellowship and both of us had done research. The beginning of January we returned to Göttingen, in West Germany, where we spent the remainder of my sabbatical until the middle of August. We very enjoyed the seven months there as we had the stay in Leipzig. Göttingen, as you know, is almost a second home to us. We have been there repeatedly since 1961, for research years and summers, have many friends there and feel very much a part of the community. This time we did not live with Irmgard Bokemeyer in Rauschenwasser as on previous sabbaticals. Irmgard, whose eightieth birthday we helped celebrate and who continues to be as active as ever, this time among other things with making refugees from Sri Lanka feel welcome, has given up all of her house to her family except for one room. This time we lived with other very good friends, Dagmar and Hannes Friedrich, who with their three teenage children occupy a charming art nouveau house within a few minutes walk from the center of the city. We had a self contained apartment in the house in which once Hannes' mother, whom we had known since we first came to Göttingen and who, herself one of the first non-Jewish members of the left resistance to have been arrested by the Nazis, was the moving spirit until her death of the Society for Christian-Jewish Cooperation which has sought to keep alive the awareness of a Jewish heritage in Germany but in recent years has also addressed itself to other civil libertarian issues such as the rights of the foreign workers. Both Wilma and I were able to do quite a bit of research and writing. Wilma continued her work on the early twentieth-century feminist on whom she had started to work in Leipzig last fall, Grete Meisel-Hess, and during the year discussed her work in lectures in West Berlin, Leipzig and Darmstadt. As usual I found my stay at the Max-Planck-Institute for History very stimulating. I had a work table there and had an opportunity almost daily to discuss my work and my manuscripts with the researchers there, several of whom have become good friends. I myself tried to pull together the various topics on the history of historical writing and thought since the eighteenth century in the West, a shorter version of which will come out in a small book which I am writing in German for a German publisher and have promised to submit in 1988, a larger version of which is intended to appear ultimately in English. I had an opportunity to present and discuss various aspects of my work to audiences in West and East Germany, but also in Austria, Hungary and the Netherlands. It was thus a very rewarding year for both of us in terms of intellectual feedback. I had utilized the stay in Leipzig last fall to read intensively on recent work in history in the GDR (East Germany) and had asked colleagues at the Academy of Sciences in East Berlin to permit me to have an opportunity to discuss my conclusions, which I frankly told them

would be controversial, at an informal gathering of historians there. My conclusions were quite critical of recent attempts in the GDR to reclaim, in my opinion too positively, aspects of the German political past; they were relatively positive about new imaginative work, Marxist but relatively free of dogmatism, which is being done in social history and which I believe deserves to be better known in the West. I was invited to present my paper when I had completed it in March. The discussions, which lasted most of one morning and one afternoon and were followed by individual conversations the following two days, were very open and productive. I was very pleased to be invited subsequently by a group of social historians to discuss the paper once more in Leipzig. The final version of my paper which is going to appear in Geschichte und Gesellschaft, the leading West German journal of social history, in Germany and in History and Theory in English, profited a good deal from both sets of discussions. The Leipzig invitation gave us an opportunity to spend several very enjoyable days with our very good friends there. Wilma was invited to her paper on Meisel-Hess at the institute dedicated to womens studies. It was a fascinating discussion since she and the people there came from very different directions. I gave a public lecture on "The Idea of Progress" reconsidered which only a few weeks after the Chernobyl accident led to an interesting exchange of views.

The high point of our stay, however, was the publication on Wilma's book on "The Jews of Bohemia and Moravia," the collection of documents with her extensive historical introductions on which she had worked many years. C.H.Beck Verlag in Munich, one of the leading German publishers, had done an excellent work of publicity. The reviews so far in the daily press have all been very positive and have recognized the extent to which the book is an attempt to set a fitting monument to a community which no longer exists and which is so very much a part of Wilma's own past. The focus is less on the intellectual life of Prague which has received considerable attention than on the conditions of life of common people. For those of our friends outside of West Germany who will not have seen the book but who do read German I am enclosing a copy of recent review from the Swiss Neue Zürcher Zeitung which well conveys the sense of the book. Shortly before we left Göttingen the Friedrichs organized a garden party with our various friends at which a Bohemian Jewish meal was served to celebrate the book.

This has been a busy fall since we returned to Buffalo on August 15. I was invited to participate in a large project at the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of Bielefeld in Westphalia. The project began on October 1 and will last until the end of August but I shall join it on December 15 so that I can complete the fall semester here in Buffalo. The topic of the overall project is a comparative studies middle class (bürgerlich) societies in nineteenth century Europe and I shall look specifically at the historians in France and Germany in the period from 1870 to 1918 to examine the different contexts of political consciousness and intellectual life in the two countries. There will be approximately thirty participants from various disciplines and countries, from Western and Eastern Europe, North America and Israel, working and living together at the Center. Our address from December 15 until August 15 will be

Georg und Wilma Iggers
ZiF

Wellenberg 1

D-48 Bielefeld 1, West Germany.

Our telephone number will be (0521)-1062739. Bielefeld is on the main train line and Autobahn from Cologne and the Ruhr area to Hannover, only about fifty miles Southwest of Hannover. If you should be in the area it would be good to see you. As you will have noticed from our American address, we are not living in our own home which we rented for two years to an Israeli family but have rented the house of a Buffalo professor and his family who are away on sabbatical. After August 15, we shall be again at our home, 100 Ivyhurst Road, Buffalo NY 14226. Wilma will be busy with her own projects. She is planning to combine her work on Meisel-Hess with studies of two other Jewish women intellectuals born in Prague who were active around the turn of the century. One of the most fascinating documents in her book are extensive selections from the autobiography of her grandfather's brother, a poor Czech-speaking country Jew which she discovered. She is planning to go to Prague in January to interview the man's aged daughter, to whom he had dictated the autobiography in the 1930's and develop it at least into an article and a lecture.

Wilma will be on sabbatical during this academic year and will probably be teaching a reduced load when she returns to Canisius next fall. Being away from her heavy teaching responsibilities has been a good relief. She has been in good health and has been able to turn more fully to her writing interests. I have been teaching a very full load of graduate students this fall and shall be in close correspondence with several when I go to Germany as I was also last year. One of my doctoral candidates accompanied me to Göttingen and two will join me in Bielefeld. We now have a very international group of graduate students in the department, an active exchange with West Germany and a number of students from the Far East, including our first student from the People's Republic. We continue to have an active correspondence with students and colleagues we met in China two and a half years ago. Next fall we shall have the first exchange on the doctoral level with the Academy in East Berlin. During the fall we had a number of visitors from both Germanies and one each from China, Australia and Romania, several of whom were here in connection with two conferences in which I was involved. Almost immediately after our return to Buffalo, I flew to Little Rock to the college where we taught in the 1950's and to which I have been invited annually as part of an evaluation team since 1966. The visits have given me an opportunity to continue contacts with friends from the days of the civil rights movements but at the same time follow the development of the college over the years. I have been reinvited for next year after our return and Wilma will join me this time.

We have enjoyed the opportunity to see family and friends during this stay in Buffalo. Little has changed in the professional status of our children. We saw Jeremy in Germany in June and visited him in Detroit shortly after our return. He is still writing for newspapers in both Detroit and Minneapolis and commuting between the two cities. He expects to see us later this month and if his plans work out proceed from here to Nicaragua but in connection with his journalistic work and his personal concerns. He and Wilma continue to work on the Bohemian Jewish cookbook but it is proceeding understandably slowly. Jonathan continues to be very busy between his work for the division of social services of the county, his houses, and the advertisement posters he

continues to handle. He now has an apartment of his own but we see him several times during the week, generally in the evening. When we wrote you last December, we added a P.S. that Adam, our newest grandson had just been born in Toronto. We have seen the whole family, Daniel, Janet, Sarah, Kelly and Adam several times. Sarah, now nine, has been here both with Daniel and alone and we shall be meeting her next weekend with her mother and family halfway between Dundas, where she normally lives, and Buffalo. Last weekend we were in Hamilton for a big gathering of Wilma's family on the occasion of the sixty-fifth wedding anniversary of her uncle and aunt. Unfortunately we have missed the picnic the first Sunday in June near Hamilton at which the whole group of Wilma's relatives and friends who came Czechoslovakia to Canada in 1938 and 1939 gather and shall miss it again next year. Unfortunately the ranks are now quickly thinning but it is encouraging that the younger generations, including our children still regularly attend.

This has been a longer and a chattier letter than I intended and one about less exotic places than our last two. We, however, always welcome the opportunity to communicate with you at least once a year. We wish you all the best for the holiday season and the New Year and hope that we shall see some of you on either side of the Atlantic.

All the best,

100 Ivyhurst Road
Buffalo, NY 14226
November 27, 1987

Dear Friends:

Before we enter the final busy period of the semester, we wanted to write you and bring you up to date on our lives during this past year. Shortly after we wrote you last year, we had a very nice gathering here of family and friends to celebrate my sixtieth birthday. A few days later we left for Bielefeld in West Germany where we stayed for almost eight months. Bielefeld was a different experience from any we have had. I was associated with a research project at the ZiF (the Center for Interdisciplinary Research at the University of Bielefeld). A whole team of researchers worked on a common topic, a comparative study of middle class (bürgerlich) society in nineteenth-century Europe. Approximately thirty scholars from a variety of disciplines from Western and Eastern Europe (including the GDR), the United States and Israel were in residence for longer periods of time in the Center which had its own complex of apartments and studios, its conference rooms and library, and its own swimming pool of which I took advantage daily. In addition a number of international conferences related to the project were held at the Center. We were located at the very edge of town, between the university -- founded in the early 1970's with a strong stress on interdisciplinary studies and housed in one huge building with a good library, which unlike other libraries in Europe has open stacks and remains open until 1 a.m. -- and the Teutoberg Forest. There was intense pressure to work. Every Tuesday at least one paper by a member of the group was discussed. The working atmosphere was good. There were constant informal discussions and a formal session on Tuesdays at which each at some time offered his or her work for mutual criticism. Support services were excellent, secretarial and xeroxing, and a chauffeur brought the researchers to other research libraries and archives. We thus had an opportunity about once a month to spend a day in Göttingen where we combined library work with seeing friends. My own topic consisted of a comparative analysis of the political cultures within which historians in Germany and France worked in the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries. My work involved several trips to Paris, supported by the Center, to use archives, libraries and consult scholars there. My Bielefeld topic fitted well into my larger project of a social and intellectual history of history as a discipline in the Western world since the Enlightenment. I thought that Jürgen Kocka, the Bielefeld social historian who directed the project, did an excellent job in gathering a group of persons which included not only established senior, but also promising younger scholars in search of positions and a large proportion of women.

I very much enjoyed the stay in Bielefeld. Not disturbed by teaching obligations, I was able to do a considerable amount of writing. Wilma felt less well integrated into the team, although she attended most of the Tuesday sessions, partly because she was not a member of the project, partly because her interests were too different

from the strongly analytical thrust of the project, but partly also because some of the members, no matter how emancipated, perhaps regarded her primarily as an accompanying spouse rather than as a productive scholar. She also achieved a lot. Her book on the Bohemian Jews, which appeared the previous year, continued to receive very positive reviews in the daily press and on the radio and she was invited to a number of lectures and readings in West Germany and in the GDR. Various people in the community in Bielefeld invited us either socially or for discussions, the latter in church groups. On Passover I conducted the seder service for the minuscule Jewish congregation since there was no one else who could conduct it. Our travel was either directly research connected, like our trips to Paris, or involved lectures which gave us opportunities to discuss our work but which also gave us an occasion to see friends in West Germany, France, England, Switzerland and Italy. Twice we went to the GDR to lecture, once to Berlin and once for a week to Leipzig, where we now have quite a circle of good friends. Wilma interestingly was invited to give a reading from her book to a church group in Dresden.

We left Bielefeld the second week in August and then spent two and a half weeks in Australia. We both had had a long standing invitation to lecture there and took this opportunity before our return to Buffalo to go there. We saw only a very small corner of the country but this rather intensively -- Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. Wilma went north of Melbourne to visit a fascinating Czech Jewish family on a farm; I spent a day in Canberra. In Brisbane we attended the biennial meeting of European historians, a very pleasant meeting which gave us an opportunity to become acquainted with the relatively small group of people in Australia working in the field. Not only from an intellectual but also from a human point of view the trip was rewarding. In Sydney we met Konrad Kwiet and his group of colleagues and students working on German and German-Jewish history. At the house of our good friend John Moses in Brisbane, who had arranged our trip, we were able to get something of a feeling of Australian life. We spent three very relaxing days in the mild Florida-like winter climate in his apartment on an island off the coast of Brisbane. The high point, however, was meeting my cousin and family and my aunt in Sydney. Except for two very brief meetings, I had not seen my cousin since we were children in Germany. Despite the fact that we have had very different careers -- he became a business man -- we discovered how much we had in common in our intellectual and social interests and commitments.

On Sunday, August 30, we returned to Buffalo in time for the opening of the semester the following day. We found our house which had been rented for two years to an Israeli physician family here on a research grant with four kids in good shape but still with a lot of reorganizing to do. Our basement was full of books and papers which I had to move from the university when our department moved into smaller quarters and other materials accumulated during two years in Germany and awaited sorting. Wilma has gone on partial retirement at Canisius -- she will teach a half load, which is still two courses, each fall and will have each spring free. At the same time she is very busy with further research and writing -- she has signed a contract to write a book, a collection of biographies of several Prague born Jewish women of the turn of the century, and is now negotiating with an American publisher about an English translation of her book on the Jews of

Bohemia and Moravia which she would translate. I am back in the routine of teaching -- which involves a fairly heavy load of doctoral candidates, several from overseas -- and have been involved in organizing several conferences and in coediting several journals which have all taken time from my writing but enable me to maintain international contacts. I am trying to meet a deadline by the end of next summer on a small book which I am writing for a German publisher on my research of the past two years. In connection with the German Studies Association which this year met in St. Louis in October we had a number of East and West German visitors here in Buffalo. Since 1982 I have coordinated the visits of East German scholars to the German Studies Association, which brings together historians, Germanists, and persons from other disciplines, and have arranged panels involving participants from both German states and North America. Some of the participants then come to Buffalo to participate in my seminars and meet colleagues and students. This fall we also started the first exchange of advanced doctoral students, one going in each direction, between the Academy of Sciences of the GDR and our history department.

We have very much enjoyed seeing our children and grandchildren after our long absence. Jonathan lives about five minutes from here and we see him almost every day. He continues to work for the county and to administer the houses he owns. Daniel, Janet and children have been here twice for a weekend since we came back and we have seen them in Toronto. Toronto is close enough for Daniel to come down for a day, as he did yesterday, Thanksgiving. Sarah, who just turned ten, we, of course, know well, but Kelly was still very young when we were here briefly last year and Adam will just turn two next month. With both, including Adam, we can now communicate. Kelly even exchanges letters with us. Janet works again for the ombudsman; Daniel is looking for a new position after four years with the Law Society. He is a trained lawyer with little interest in law practice but a good deal of interest in writing and social problems. He is about to start an evening appointment as a justice of the peace to which he looks forward. Sarah has moved with her mother, Maggie, Maggie's husband Rick, and her half brother, Jeff, to Owen Sound which unfortunately is almost three hours by car from Toronto. Nevertheless Sarah spends almost every second weekend in Toronto. The end of December Sarah, Maggie and family plan to visit us here. Last time they did -- before we went to Germany -- they were caught here by a snow storm and we had a very enjoyable, unintended vacation together. Jeremy has just moved to Minneapolis from Detroit. For the past several years he led a dual existence with Detroit as his main base as he wrote a weekly food column for the Detroit Free Press but also wrote for the Minneapolis Star and Tribune. As this involved a lot of commuting, he has now decided to work full time for the Minneapolis paper; also because he still has many friends there from his student days and has not fully given up the prospect of writing a dissertation. His articles have combined interest in nutrition with broader social interests and always have reflected a good sense of humor. He has travelled quite a bit during the past year, to Nicaragua and Europe, and shall be going to the Cameroons in December; these trips inevitably result in stories.

We enjoy being back in Buffalo but also look forward to seeing many of our European friends this summer when we shall be in Göttingen from early June to late August. But before leaving, we intend to attend

the annual picnic in nearby Canada the first Sunday in June when all those surviving who emigrated with Wilma's family from Czechoslovakia in 1938 and 1939, but also the next generation, their children, and grandchildren assemble.

Healthwise we have been fortunate, considering our age. Wilma, however, was in the hospital for observation for several days in early October after she had had chest pains which fortunately turned out to be not an infarct but a recurrence of the relatively mild angina pectoris she has had for several years. Nevertheless, it was a warning sign. While she has not noticeably cut down on her activities, she as well as I have begun to watch our diets to cut down on cholesterol and calories which is a harder sacrifice for her than for a culinary barbarian like me.

The year promises to end with the first major breakthrough in nuclear disarmament. Let us hope that this is the beginning of a process of detente and reconciliation. May the coming year be a good one for all of you in health, happiness, and peace. With best wishes for the holiday season,

affectionately,

Georg + Wilma
Georg and Wilma Igers

Georg and Wilma Iggers
100 Ivyhurst Road
Buffalo, NY 14226 USA
December 10, 1988

Dear Friends:

Like all years, this year passed very quickly. It began on New Year's Day with a beautiful two-week vacation, the first real one we took in years, in Sosúa in the Dominican Republic, a small town which in 1940 was settled by Jewish refugees from Central Europe who made a remarkable contribution to the agricultural development of the Dominican Republic. We found out about the settlement only after we had booked the vacation and were pleasantly surprised to meet the small remnant of survivors in the still functioning synagogue a few steps from our hotel.

In the spring Wilma enjoyed the semester off in the first year of the semi-retirement she had negotiated with Canisius College, but still did not have enough time for her writing and research. We were very pleased that the Wayne State University Press agreed to publish an English version of her book on the Bohemian Jews. We are confident that someone else will do the translating. She has been engaged on her new project, for which she has a contract, on Prague women, German and Czech, Jewish and non-Jewish, since the early nineteenth century.

During the summer we were again in Europe. As usual Göttingen was our base. Wilma spent two weeks in Czechoslovakia -- the previous year she had been denied a visa -- where she had an exhilarating time seeing friends and relatives and discussing her present work with a large variety of people. Only the political atmosphere and the very uncooperative reception she was accorded at the Jewish State Museum and by the officials of the Jewish community put a damper on her trip. I stayed put in Göttingen, working on my own manuscript, except for two brief trips we took together, one to the two Berlins and Leipzig, where we combined scholarship with seeing friends, the other to a conference I organized in Paris which too was an opportunity to see good friends.

Fall was unusually busy; Wilma says hectic. For the past several years we have had a regular flow of visitors from both Germany and this time also from Austria who came to Buffalo to stay with us before or after attending the meeting of the German Studies Association in early October. At the end of October Wilma went to Germany for two and a half weeks. She had been invited to give a paper at a conference on the Prague literary circle in West Berlin and to attend a commemorative colloquium at the Academy of Sciences in East Berlin on the fiftieth anniversary of the Nazi programs of November 1938. Wilma was able in Berlin to observe how Germans in both parts of the city dealt with the

anniversary. The confrontation with the past was also the topic of two very interesting discussions which we had in Buffalo, one with a social historian from Vienna, the other with a political historian from the Academy in East Berlin.

While Wilma was in Germany, I taught her two classes, one in German language, the other in recent German literature at Canisius College, which I enjoyed even if together with my own classes it gave me a very heavy load. A good deal of our spare time has been taken up with our exchange students. A majority of the graduate students whose work I direct are foreign, European and Asian, including students from Mainland China. We were very pleased when the president of the Technical University in Darmstadt, who has become a good friend, came over in person to honor us for our part in the student exchange which we established almost fifteen years ago. There is a whole community of former exchange students from Darmstadt with whom we keep in touch and whom we see whenever we come to Germany. Our contact with Philander Smith College in Arkansas, where we taught at the time of the Civil Rights Movement, continues, but this is the first time in many years that I have not been invited to visit because the particular evaluation component of the program under which I have been regularly invited has been discontinued.

This October it was fifty years since we left Europe for North America. The Buffalo university archives interviewed us at length this spring on our experiences before emigration and later in the South. The years pass quickly now. Later this month we shall be celebrating our fortieth wedding anniversary with our children and grandchildren.

We see quite a bit of them. Jonathan has just moved into a house about half a mile from here and comes by almost every day. Daniel and Janet and family come down fairly often or we meet them in Hamilton or Toronto. Jeremy has now fully moved to Minneapolis where he is working full time for the Minneapolis Star and Tribune. We visited him right after our return from Europe last August, also to see his new house, and he will be here later this month.

We shall be in Göttingen again this summer but shall also be on brief lecture trips to Sweden, Poland and the GDR. So we shall see some of you during our stay in Europe.

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

George + Wilma

*George + Wilma in Toronto
see some time before
etc*

see also, ...

Georg and Wilma Iggers
100 Ivyhurst Road
Buffalo, NY 14226 USA
November 28, 1989

Dear Friends:

We write this letter this year deeply moved by the rapid and in many ways astonishing events which have taken place in the last several months in Eastern Europe, events to which Wilma and I felt particularly close. Preceding the events in East Germany and Czechoslovakia was the democracy movement in Beijing and the bloody repression which took us by surprise, particularly in view of the steady opening which we thought to have observed since our stay in China five years ago. The doctoral candidate with whom I work most closely here is from Beijing, has been involved with the dissident movement, and saw developments in China already sufficiently pessimistically before the blood bath to apply for asylum in the U.S. Our ties to East Germany and Czechoslovakia are, as you know, much closer. We were both in East Berlin and Leipzig in June and then spent a very relaxing week along a pond in the Bohemian Forest in Czechoslovakia with Wilma afterwards going for two weeks to Prague in connection with her work and my stopping once more briefly in East Germany. Never in the last twenty-some years since we have regularly visited both countries did we sense such discontent among our friends and acquaintances, also on the part of persons who in the past had refrained from criticism, but also a deep sense of despair that the regimes would resist all changes with force. In East Germany the TV repeatedly showed the official Chinese accounts of the events in Tienanmen Square but groups were already meeting regularly, such as in the weekly peace vigils at St. Nicholas Church in Leipzig, to protest government policies and call for reform. Wilma, who knows people in Prague from a broad variety of backgrounds, including active dissidents, found an even starker pessimism. Here in Buffalo this fall we have been able to follow the events in East Germany in close contact with two young historians from East Berlin, part of an exchange which I had arranged, who left East Germany just as the refugee stream commenced and who will be returning home next month, as well as a young woman, a Lutheran minister from East Berlin, who joined her American husband who is a doctoral candidate in our department. We are, of course, overjoyed by the movement to democracy in both countries yet are uneasy with the repeated assertions one hears by public figures and in the media here about the victory of capitalism. Certainly the bureaucratized economies of the socialist countries with the accompanying repressive political apparatus have proved to be bankrupt, but we have no reason for complacency in our American society. The gap between the affluent majority and the impoverished minority has been steadily growing here, so that we have created conditions of the third world in our own cities. One of the most hopeful developments of the past year has been the lessening of tensions between the two major power blocs and the prospect of an end to the cold war. We hope that the U.S. too will respond positively to initiatives for disarmaments. As Americans we are disturbed by the residues of the cold war mentality which play a role in our stubborn support of murderous regimes in Central America seeking to block needed social reforms. As Jews we are deeply troubled by Israeli policies which in their reliance on military repression go far beyond Israeli security requirements.

Our lives in Buffalo have been little changed. We both continue to be very busy, Wilma, even though she is teaching a reduced load in the

fall and is free in the spring. She is very busy with her book manuscript on women of Prague and with preparations for the translation of her book on the Czech Jews into English. She will retire at the end of the coming academic year, but will be just as busy. I have no immediate plans for retirement. As in the last few years, we have had a host of international visitors here, primarily from West and East Germany. The number of visitors has snowballed and will probably reach its high point next year when the German Studies Association meets in Buffalo in October.

Before going to East Germany and Czechoslovakia last summer, we spent nine wonderful days in Sweden where a friend of ours had organized a lecture tour for us which also permitted us to see something of the country. In Gothenburg we also met a former teacher from Esslingen, where I spent the last year of my stay in Germany in 1938 in the Jewish orphanage although I was no orphan. He had been my favorite teacher then and only by chance did I find his address in Sweden, where he has lived since he was released from Dachau in early 1939. It was a good meeting after 51 years. He had alerted the city of Esslingen of my existence and the city invited Wilma and me to be their guests as part of its program to reestablish contacts with former Jewish residents. Altogether six former pupils of the orphanage and their spouses were invited this year. Our stay was very well organized. We met with civic and church groups, spoke at a school, spent evenings with members of the city council from all political parties, spoke with social workers, visited the Jewish historic sites and cemeteries in Esslingen and Stuttgart and were invited into homes. It was in many ways a moving experience and I hope that the contacts will continue.

Little has changed in Jonathan and Daniel's lives. We see Jonathan several times a week and speak with him daily. Daniel and Janet manage to visit us with the grandchildren about once a month and in addition we manage to meet sometime halfway between Buffalo and Toronto. Sarah and her mother visited us this past weekend. Jeremy made a trip around the world this summer for his newspaper to study food and nutrition in third world countries, which included stays in Nicaragua, Ecuador, China, Viet Nam, India, Ethiopia and Mali and resulted in a series of articles on hunger in the world. Three years ago while in Nicaragua for his newspaper he met a young Viennese woman in Managua who has now joined him in Minneapolis. We expect all the children and grandchildren here next month during the holiday season.

Wilma and I shall be in Göttingen from early February to the middle or end of August. Our address there will be c/o Hahne, Schillerstrasse 50, D-3400 Göttingen, West Germany.

With very best wishes,