

## HAMILTON, ONTARIO, TRIES COMMUNITY CONTROL OF KASHRUTH

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**H**AMILTON'S experience and the structure recently developed for the control of community Kashruth may be of interest to other communities particularly those in the small city category. Hamilton has a Jewish population of approximately 3,000, predominantly Orthodox, with four Orthodox congregations and one Reform, and a central representative body, the Council of Jewish Organizations, which has successfully integrated most communal services including fund-raising, education, public relations, social welfare, etc. As in most communities, the problem of community Kashruth was regarded as a communal "hot potato", and, therefore, avoided, since there was widespread cynicism as to the possibility of achieving community control.

Until recently control of Kashruth was in the hands of a Vaad Hakashruth, an independent body, self-constituted, made up of the local Orthodox rabbi and representatives of the Orthodox synagogues, who provided the services of Shochtim for the two local butchers, as well as individuals in the community, and the services of a Mashgiach. Income of the Vaad was derived from fees paid by the butchers for the slaughter of cattle and poultry and by individuals for the slaughter of poultry. Salaries were paid to the Shochtim, the Mashgiach and the rabbi for their services.

For many years slaughtering of cattle for the butchers was done at a local

meat packer's establishment with the packer paying the slaughtering fee directly to the Vaad (2 cents per pound of kosher meat sold to the butchers). Substantial amounts of money were realized in this way. It was the feeling of the Vaad that the charge for shechita which was ultimately paid by the Jewish consumer was a form of Jewish community taxation and that the proceeds should be used for communal purposes as well as for payment for services rendered by Shochtim and Mashgiach. For this reason the Vaad made available sums of money for the purchase of a community hearse for the Chevra Kadisha (Hebrew Burial Association), to provide a capital fund for the Hebrew Free Loan Society, and for the regular maintenance of the local Talmud Torah. This practice was constantly objected to by the employees of the Vaad who claimed that they were being underpaid and that the support of the community programs mentioned above was at their expense.

Income of the Vaad was considerably reduced a few years ago when the meat packer went out of business and no other local packer would consent to arrange for the slaughter of cattle for sale of kosher meat by the Jewish butchers. They then had to rent private slaughterhouses and to purchase cattle themselves. Conflict immediately arose as to the amount that they should pay to the Vaad for the services of the

Shochtim. The situation was further complicated when the butchers began to use the Shochtim for the slaughter of cattle for a non-kosher wholesale trade which they developed during the war in addition to the kosher retail business. All methods of control, such as payment per head of cattle, payment per pound of kosher meat, as a result of this new development, proved ineffective. An agreement was reached at this stage whereby the butchers paid a flat weekly rate to the Vaad. According to community opinion the rate was set too low, and it was felt that the butchers were personally benefiting from the extra charge for shechita paid by the consumers. The Vaad, however, was unable to do anything about this.

Two years ago, the Shochtim brought their complaint to the Council of Jewish Organizations. They claimed that they were grossly underpaid, that they were being exploited both by the butchers and the Vaad Hakashruth, that money earned by their services was diverted for other purposes, that the Vaad did not operate its finances properly and paid salaries haphazardly. They asked that their services be considered in the same light as other community services and that their salaries be paid by the Council just as the Council took responsibility for payment of case work, group work, Jewish education and other community salaries. Representatives of the Vaad were also eager for Council intervention because of the difficulty with the butchers over finances. Unfortunately, while the Council was willing to study the situation, no suitable person could be found who would be bold enough to assume the chairmanship of a committee charged with the reconciling of the various conflicting elements and the finding of a solution to this perplexing community problem.

As a result of the failure of the Council to take action, the Shochtim worked out a private arrangement with the butchers whereby they received the money for shechita directly from the butchers and divided it between themselves and the Mashgiach. This was regarded as outrageous by the Vaad Hakashruth since in this way there was no communal responsibility involved at all and there was no guarantee of the proper observance of Kashruth. Unable to do anything itself about the situation, the Vaad Hakashruth in the early part of 1946 brought the attention of the Council again to the problem of Kashruth. The Vaad urged that the Council as the representative body of the Jewish community was the only body that could find a solution which would be acceptable to all parties concerned and which would guarantee the observance of Kashruth, ensure adequate community control, and provide proper financial administration. The prestige of the Council of Jewish Organizations had by this time been enhanced through successful completion of a number of community projects. Its leadership was younger and aggressive and felt that the problem was a challenge. A committee was therefore appointed to study all matters pertaining to Kashruth and to bring in a report. The committee held a series of meetings. It met separately with representatives of the Vaad, with the Shochtim, the butchers, and then jointly with all parties present. The results of its study was presented to the Council recently who approved the new set-up as recommended.

Under the reorganization, community control is established by making the Vaad Hakashruth a standing committee of the Council of Jewish Organizations. It is made up of a chairman and 11 members. The chairman and 6 mem-

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bers, one of them a rabbi, are elected by the Council. The other 5 are appointed as representatives of each of the 5 synagogues. The Vaad is to be responsible for the supervision of community Kashruth. A sub-committee of three is to serve as a Finance Committee. Proper salaries are to be paid to Shochtim and Mashgiach with a consistent schedule of hours of work to be arranged. All receipts and expenditures are to be handled through the Council office thus ensuring control of financial matters. In order that the butchers should agree to participate no change was made in the weekly sum they were to pay for the services of the Shochtim. It was felt that the arrangement should be tried for a period of time to see if it could operate to the satisfaction of all parties concerned before any drastic changes were made.

At the time of writing, the new Vaad Hakashruth of the Council of Jewish Organizations has just been established and is working out the mechanical de-

tails of its operation. It is therefore too soon to judge its effectiveness. In all likelihood, however, the scheme will work out satisfactorily since it provides for community control, permits adequate salaries for the communal workers involved and guarantees proper observance and administration of Kashruth. There were some who questioned the responsibility of the Council to become so involved in this problem. To them it was pointed out that experience had shown that no independent group could cope with it, and only the Council had sufficient status and respect to find a workable solution and to implement it. The Council was also charged in the terms of its constitution with dealing "with all matters affecting the community as a whole". Since this problem affected the daily life of so many people in the community (even members of the Reform congregation purchased meat from the Jewish butchers), it had to be regarded as an obligation of and within the purview of the Council.

## BOOK REVIEWS

William Posner, *Editor*

EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS OF LIVING, by O. Spurgeon English, M.D., and Gerald H. J. Pearson, M.D. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., New York, 1945. 438 pp. \$5.00.

OUR INNER CONFLICTS, by Karen Horney, M.D. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., New York, 1945. 250 pp. \$3.00.

English and Pearson review the oral, anal, and genital periods of development, and indicate the emotional problems engendered in each of these periods when instinctual needs are frustrated. The chapter headings follow a formal pattern and indicate the philosophy as well as the contents of the book: "Development of Personality During the Oral Period" is followed by "Emotional Disturbances that Occur During the Oral Period." This pattern is carried through for the oral, anal, phallic, latent and puberty, and adolescent periods of development. A group of chapters dealing with problems of adult life, neurotic behavior and treatment, close the book. To these authors the anxieties experienced during the various periods of development serve as the prototypes of all later anxieties. Thus there appears to be a straight line of expression of early anxieties in present problems of living.

Horney has previously helped us to understand that neuroses are brought about by cultural factors, that a neurotic trend is central to the neurotic character structure, and that therapy depends upon understanding the interplay of forces in the existing personality. In her present book Horney is concerned with the role of conflicts in neurosis, conflicts which operate between contradictory sets of neurotic trends. For Horney our inner conflicts arise as defenses built around the nucleus of a basic conflict due to incompatible attitudes. These attitudes—moving toward people, against them, or away from them—arise from a basic anxiety; the feeling of being isolated and helpless in a potentially hostile world. This basic conflict is often transmuted into subtle parallel or contradictory expressions because of changes in the life situation.

English and Pearson state that "Any change

in the child's circumstances tends to have a traumatic effect on his development." (my italics.) Since change has been described as the essence of life, life to English and Pearson appears to be a traumatic experience in itself. Horney states that "Life itself remains a very effective therapist." This difference in approach epitomizes the basic disagreement of the orthodox Freudian psychoanalysis of English and Pearson and the socially oriented psychology of Horney.

English and Pearson have made themselves candidates for the Infatuation With the Sound of Their Own Words Department with their constant introduction of such a phrase as, "The treatment for these cases will be intensive psychotherapy, preferably psychoanalysis." In this connection it may be well to quote from an article by Dr. Martin Gumpert in the November 16, 1946, issue of *The Nation*: "Dr. Peter G. Denker, of the Department of Neuropsychiatry, Bellevue Hospital, New York, has just published an account of 500 cases of severe psychoneurosis, leading to complete disability, that were treated by general practitioners. His investigation showed that there was *no significant difference in the therapeutic success obtained by practitioners, psychiatrists, and psychoanalysts.*" (Italics in the original.)

English and Pearson have so fully explored the unconscious meaning of various expressions and experiences, that it is tempting to suggest some meanings which they have not mentioned. For instance, if any experience is traumatic, then the male Jew certainly experiences a traumatic act with circumcision. What is the meaning of such a phallic experience during the oral period? How does it affect his personality—is it at the basis of the "neurotic" personality of the Jews? May I suggest that the Oedipus complex does not arise from the desire of the child for the parent of the opposite sex, but vice versa: the desire of the parent for the child of the opposite sex. To the parent the child represents the potentiality for the realization of his idealization of the opposite sex. It is the child's unconscious response to this not necessarily unconscious