

National Association of Jewish Social Workers
JEWISH CHARITIES
PROGRAM OF BALTIMORE CONFERENCE

(Subject to Change)

FIRST SESSION, SUNDAY, MAY 9, 1915, at 8.30 P. M.

ELI FRANK, ESQ., Chairman.

Address of Welcome, Dr. Harry Friedenwald, President of Federated Jewish Charities.
 Presidential Address, David M. Bressler.

MRS. HENRY MOSKOWITZ, Chairman.

"Newer Methods of Adjusting Industrial Disputes."

(a) The Protocol.

(a) A Modern Conception of the Employer's Responsibility to Employees.

Papers—(a) Mr. A. V. Williams; (b) Mr. A. Lincoln Filene.

Discussion—Mr. S. B. Sonneborn, Baltimore.

SECOND SESSION, MONDAY, MAY 10, 1915, at 2.30 P. M.

MISS MINNIE F. LOW, Chairman.

- (1) "How Do Jewish Settlements Differ From Settlements in General?"
- (2) "What Should be the Attitude of a Jewish Settlement Toward Nationalism and Allied Jewish Questions?"

Papers—(1) Mr. Walter Leo Solomon; (2) (a) Dr. Israel Friedlander, (b) Mr. I. Edwin Goldwasser.

Discussion—Mr. Oscar Leonard, Mr. Isaac Aaronson, Mr. Philip L. Seman.

THIRD SESSION, MONDAY, MAY 10, 1915, at 8.30 P. M.

DR. LEE K. FRANKEL, Chairman.

- (1) "Should Schools For the Training of Jewish Social Workers Be Established?"
- (2) "What Should Be the Entrance Requirements and Curriculum For Such Schools?"

Papers—(a) Dr. Ludwig B. Bernstein; (b) Dr. S. Benderly.

Discussion—Dr. Boris D. Bogen, Mr. Charles Strull, Mr. George Ellman, Dr. Isaac Landman.

TUESDAY, MAY 11, 1915, at 2.30 P. M.

Automobile Ride to Jewish Home for Consumptives

FOURTH SESSION, TUESDAY, MAY 11, 1915, at 8.30 P. M.

MISS SADIE AMERICAN, Chairman.

"Newer Developments in the Treatment of Tubercular Dependents."

Paper—Dr. Maurice Fishberg.

Discussion—Dr. Sidney Goldstein, Mr. Garfield A. Berlinsky, Mr. Edward Hochhauser.

FIFTH SESSION, WEDNESDAY, MAY 12, 1915, at 2.30 P. M.

TRANSPORTATION RULES

MORRIS D. WALDMAN, Chairman.

Paper—Garfield A. Berlinsky.

Discussion—Mr. A. S. Newman, Mr. Samuel B. Kaufman, Mr. Charles Strull, Mr. Julius Goldman, Mr. H. Joseph Hyman, Mr. Charles I. Cooper.

ROUND-TABLE DISCUSSION

Monday, May 10, 1915, at 10.30 A. M.

"Jewish Settlements"—Discussion of the relation of the settlement or social center to its neighborhood and its city, as well as various details of settlement and social center activities. A small exhibit is being arranged in connection therewith. Dr. Boris D. Bogen of Cincinnati, Mr. Philip L. Seman of Chicago, Mr. Charles Strull of Louisville, Mr. Oscar Leonard of St. Louis and Dr. Charles S. Bernheimer of Brooklyn have signified their interest in the conference.

Tuesday, May 11, 1915, at 10.30 A. M.

Wednesday, May 12, 1915, at 10.30 A. M.

- (1) "To What Extent Have Present Conditions Increased Dependency in Your Community?"
Miss Frances Taussig, Chairman.
- (2) How Did Your Community Meet the Employment Problem During the Past Winter?"
Mr. Joseph Gedalecia, Chairman.
- (3) "How Has State Aid to Widows Affected the Jewish Relief Situation in Your Cities?"
Chairman—(open).
- (4) "Is Delinquency Among Jewish Children Increasing in Your Community, and What Are the Characteristic Offenses?"
Mr. Alexander Kaminsky, Chairman.
- (5) "What Will Be the Effect of the War on Immigration to This Country?"
Mr. David M. Bressler, Chairman.

THE JEWISH SOCIAL CENTER

By Oscar Leonard

St. Louis

The question as to the special and peculiar functions of the Jewish social center has again been raised. From time to time this question has come up for discussion. It was discussed quite freely at the meeting of the National Association of Jewish Social Workers in Atlantic City, two years ago, and at the last National Conference of Jewish Charities meeting the question was again touched upon.

It is a fine sign of the times—the best known Jewish social center in this country when founded omitted Jewish from its official name. Some twenty-five years ago that was possible; today it could not be done; that was the day of fast assimilation. In the same institution Yiddish was practically tabooed. If this institution were founded today, it would be known as the Jewish Educational Alliance; it could not do otherwise—a new era has come into Jewish life.

There was a period in the life of the Jews of America when it was supposed that the manner by which people could be Americanized was to compel them to forget they were Jews. I am not talking of de-Judaizing, I am not here concerned with the religious aspect of the situation, I leave that to the religious leaders; I concern myself with the sociologic aspects of the problem. It is this phase which will be discussed more and more among Jewish social workers. We have come to a turning point. The nationalist movement, as expressed in Zionism, has done its work. The Jewish people is coming into its heritage in America. We are beginning to feel at home and are leaving off some of the ghetto psychology.

To be a Jew was considered somewhat of a disgrace in the European countries. It is still considered so in most of these countries. Even the best among us felt as if we owed an apology to the world for being Jews. This feeling was brought by us to this land of freedom and opportunity, we wished to discard rapidly everything which indicated our Jewishness. We clung to Judaism, but wished to discard Jewish-

ness. Many a strong adherent to the Jewish faith, to Judaism, was a traitor to Jewishness; many a man not much concerned with Judaism was a loyal Jew. To be sure, one does not exclude the other, but one is easily possible without the other.

Let us remember that the faithful Jew made his allegiance known in the synagogue, and only there. It was he who frequently derided those who were loyal to Jewishness; he regarded them as fanatics, backward persons, and looked upon them as individuals whose existence was injurious to the Jew in America. Jewishness meant non-Americanization. It was because of this that Zionist organizations were not welcomed to Jewish social centers until practically recent years. Zionism was the cardinal sin against Americanization, just as Socialism was, and is still largely, the economic blasphemy.

The Zionist movement, however, has gradually brought about a change in thought of the Jewish people. It has made itself felt as no other influence in the life of the Jew. The Jewish social center or settlement reflecting as it does the life of the Jewish people could not escape this influence. With this influence have come more lectures on Jewish topics, Yiddish has received recognition in the settlement, Zionist meetings were at first tolerated, then welcomed. In a word, the Jewish settlement has become more Jewish. It is no longer sufficient for a settlement working among Jews to limit its Jewishness to its name only.

As a result of this natural development, discussions as to Jewish problems and the settlement had to come. These discussions will continue. There must be adjustment and correlation in this process of Americanization of the Jew. We must decide how far we can Americanize the Jewish immigrant and his offspring without stifling the Jew within him. America cannot profit by the suppression of racial peculiarities or group characteristics. If the literature of America is to be rich it must keep alive these heritages which the immigrants bring;

if we are to have any art in America it must be an expression of the composite soul of the immigrants. Whatever art or literature we possess has not come out of the native soil. The civilization we have found here—we Europeans—we have destroyed together with the population which inhabited the continent. If we are to have the things which express the language of the soul, we must not suppress the expression of the longings of the soul.

We cannot produce ready-made, hand-me-down Americans; such Americans are not worth having. People who readily give up their soul life which they brought with them from their native lands will easily give up the little we may graft on them here. Americanization must be accomplished by the slower but more lasting method—forced blooms die quickly; blooms slowly ripened in the sun live their normal life. The same thing applies to the immigrant, and particularly to the Jewish immigrant; he has been forced long enough to take on the color of his surroundings; let us for once permit him to live his own soul life. Let the sun of American freedom help him to ripen into an American; let us allow him to bide his time while giving him opportunities to learn what America is. While doing so, let us not interfere with his Jewishness. The more he loves that, the more loyal he is to it, the more loyal an American he will be.

THE KEHILLAH CONVENTION

The Kehillah of New York met in convention on April 24th, and the following program was presented:

The chairman of the Executive Committee, Dr. J. L. Magnes, analyzed the Jewish problem of New York City from the point of view of the Kehillah. He endeavored to show that the Jewish problem is divided into a number of phases, and in what manner the Kehillah is trying to meet this problem. The general theory of the Kehillah is that the problem can be met only if the Jews themselves, that is, Jews of all kinds, take the problem in hand and endeavor to answer it.

Prof. Israel Friedlaender, chairman of the trustees of the Bureau of Education, pre-

Those who believe that the Jews are a religious group and nothing more, believe that one may be a loyal Judaist and a patriotic American. They are absolutely correct in this belief. Their very loyalty to one ideal makes them capable of real American patriotism; but that holds good also for the Jew who is loyal to his people with the loyalty of the nationalist. His Americanism is even stronger because he has an appreciation of the national group. His Americanism is more fervent because of his loyalty to his own national group.

I know I have not touched upon the problem of Judaizing the settlement; it is a subject worthy of a special article, because it involves the division of certain communal functions. I shall therefore leave it untouched at this time. I merely wish to present a few thoughts that may stimulate others to express themselves on this important subject. It is a subject worthy of consideration because it deals with the welfare of our country as well as of our own people. It is a subject worthy of discussion because it will help us bring about a better understanding of the Jewish social center and the people with whom it works. Only as there is such an understanding between the Jewish social center and those who form its very life can lasting results be accomplished.

sented a report on the five years' activity of the Bureau. It called attention to the fact that the Bureau is now in touch with over 30,000 Jewish children in and out of New York City, and that the whole problem of Jewish education has taken on a new and hopeful phase owing to the activities of the Bureau.

Mr. Bernard Semel presented a report on the Bureau of Industry indicating the method that has proven so successful in the adjustment of difficult industrial relations among Jews, and showing also the method by which the Kehillah is endeavoring to co-ordinate Jewish employment work in the community.

The Social Worker

I commend to you the social worker, that monstrosity of conflicting attributes, who is a "specialist" without a definite subject, who makes a business of that which should be followed instinctively, who is called upon to arbitrate upon the most significant things of human life without sufficient data upon which to judge, and in most cases without the ability to judge. All things are demanded of him and he has so little to give; all sufferings must be shared by him until his heart becomes either bloated and maudlin, or thin and callous.

What the philanthropist misunderstands, what the Government ignores, what life ruthlessly passes by, he must comprehend and envisage. He is given *carte blanche* to solve the ills of the universe, but is prohibited from tinkering much with things human. He must sympathize without condemning, be constructive without disturbing things, so that he is in a position where he perceives ills which he is powerless to remedy. Narrowed and confined he is yet placed in the broadest field of human activity, so that he may be compared to a man who has the freedom of the universe, but not the freedom of his city.

But the majority of social workers prefer to find a rut rather than to contemplate the infinity of their problems. Since routine comes easier than thinking, they amble along, busied with trifles until they become mere classifying machines.

Thus it is that the social worker has no intellectual home, except it be the rude patchwork ideas in which he temporarily takes shelter. He has no passions, for these might disturb mental balance. He has no definite philosophy of life, for that would not always leave him free to carry on his activities. He has no tastes, for he must conform to a drab average. Everyone expects him to be moderate in his views, but blames him if he is sterile.

If the social worker is merely a cog in our present society, the result of material and social conditions, his function then becomes no more significant than that of the commercial middleman.

Can he become something more than an economic necessity?

Abraham Solomon.

Mr. Cyrus L. Sutzberger read a report on the newly organized Bureau of Philanthropy which the Kehillah has established, together with the Council of Jewish Communal Institutions. The general plan of co-ordinating the philanthropic enterprises of the community was laid before the convention.

Mr. I. Unterberg explained the activities of the Bureau of Religious Affairs, pointing out particularly the nature of the co-operation of the Kehillah with the *Vaad Horabbonim* and other religious bodies.

One of the interesting reports presented to the convention was that on the new School for Jewish Communal Work. This school expects to begin its sessions during the coming summer. The purpose of this school is to supply a steady stream of Jewish trained workers for our various growing Jewish communal activities.

Miscellaneous reports on the activity of the Kehillah in connection with the bank failures and the suppression of libelous moving picture films were read.

Mr. Louis Marshall then gave a report on the activity of the American Jewish Committee. His paper dealt particularly with the situation of the Jews during and after the war.

After all the questions of a local nature were disposed of, the convention took up the discussion of the report of Mr. Marshall and the activities of the American Jewish Committee. The whole question of Jewish representation at a peace conference was discussed in connection with this report.

On the Saturday evening of the convention reports were presented, but there was no discussion. The session on Sunday morning began with the discussion of the report of Professor Friedlaender, and continued on the reports in the order of their presentation. Special committees were appointed on each report, so that the delegates had full opportunity not only of discussion, but also for the presentation of resolutions.

Correction

In discussion of "Standards of Relief" by Mr. Morris D. Waldman in last issue of JEWISH CHARITIES, line 28, page 203, should have read "whose actual standard is *no* lower than the."