

POLITICS & GOVERNMENT*Doves' Debate*

"Fighting Among the Doves" by James Finn, in *Worldview* (Apr. 1977), 170 E. 64th St., New York, N.Y. 10021.

Among American former antiwar activists, as *Worldview* editor Finn reports, bitter controversy has broken out over evidence of totalitarian repression in South Vietnam. In Manhattan, one faction (including Finn) sent a public "Appeal" to Hanoi, December 29, protesting the Communists' detention of many leading non-Communist foes of the wartime Saigon regime. They urged Hanoi to "honor the concern for human rights which you have expressed [to visiting] peace activists." The Appeal's 120 signers included singer Joan Baez, writer Daniel Ellsberg, historian Staughton Lynd, poet Allen Ginsberg.

A paid counterstatement later appeared in the *New York Times*. Its signers included Princeton law professor Richard Falk, pacifist David Dellinger, and Richard Barnet of Washington's Institute for Policy Studies. South Vietnam, they asserted, was a special case; the "present suffering" there was "largely a consequence of the war itself," for which the United States bears a "continuing responsibility." Assessing the doves' continuing debate, Finn quotes from French journalist Jean Lacouture: "It is better for someone trying to preserve intact his admiration for a revolution not to know its victims."

American Jews as Voters

"The Roots of American Jewish Liberalism" by Ben Halpern, in *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* (Dec. 1977), 2 Thornton Rd., Waltham, Mass. 02154.

Why do American Jews consistently vote as political liberals, regardless of party alignment, class status, and economic interest? Many analysts cite traditional Jewish cultural values—charity, reverence for learning, and a concern for "life-in-this-world"—as an explanation. Halpern, professor of Judaic studies at Brandeis, believes otherwise. Jewish liberalism, he argues, is a political development largely influenced by Western European immigrants whose descendants constitute a minority of the Jewish population.

The traditional Jewish political attitude, he says, is one of conservatism and detachment, conditioned by a historic awareness that safety from persecution depended on the protection of the ruling authorities. Among Eastern European Jews (from Russia, Rumania, and parts of Austria-Hungary), from whom the majority of American Jews are descended, this noninvolvement was reinforced by language barriers and cultural insulation; among Western European Jews, by ghetto life in France and Germany and the constant fear of expulsion.

Inspired by the ideals of the French Revolution (and its subsequent Napoleonic extension into the Low Countries, Italy, and Germany), the Western European Jews became the forerunners of today's liberals. They adopted the language, manners, and fervent patriotism of their