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Greater, numerically, than the exodus from Egypt, perhaps as momentous in effect, has been the exodus of Jews from Eastern Europe and their settlement in the United States. And the past forty years or more have been, communally speaking, another forty years in the wilderness.

The newcomers found here, in commanding position and influence, fellow Jews from Central and Western Europe whose religious, social and philanthropic institutions already gave some content and character to Jewish life.

There existed, however, no organized community life. Religious congregations were, as they are now, circumscribed associations; the charitable organizations were similarly unrelated voluntary efforts. These institutions were the creations of small private groups, independent of one another, enlisting the support of as many individuals as these groups were capable of enrolling, but a support which could in no sense be interpreted as community support.

Federations were only just being started at the beginning of this century and they were merely unions of a number of German Jewish charities managed by small groups of interlocking directors, whose chief purpose in federating was to economize and make more effective their arduous efforts at fund raising. The rapidly increasing masses had no interest in them except for those who sought their aid; indeed, they were on the whole antagonistic to them.

In the course of a short time the settlers from East European countries prospered. Their institutions prospered, too. They began to develop leadership. The older institutions sought their support and began to invite them into the administration and management. Professional social work was developing and the professionals had to be drawn largely from among the newcomers. Matrimony began to undermine the social barriers. So-called Orthodox Jewish institutions were gradually being embraced within the federations. Zionism grew stronger. Reform Jewish Temples opened their doors to the younger Americanized elements and were happy to replenish the diminishing membership of the older settlers. The pulpits were given over

to the fresh graduates of the Hebrew Union College and the Jewish Theological Seminary, nearly all of whom originated from Eastern Europe. Jewish interests, whether religious or communal, were rapidly finding their way into the hands of the newcomers.

And then the War broke out. It drew us all closer to the Jews of Eastern Europe. And in the meantime war profits swelled the number of wealthy among the newer elements and they assumed an active, generous and even leading part in the great enterprise of fund raising.

But even before the War the influence of Eastern European Jewish life began to assert itself. In New York and Philadelphia, Kehillas were formed based on the theory of conscious, comprehensive, integrated community life. Though they were abortive, they influenced the development of community organization. The Kehilla produced the first successful effort to organize a system of Jewish education in this country. It developed leaders, as well, who spread the system to other large communities. It focused public attention upon our common problems. It emphasized the importance of positive elements in Jewish life as contrasted with the negative elements of dependency, ill-health and delinquency with which the Jewish people up to that time had nearly exclusively been concerned. It gave meaning, logic and content to the term "Jewish community." However, it resembled too strongly the Ghetto type of community organization. It attempted, at the outset, to embrace all elements and interests within one fold. Perhaps that was the reason for its failure. It produced Minerva out of the forehead of Zeus. Life springs neither by such miracles as those of Greek mythology nor through immaculate conception.

As the war intensified the nationalist spirit in every country, so has it, apparently, strengthened the solidarity of the Jewish people. This fresh impetus to Jewish life is a reaction to the universally reawakened chauvinism. The emphasis upon national determination and minority rights written into the peace treaties and into the processes of the League of Nations has helped to strengthen group consciousness, political, ethnic, and religious. Zionism has received a tremendous impetus. The world's recognition of Jewish nationalism, manifested first in the Balfour declaration, then in

favorable pronouncements of heads of leading governments, including our own, and the establishment of the League of Nations' Mandate for Palestine reacted upon countless American Jews to the extent not only of enlisting their support for the upbuilding of Palestine, but of encouraging their group consciousness for life in this country.

Indeed, in the new freedom produced by the war, do not the Jewish people sense danger of disintegration? If the political, economic and social disabilities of the last two thousand years were a strong factor in perpetuating the Jew and Judaism, is it not logical to assume that the removal of these disabilities exposes them to extinction? In other words, is not the high-tension group consciousness of the past decade a defense reaction to the new freedom? Does not interest in Palestine reflect the fear of ultimate dissolution in the Diaspora and sense Palestine as Israel's only permanent refuge? Is not the feverish interest in and emphasis upon Jewish education a sign of this fear? Are not even the Jewish educators apprehensive of ultimate defeat? Are even they sure that Israel will continue a biologically unassimilated element in the chemistry of life in free countries like the United States of America or even in East European countries, should political freedom become stable and economic opportunities assured? Are even they certain that the 2000-year-old crust of enforced separatism will not finally crack and dissolve in the crucible of life? Do we not all want the fruits of a predominately Christian civilization? Do we not want to take part in producing those fruits? Do we not want our place and opportunity in every field of activity, in commerce, science and education? But we still decline to sell our birthright for them,—we hope to procure them and yet remain Jews.

And is not the development of Jewish community organization essentially another expression of the group will-to-live? If not, what justification is there for our Jewish philanthropies? In the earlier years of our own period, immigration was the justification. Our masses were strangers; they did not know the language and the customs of the country. They had to be adjusted; they had to be Americanized. All this is virtually over, yet Jewish activities are expanding day by day. We seek other reasons for existence.

At the last Conference much consideration was given to introspection. Dr. Rubinow stated:

“I am willing to admit that we ought to make our final judgment as to the desirability of Jewish social work on the basis of the influences that Jewish social work may have on American life as a whole. That does not mean any excessive national pride or chauvinism, but, after all, there is something, we think, in Jewish psychology and ethics. There must be some reason why, in most cities, Jewish communities do meet their group responsibilities to the needy, and other groups don't. There must be some reason why the general attitude of mind of the Jewish social worker as well as the Jewish communal leader is that the sky is the only limit in the extension of group responsibility while, on the other hand, one Community Chest after the other admits in print as well as in private that a point of saturation of group responsibility expressed in relief has been reached. So long as that remains the point of view of the large community I think that the Jewish community has a tremendous contribution to make.”

Even if this were true,—and its general application will be challenged because it can be true only in some localities and certain fields of activity,—would this be adequate reason and basis for separate Jewish philanthropy? Would it not logically follow that as soon as non-Jewish philanthropy attained the Jewish standards the reason for our sectarian activities would disappear? To maintain that our generosity will always be greater, our standards more liberal, our technique more refined, is to assert an inherent superiority which can be questioned.

Indeed, even were non-Jewish philanthropy to become more generous and more effective in technique, would not Jewish philanthropy continue simply because it is essentially an expression of the group life, a reflection of group integrity, a challenge of group survival?

Is not the motivating influence behind it the conviction,—not perhaps clearly expressed or defined, but nonetheless genuinely and profoundly felt,—that the Jewish people has a valid, inalienable right to retain and develop its own culture in every direction; that patriotism does not involve

uniformity or conformity with all the folkways of the majority; that the Jew may be a perfect citizen though denying Christ; that he may be a loyal American and yet hand down his heritage, the Hebrew language, the Jewish faith and the Jewish spirit to his posterity; that he may be a brother to other races and yet develop his own racial individuality; that the test of his patriotism will not be confined to his participation in the wars of his country (though it is our pride that in this test he has never failed), but will extend to the way he lives for his country; that the test of his Americanism will not be the abandonment of his Jewish heritage, but the manner in which he uses that heritage for America; that the test of his fraternity toward his non-Jewish neighbors will not be a similarity, necessarily, of language, modes of thought and common prejudices, but what he contributes as a group to the common welfare? Isn't Rubinow nearer the truth when he says:

“To me it is less important whether all Jewish families are being taken care of by Jewish agencies, . . . than the very facts of existence of Jewish social service organizations for the preservation of the Jewish group community feeling”?

The trend in Jewish life in this country is toward greater homogeneity. The schisms and conflicts and demarcations are becoming less emphatic as time goes on. We are rapidly approaching unity. This does not mean that we shall not have parties in the Jewish fold and that personal ambitions will cease to govern and promote these parties; but as the different elements in the Jewish population merge with one another more and more, as their differences gradually disappear, does it not follow logically that the particular interests of these different elements tend to become common interests?

We observe everywhere throughout the country an ever widening horizon within which are embraced the activities of the Jewish community. Our Federations, which began a quarter century ago as unions of a limited number of existing organizations,—the relief society, the orphanage, the hospital, the old folks' home and the settlement, plus a few of their women's auxiliaries,—are now becoming comprehensive community organizations with a growing tendency

to include every non-congregational activity. Is it not to be anticipated that in our national and international activities a closer approach will also be made to unity?

The hitherto extraordinary spectacle of a Louis Marshall being the President of Temple Emanuel of New York and at the same time the chief support of the conservative Jewish Theological Seminary will cease to be unique. In Cleveland, for example, the Rabbi of a Reform Temple, Abba Hillel Silver, heads a movement including nationalist Jewish education.

Reform Judaism is being swept inward by the mighty waves of group feeling. The present leaders of Reform Judaism, especially the younger men, realize that the idealism of the Prophets, though expressive of the very essence and spirit of Judaism, cannot of itself take the place, completely, of the irksome discipline of the rabbis of the middle ages; that the intriguing mission theory of dispersion is not acceptable as a substitute for the age-long aspiration of this ancient people for national existence; that the task of transmitting the language and spiritual heritage of Israel to future generations requires more schooling than obtains at present, as well as more emphasis on symbolism. There is a growing recognition of the belief that to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with God requires a discipline governing human conduct in all of its relations, and that this is not a solitary process but is involved with the life and destiny of the entire Jewish people.

Ludwig Vogelstein, the presiding officer at the Convention of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, said nearly two years ago:

“Again in emphasizing the moral life there is the ever present danger of lapsing into a vague universalism in religion which makes men question the value of religious differences and which produces the types of men who, attracted by the apparently similar ethical teachings of the religion of the majority, may disappear from our ranks. . . . The Jewish prophets, although they preach truths which form the basis of all religions, did not counsel the children of Israel to lose themselves in a shallow universalism. . . . We still feel we have a reason for separate existence. . . . We must not permit ourselves to succumb to the ideal of barren uni-

formity which sacrifices what is excellent and remarkable for the spurious comfort of being like all the people around about us. . . . The grave danger of our period lies in the fact that too little thought is given to these matters."

In short, then, it appears to me that the outstanding phenomenon in the communal life of the Jewish people of this country has been the gradual shifting from emphasis on philanthropy to emphasis on group life and group survival. In line with this, community interest will be concerned not so much with technique (though technique will not be neglected) as with furnishing opportunity for the full and free expression of Jewish personality; whether for distinctly Jewish objects or merely for Jewish companionship is immaterial. It is obvious that Jewish life and ultimately Jewish survival will be reflected through associations that have no Jewish purpose or content as well as through those organizations that have. There exist countless such organizations now, as for example, college fraternities, Jewish societies of medical men, social clubs, etc. These groups, though not concerned with Jewish culture, are nevertheless a Jewish expression of life, a crystallized consciousness of kind, which, willy-nilly, ultimately operates to conserve and perpetuate group life. You will perhaps say that such groups, lacking as they do positive Jewish objectives, are merely the reaction to anti-Semitism. Assuming that they are nothing but this, are they any the less manifestations of the group-will-to-live? Anti-Semitism is one of the strongest forces making for Jewish cohesion. Should it ever disappear, the danger of disintegration will become greater.

And is not this urge for personality expression through the life of the group in harmony with the basic principles of social service? Is it not in harmony with the fundamental principle of case work, namely the liberation and enrichment of personality? And should social service, therefore, not recognize it and encourage it as the natural and most effective medium through which to achieve its own humanitarian ends?

Parenthetically be it said, the organized group life of the Jews of America, unlike that in East European countries, does not entertain political ends. Whereas in those countries the political nature of community organization is traditional

and inevitable, here in this country it is ethically inconceivable because it violates the basic principles of our political system and is in conflict with its spirit. To attempt in this country to establish a Jewish organization on political lines and for political purposes is as dangerous and immoral as the establishment of the Ku Klux Klan for white Protestant domination. Jewish group life seeks here only religious and cultural objects. If it ever should seek political purposes and assume political character it will be only as a defense measure against political control on the part of some other ethnic or religious group. Unhappily, such control has been ruthlessly attempted in recent years. There have been subtle and drastic changes in the spirit of America during the last decade. Our domestic and foreign policies have reflected the influence of a shocking chauvinism which, please God, may only be a passing phenomenon. May we never see the day when men and women in this country will find it necessary to seek political organization on racial and religious lines. If it comes, the 100 per centers will be responsible for an unspeakable calamity to this country, the calamity of a nation divided against itself.

At the beginning of this century the leitmotif of Jewish philanthropy was to adjust the immigrant to America. This was to be expected. But to the extent that it encouraged the repudiation or abandonment of Jewish values that process was not only unsound but actually anti-American. It is a truism to say that Americanism demands, as the primary and paramount essential, that every citizen shall be true to himself. Jewish philanthropy today recognizes the preciousness of the old practice and is now chiefly concerned with protecting Jewish life against the disrupting forces that surround it. Jewish philanthropy recognizes that unity, and not uniformity, spells true democracy and that unity can best be promoted by freedom of opportunity to every group to express itself fully through the vehicle of its own traditions and in the direction of its own potentialities.

With racial consciousness and self-respect as our gyroscope, our relations with the community at large become easily and amicably defined; our cooperation becomes strengthened because of the strength produced by our own union of forces; our fraternity with the majority is augmented because we bring to the majority the good will of

all elements in the Jewish population in the place of those comparatively few who, as individuals, have heretofore identified themselves with the majority. In other words, in the place of a theoretical and fictional brotherhood of individuals, we shall bring about a genuine brotherhood of groups.

The fact of our meeting here this week instead of in Memphis is a significant illustration of this trend and spirit. In no way disparaging our interest and part in the general welfare of our country, the majority of our Executive Committee was moved by the consideration that the integrity of Jewish community work, which would have been threatened by the absence of the National Association of Jewish Community Center Secretaries and the National Council of Jewish Education, had we met in Memphis, was too vital a matter to sacrifice for the fortuitous consideration of meeting at the same place as the National (non-sectarian) Conference. And arguments in favor of the latter plan, eloquently and persuasively presented, could not overcome the profound conviction that the Jews of America can contribute most effectively to human welfare at large by insuring the maximum integration of their own group activities.

It is this same sense of racial unity and solidarity that has caused the welfare of Jewry abroad to loom so big in the scheme of Jewish community life in America. It is not merely a reflection of pity for the sufferings of human beings bound to us by racial ties, not merely a united impulse to help rescue the shattered economic life of our brethren, but a conscious effort to save the Jewish people as a whole from destruction and to preserve them eternally. That is why so large a part of the millions expended have been invested in the religious and cultural schools, and why today a good part of the funds distributed abroad finds its way into these channels. Surely this is not an accidental procedure. That is why the task of protecting the Jewish people in their political, economic and cultural rights has, since the very moment when the armistice was declared, engaged the persistent intervention of the best leadership in American Jewry. That is why the responsible leaders, regardless of their particular attitude toward the Zionist organization, have become willing to join hands in the task of preserving the Jewish people through the upbuilding of the land of Israel.

The trend in American Jewish philanthropy is toward diminishing emphasis upon provision for dependents and delinquents. This does not mean that Jewish communities will cease to deal with the problems of disease and dependency and delinquency. Hospitals, child care work and relief will continue to reflect the major items of our budgets but the items for the positive elements in Jewish life will grow larger. Support and encouragement will be increasingly given to education, to primary and secondary schools, teachers' training schools and theological colleges. Whatever is of value in the spiritual heritage of the Jewish people will be conserved and further developed. Jewish art and music will, less and less, be permitted to languish in the garrets of impoverished artists. Jewish scholars will, less and less, be doomed to carry on their researches in poverty and obscurity. Jewish writers and philosophers will, less and less, be obliged to depend on penny-a-line contributions to struggling publications. More and more, the renaissance of the Jewish spirit, which has infected our communal enterprises, will envisage these precious potentialities and will regard them as legitimate claimants for the liberal support of the whole community.

The adolescence of Jewish life in America is virtually over, and with it the storm and stress that was its natural accompaniment. Israel in America has come of age. He enters upon a new era, that of a young and virile manhood, conscious of his strength and purpose and imbued with a determination to take his place, not as a nondescript, but as a Jew, by the side of his non-Jewish fellows in the march of civilization.

CHAIRMAN SHRODER: I am sure that Mr. Waldman appreciates the deep interest that caused so many people to stand while he was talking, but we need not impose that punishment upon them while the remaining speakers are giving their papers. There are seats down here in front on the left.

I now have the pleasure of introducing Mr. Gilbert Harris, the President of the National Association of Jewish Community Center Secretaries, of St. Louis, Missouri. I have commented on the age of the previous speaker; I do not think that I need comment on the youth or good looks of the present one.