A HISTORY OF THE JEWISH CENTER MOVEMENT IN AMERICA

by

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Referee

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DIGEST

The Jewish Center Movement in America, as it appears today, is the third stage in an evolutionary process which began with the Young Men's Hebrew Association, in pre-Civil War days, and progressed, in the 1880's, into the Jewish Settlement House. In each of these three phases, we find the Jewish Center assuming its shape, dependant upon the needs of the people.

The earliest period presented a Jewry in search of cultural activities, and social intercourse. The Young Men's Hebrew Association filled that need. The Jewish Settlement House arose to help the great masses of immigrants to this country, by means of Americanization classes, and employment bureaus. A charitable organization, it marked a new era in Jewish philanthropy.

The Jewish Center, today, similarly fills a very definite need. In this age of heterogeneity, it has become an agency of unity. In its attempt to serve all Jews, regardless of religious affiliation, political outlook, or financial background, it has, necessarily, to bear the brunt of men with definite points of view. Each segment of Jewry has attempted to remake the Center in its own image. The failure of these groups has been a testimony to the ability of the Center to define its program, and to maintain it.

The one principle to which the Jewish Center has unswervingly adhered is the rights and the needs of the people. It is at the Jewish Center, and probably only at the Jewish Center, that all

Jews can meet on equal ground. Equipped with professionally trained workers the Center strives to fulfill its obligations, not to any particular point of view, but to the people.

The Jewish Center faces many problems today, but it is aware of them. It is also aware that any solutions that it might reach, must be reached in conformity with the one principle for which it stands. That principle is that the people are always the end, and never the means.

Maurice Davis

ERRATA

Page 3, Paragraph 2, line 3, change synagogye to synagogue.

Page 4, line 2, change will to with

Page 8, Paragraph 3, line 1, change Rabenowitz to Rabinowitz

Page 9, line 2, change Rabenowitz to Rabinowitz

Page 12, Paragraph 2, line 1, change regarless to regardless

Page 13, Paragraph 1, line 7, change as to or.

Page 22, Paragraph 1, line 7, change fel to felt.

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DEDICATION

It was through my wife that I first became acquainted with the Jewish Center. It was through her that I gained a little insight into the science of working with people. It was through her, that I learned of the greatness of the Jewish Center movement.

Without her help, this paper could never have been begun, and without her help, this paper probably could not have been finished.

In gratitude for the inspiration which she has been to me in the past, and in anticipation of the inspiration which she shall be to me in the future, this paper is humbly dedicated to my wife, Mariam.

PREFACE

It was with a great deal of trepidation that I chose as my thesis subject "The History of the Jewish Center Movement." The enormity of the project would necessitate a great deal of selectivity of material. The lack of published minutes would add to the task. However, the greatest problem was an emotional one. The Jewish Center has always been very close to my heart. The guidance and help of Paul Schwartz, at present, Director of the Jewish Community Activities of Dayton, Ohio, and Cyril L. Sleznick, Director of the Cincinnati Jewish Center, cannot be measured in words. These men showed by precept and example the nobleness of the Center movement.

At the same time, Dr. Abraham Cronbach taught me the religious values that could be had by working with people, informally, at play and at rest. It was he who infused the Jewish Center with a spiritual value which has lived within me constantly.

As a member of the National Association of Jewish Center Workers, and at the same time a student of the Hebrew Union College, it was inevitable that I should compare these two professions. I considered it a fine opportunity to write this paper in the hope that other rabbis may gain from it some small insight into the great value of this movement, which so easily can become a partner to the Temple in working for the welfare of man.

Part one. INTRODUCTION

The Jewish Center is one of the most familiar, and at the same time, least understood institutions of our day. To the five year old, the Center is his camp. To the twelve year old, it is his club. To the adolescent, it is the place where he plays ball, or dances. To the adult, it is the center of his bowling league, or an instrument of community activity. In short, it is the place in which each individual can find expression for his needs.

What a tremendous role is cut out for this broadest and most personal of all service organizations. Its members are Orthodox, or Conservative, or Reform, or not affiliated with any synagogue. When Talmud Torah classes are finished, the Orthodox boys and girls come to the Center. When Sunday School is dismissed, Reform and Conservative children come to the Center. Some are driven by chauffeurs; others must wait until they have completed their newspaper routes. Millionaires and paupers, scholars and uneducated men - all may find within thewalls of the Center, an answer to their desires.

There are those who come for athletics. There are those who come for specific hobbies. There are those who come for dancing, or singing, or study groups; but all come for comraderie. The group worker is neither their teacher, nor their servant. He is their friend. With the youth and the adult he is present; ready to serve, to guide or to inspire.

They take him for granted, as they take the Center for granted, and perhaps that is the best way. Perhaps he could not perform his task as well if people recognized the amount of study, and training, and poor wages he has undergone to become a group worker.

He does not wish to stand on a pedestal. He feels that he must be on a level with the people if he is to work with them. So too, will the Center. The most unique thing about the Jewish Center is that it is not considered unique at all, in the minds of its members.

It is not a house of worship. It is not a place of reverence. No one need or should stand in awe of it. A Center is recognized by the shouting, and the carefree and natural attitude of its members.

But where did it come from? What is so wonderful about the Center, that men and women will go to college, and then to graduate school, and then earn a slightly less than living wage*(1) to work in it? There must be, in the Center, a type of inspiration that can attract hundreds of young men and women dedicated to long hours and hard work, whose only topic of conversation, day and night, is the Jewish Center.

All organizations come into being to serve certain needs. However, in the case of the Jewish Center, there must have been something unique to gather together men and women who have completely identified themselves with the movement.

At first glance it might appear that the Center is merely a huge game room; that, as an organization it has no principle for which to fight, no philosophy to maintain. In short, it might appear that the Center stands for nothing. Nothing could be further from the truth. It is a fact that its great strength lies in that it is an agency of unity rather than an agency of division. However, it is the purpose of this paper to unfold the gradual evolution, not only of the Jewish Center movement, but also of the one principle to which the Center is committed.

*Foot notes.

We shall see that the people, and the needs of the people have determined, in each generation, both the existence of the Center and the type of Center that did evolve. We shall further see that the people have never been put into a subordinate position within the Center movement.

Part two. EARLIEST BEGINNINGS

The Jewish Center movement was officially inaugurated in 1920. Its history however, precedes that date by eight decades. The roots, of the Jewish Center, are in the main, two; the Jewish Settlement House which appeared on the scene in 1880, and the Young Men's Hebrew Association which began in 1854. In order better to understand the Jewish Center, it will be necessary to investigate these historical antecedents, and to seek an answer to the following questions. When did they arise? Why did they arise? What need did they fill? What was their program?

The Young Men's Hebrew Association itself had an earlier antecedent which preceded it by a decade. This was the Young Men's Hebrew Literary Association.

During the period of 1840-1850 there sprang up in this country, a group of social clubs for boys and young men. These clubs were exclusive, with limited membership. It often occurred that more than one existed concurrently in the same city. Within a few years, these groups adopted a name for themselves, and were known as Young Men's Hebrew Literary Associations. (2)

The first of these groups to use this name was the one begun in Philadelphia in 1850. The Reverend Dr. Isaac Leeser organized it, (3) and was quite interested in its work for many years. Under Leeser's guidance, the popularity of this group soon resulted in the formation of many similar Young Men's Hebrew Literary Associations. These appeared in New York City in 1851, (4) Baltimore, Maryland in 1854, (5) New Orleans, Louisiana in 1855, (6) and Richmond, Virginia in 1856. (7)

Thence it spread rapidly to Chicago, Illinois; Cleveland, Ohio; St. Louis, Missouri and San Francisco, California. (8)

The program for these groups did not greatly vary. It was comprised of social and cultural activities in the form of lectures, debates, dramatic attempts and dances. A few of the larger ones had libraries, housed in permanent quarters. The groups professed educational, intellectual and social aims. Jewish knowledge also appeared as one of the stated objectives, but according to certain authorities, (9) Jewish content was more a professed goal than a realized one.

In 1854, the first group bearing the new title of Young Men's Hebrew Association, appeared in Baltimore. By 1861, similar groups, now known as Young Men's Hebrew Associations, were organized in Augusta, Georgia; Buffalo, New York; Cleveland, Ohio; Richmond, Virginia and Syracuse, New York. (10) Some of these had already been in existence under the earlier nomenclature. Richmond, which began as a Young Men's Hebrew Association in 1860, had a Young Men's Hebrew Literary Association as early as 1856. That the problems of both groups were similar even to the problems of present day Centers, can be seen in an editorial which Dr. Isaac M. Wise wrote concerning the Richmond Young Men's Hebrew Literary Association in 1856. "The Young Israelites of this city have organized a society under the name of HYMLA (notice the transposition of letters). The objects of the Association are the mutual and intellectual improvement of its members, by written and oral discussions of literary, historical and moral subjects, and general advancements of knowledge by public lectures to be delivered by such gentlemen and at such time as the society may designate. . . . .

We gladly chronicle the rise and progress of such organizations, for

they show that our young men are desirous to improve their mental condition; but we must earnestly caution them to be watchful, that their intentions be not dropped, and the hall of the society be not degraded to a mere place of Amusement, as this actually is the case with some.

Amusement must by no means be banished from these associations; but it must not be allowed to hold the supreme sceptre." (11)

It might be well at this time to breach the subject of the striking similarity of names between the Young Men's Hebrew Association and the Young Men's Christian Association. It has been popularly believed that the Jewish group borrowed its title from the Christians. This thesis has been tacitly accepted by all the writers who haveexplained that the Young Men's Hebrew Association grew up in order, either to counteract the influence of the Young Men's Christian Association, or to offer a similar program to Jews. However, the Young Men's Christian Association was an evangelical movement during its early years; a movement which would scarcely attract Jewish members. Nor was its program one that would cause Jews to be envious of their own lack of similar program.

Morever, the late Benjamin Rabenowitz, in his excellent work, "The Young Men's Hebrew Associations 1854-1913" states categorically that the similarity in names was purely coincidental. He points out that while Leeser's "Y" in Philadelphia was begun in 1850, the first Young Men's Christian Association in the United States was begun December 29, 1851.

Benjamin Rabenowitz was the director of the Jewish Center division of the Jewish Welfare Board at the time of his death in 1948, and had been associated with the Jewish Center movement for over twenty-five years. A conscientious scholar, he, more than anyone else had the ability and the opportunity to understand clearly and fully the history of the Young Men's

Hebrew Association. There are, however, two factors which must be presented as qualifications of the statement of Rabenowitz. First, the Young Men's Christian Association, although it was begun at the close of 1851, had been in the stages of being organized for some time prior to that date (especially since the movement had begun in England at an earlier year.) Secondly, the organization begun by Leeser was known as the Young Men's Hebrew Literary Association, and not the Young Men's Hebrew Association. Indeed, as late as 1856, as we saw in Dr. Wise's editorial (above) many groups were still known as Young Men's Hebrew Literary Associations. It was at least three years after the Young Men's Christian Association appeared, that Jewish groups adopted the name Young Men's Hebrew Association. While the Young Men's Hebrew Literary Association was not based on any Christian counterpart, it is equally obvious that the Young Men's Cristian Association influenced, in part, the new name for the Jewish groups.

At any rate, the period immediately after the Civil War saw a rapid increase in the formation of Young Men's Hebrew Associations. In 1865, Dr. Max Lilienthal organized the first Young Men's Hebrew Association in Cincinnati. Dr. Lilienthal attempted to extend the movement throughout the country, (12) and was actively engaged in its program over a long period of years.

Among the early Young Men's Hebrew Associations, Cincinnati played an important role. This was due, in the main, to the efforts of Dr. Isaac M. Wise and Dr. Max Lilienthal who enthusiastically supported the group. It had permanent quarters with over three hundred members, (13) and existed for over three years from 1867-1871.

In 1868, Dr. Wise wrote: "Young Men's Hebrew Associations all over this country who have higher objects in view than mere amusement, would do well in furnishing the public with statistical notices through our columns

and state their names, locations, object, time and place of meetings, present officers, age of the society, and such other particulars. The public would be much pleased to learn what the young men do for the cultivation of mind, and the elevation of the race! (14) It is thus apparent that Wise and the Israelite were anxious to help the Young Men's Hebrew Associations, as long as the groups remained up to the standards that Wise had set for them.

In 1869, the Cincinnati Young Men's Hebrew Association appointed "a committee to address proper letters to various Jewish communities, recommending the organization of similar associations." (15) The movement was now growing rapidly, although it could scarcely compare to the amazing growth of the Young Men's Christian Association. At the close of the Civil War, the Christian Organization had sixty groups. With ten years (1879) their total had reached nine hundred and fifty. (16)

It would be impossible for the Jewish Community not to be greatly impressed by the Christian movement. The liberal Rabbis were enthusiastic supporters of the Young Men's Hebrew Association, often becoming presidents of the local chapters. It was they, more than the lay membership, who stressed the difference between the Jewish and Christian groups. The latter, as was mentioned above, was an evangelical organization, interested in reforming criminals, enforcing the Sunday "blue laws", and the like. These goals did not play an important role in the Young Men's Hebrew Association. However, it will be recalled that the earlier Young Men's Hebrew Literary Association were but passively concerned with Jewish affairs. The sectarianism of the Christian group brought about in the Young Men's Hebrew Association, a more positive interest in things Jewish.

The Young Men's Christian Association also played an important role in that it had conceived of a community wide organization. The Young Men's Hebrew Association, due to the influence of their Christian counterpart, also began to think along community lines. This broadened outlook, in itself, was a great

step forward, and helped to form a link with the later Jewish Center.

Led by the New York Young Men's Hebrew Association, classes in Hebrew language and literature began to appear upon the program. Essay contests were begun, to emphasize Jewish affairs and Jewish life. Two of the early winners were Emma Lazarus and Solomon Solis-Cohen. Under the impetus of the New York group, a definite attempt was made to differentiate the Young Men's Hebrew Associations from the purely social groups of that time. Editorials were written reminding the members that the name was Young Men's Hebrew Association and not Hebrew Young Men's Association. (17) The implication was that the term Hebrew must modify the activites of the group, and not merely the religion of its members.

It must be kept in mind however, that this was the feeling of the adults in charge of the group. It did not necessarily represent the attitude of the members. An interesting incident in the life of the New York Young Men's Hebrew Association, might shed light upon this thought. At its annual meeting in 1876, a motion was passed - not without opposition - for two social entertainments during the year. The Board of Directors interpreted this motion in their own way. They planned a Purim celebration followed by dancing, and a Chanukah celebration to be followed by dancing. These affairs were successful. However, in an annual report for 1880, the following statement appeared:

"It is the opinion of the Executive Committee that such entertainments as were given at Chanuka and Purim are not embraced within the aims of the Association and that no entertainment, followed by dancing, should be given as one of the regular courses of entertainment of this Association." (18)

The Jewish Messenger reports that a great deal of discussion followed the above statement, during which all of the arguments with which we, today, are familiar, were employed. The survival of Judaism, as well as the survival of Jews was seriously threatened, should dancing be mentioned as part of the

regular program of the Young Men's Hebrew Association. (19)

It was natural that these groups, expanding rapidly, would soon attempt to have a national organization. The American Hebrew Association was the first such attempt. It was doomed to failure almost from its inception, and lasted a scant three years. (1880-1883)

The chief reason for its failure was the insistence of Philadelphia that all groups, regarless of size, were to have but one vote on the general committee (20) New York with fourteen hundred and fifty members, refused to comply with the plan. The New York group gave many other reasons for not joining, but the question of voting was easily discernable as the major cause of conflict. The American Israelite echoed the feelings of many when it voiced its disgust over the bickering between Philadelphia and New York in its issure of January 28,1881.

Cyrus Sulzberger and Solomon Solis-Cohen, who were the active leaders of the national organization were but twenty-five years old, and scarcely capable of keeping together a national organization, which many large and influential groups refused to join. The American Hebrew Association went out of existence in 1883.

As we close the first period in the history of the Jewish Center movement, namely the period of 1850-1880, a word or two should be mentioned concerning the role of women in the organization. It often occurred that the earlier Young Men's Hebrew Literary Association admitted women on an equal level. Where this was thecase, when the group converted to a Young Men's Hebrew Association, with a community-wide scope, similar arrangements were followed. However, since it more frequently happened that women were not admitted - at least not until 1869 - the groups offered women honorary memberships, without the right to vote. Thus the Young Men's Hebrew Association in Lafayette, Indiana, organized in 1868, had "a musical and dramatic corps which included

young ladies." (21) while in New York, as late as 1874, a motion to admit women was voted down. (22) The first Young Women's Hebrew Association did not appear until 1888 (23).

In reviewing this first period of the historical antecedents of the Jewish Center movement, we see that the Young Men's Hebrew Association was not actively engaged in philanthropic work. Nor was it much interested in Americanization classes, such as teaching English immigrants. However, there was little need for these activities. There had as yet been no great wave of immigration which would necessitate such Americanization courses. Nor had there been a sweeping depression at home, as persecution abroad which would call for philanthropy. Following the close of the Civil War, new industrial frontiers were created, and the urbanized Jew had many opportunities to earn a living. We shall see in the next period, that when the need arose, the Jewish community also rose to meet it.

The desires of the young people "were chiefly social intercourse, and the cultivation of intellectual interests, including at least a professed concern with Jewish content." (24)

Immigration to the United States of great numbers of Jews, brought with it specific problems which the Jewish Community prepared itself to meet. The Jewish population in 1848, at the beginning of the Young Men's Hebrew Literary Associations, was estimated at fifty thousand. In 1880 it had multiplied itself to two hundred and fifty thousand people, and within eight years (1888) it had reached four hundred thousand. This amazing increase was to continue, with the Jewish population doubling itself each decade until there was in 1910, slightly over two million Jews in this country. (25) Over ninety percent of these immigrants came from Eastern Europe. (26)

It was the immediate problem of those already established within the country, to help the newcomer adjust to an entirely new setting. The needs of the immigrant were, in the main, two. He had to learn the language, and he had to learn a trade. The overwhelming majority of them had come from villages, and had entered into a teeming metropolis. They had come from a patricarchal setting into a young and fighting capitalistic setting. The tempowas different. Here every one had to rush. The new industrial horizon demanded a maximum of speed. It was truly a materialistic setting. There was no time for thinking, except if that thinking be directed toward speeding up production.

It was no wonder, then, that the immigrant was completely bewildered. Into this picture stepped the already established Jewish community, and with this problem it prepared to cope. Their desire was to settle the newcomers into various sections of the country, and away from the large cities. However, for reasons many and obvious, the immigrants in great bulk remained in big cities, particularly in the east.

Practically every organization became engaged, in one form or another, in the Americanization of the newly arrived Jews. Industrial and manual training

schools were set up; "missionary schools", which were a combination of religious school, kindergarten, and sewing institution for girls; night schools for teaching English, American customs and history; libraries; preparation for naturalization; social service activities; and the establishment of neighborhood centers of the settlement type. (27) It is interesting to note that these activities preceded the establishment of non-sectarian settlement houses in this country, the first of which was the University Settlement, founded in New York in 1886. (28)

As it has so often occurred in the field of social work, New York took the lead, and many cities followed her example. The Hebrew Free School Association had been established in 1868. Russian Immigrants began to arrive in 1876, and in 1879 the Hebrew Free School Association established the first industrial school for girls. In 1884 the New York Hebrew Technical Institute for boys was established. The United Hebrew Charities of New York was organized in 1880. Their activities were later taken over by the Hebrew Free School Association in 1886. The organization established the first kindergarten in 1882 as well as classes in English for immigrants.

In 1883, the New York Young Men's Hebrew Association organized the first Jewish Neighborhood Center in America for immigrant groups. Its program was to be the pattern for most of the settlement houses in this country. There were classes in Americanization. This need was obvious. There was an employment bureau to help the members earn a living. On the cultural side, there were lecture forums, and a library. Added to these was planned entertainment.(29) The importance of this type of structure, as an answer to the needs of the time, was not quickly recognized by the Jewish Community. This can be noted by an editorial in the American Hebrew.

"The narrow-minded and short-sighted intelligence of our charity donors, has failed to distinguish that it (The Young Men's Hebrew Association) has

claims no less important than the Orphan Asylum, the Hospital and the Home." (30)

Those actively engaged in social service, however, were cognizant of the needs of the time. Samuel Greenbaum, who was part of this picture, later wrote: "But the onrush of so many of our co-religionists, ignorant of the language, and unaware of the laws and customs of the land, and of the spirit of our government, created a problem which many of the members of the Young Men's Hebrew Association, the Hebrew Free School Association, and the Aguilar Library (31) felt it their duty to help solve. Out of this feeling grew the Educational Alliance, at East Broadway and Jefferson Street, or the Hebrew Institute as it was first called." (32)

Jacob Schiff was contacted in 1889 to help raise money for a building which would house the activities of the newly conceived Hebrew Institute. Fund raising campaigns, with which we are so familiar today, were unknown then. Schiff invited the president of every Jewish organization in New York to his home. No one was absent. At the meeting it was decided that a "fair" would be given and the organizations pledged themselves to support this project.

The "fair" took place at the American Institute on Third Avenue, in 1889. It was a huge success. It was the greatest Jewish function ever given in New York, and the group received a net amount of one hundred and thirty thousand dollars. In this way the Hebrew Institute was formed. At its inception it was a real "Alliance", an alliance of the Hebrew Free School Association, the Young Men's Hebrew Association, and the Aguilar Library. The Young Men's Hebrew Association took as its share of the work, the immigration problems, social and cultural activities, and the conducting of classes in English. The building was erected in 1891. The program, however, had existed since 1889, and continued only until 1893. (33) At this time, the Young Men's Hebrew Association withdrew its support, mainly because of lack

of finances, and the group was re-organized. The name, Hebrew Institute, was gradually dropped, and the title, Educational Alliance, was used in its stead.

The Educational Alliance developed an extraordinarily intense and diversified program of educational activities. It began in the forenoon with speeded-up courses for children, who could not be accepted into public schools until they were able to use the English language. In the afternoon, children who were released from school were taught manual arts, sports, and music; and were provided a more attractive atmosphere that could be had in their tenements. In the evenings, adults came to learn English, and to perfect themselves in their vocations. In this building there were combined, "an American school, a social settlement, and an adult educational agency of a superior kind." An average of three thousand persons daily used the facilities of the Educational Alliance, a number which actually increased at a later date. (34)

A similar experience is to be found in Philadelphia, where the Hebrew Educational Society, functioning since 1848, opened its first industrial school for girls in 1880. Eleven years later they opened a new building, the Touro Hall, at a cost of fifty thousand dollars, and there carried on a program quite similar to the New York Educational Alliance.

These two buildings, both opened in 1891, were the first structures specifically erected for Jewish Settlement House purposes. Within a very few years, however, similar groups sprang up throughout the country. The United Young Men's Hebrew Associations of American, the national organization that existed from 1890-1893, attempted to establish the Union Technological Institute of America, and claimed that practically all of its constituent societies were conducting employment bureaus and night schools for the education of immigrants. Such a school did exist in Cincinnati under the direction of Professor Sigmund Mannheimer in 1890. Other such groups were found in Bostonn, Hebrew Industrial School, 1890; Chicago, Maxwell St. Settlement, 1893; Baltimore, Jewish Educational

Alliance, 1896; Cincinnati Jewish Settlement, 1899; and about thirty others.(35)

By 1910 at least seventy-five Jewish Neighborhood Centers and settlement type agencies were functioning. In addition, fifty-seven similar organizations under non-sectarian auspices were serving mostly Jewish clientele. (36) (Rumors that these non-sectarian settlement houses were run for conversionistic purposes, have repeatedly occurred. However, the author has been unable to substantiate them) This was the peak of the movement.

Within a decade these numbers were reduced to less than half, and by 1922, according to certain authorities, there were, "thirty settlements organized and financed by non-Jews, which are carried on for the benefit of Jews, and twenty-eight settlements organized and maintained by Jews for Jews." (37)

The reason for the decline was the almost complete cessation of immigration at the outset of the first World War, so that practically no new settlements have been begun since then. A second reason was the rise of the Jewish Center, which will be discussed shortly.

In summation, it should be pointed out that the settlement movement originated in England in the eighties as a humanitarian and perhaps utopian concept, to counteract the unhappy effects of the industrial revolution. It was felt by many, that by living among the underprivileged, and by sharing their culture with them, somehow social betterment would be achieved. The idea quickly spread to this country. However, at least among the Jewish settlements, this ideal of living among and sharing with the underprivileged, was never realized. Indeed, the attempt was never made. The Jewish Settlement movement in this country became a philanthropic movement, whereby the wealthy supported institutions for the poor. The men and women who financed the settlement rarely, if ever, stepped foot within the settlement. The Board meetings were held elsewhere. Without attempting, as yet, to evaluate this stage in the evolution of the Jewish Center movement, it is nevertheless necessary to stress this very important factor of

the settlement idea. The call to help the underprivileged was present. The call to live among them, and to share their trials, in order better to help them, was lacking.

There is a second factor that played a great role in the settlement movement. The non-sectarianism of settlement ideology was very much present. It was not so noticeable as a desire to work with all groups, as much as it was to eradicate, as much as possible, Jewish habits and ideas. The change of name in New York from Hebrew Institute to Educational Alliance can be traced to this trend. The Educational Alliance proclaimed itself non-sectarian, although it never gave up its religious school.

It was felt by many that these peculiarly Jewish customs were a barrier to Americanization. Concerning this, Goldwasser said in 1915, that a settlement, "must inevitably be non-sectarian....A settlement is essentially a socializing institution. It is the clearing house of human differences. It is the equalizing, the levelling force in a community. Whatever separates, whatever divides man from his fellows must be denied admission into its precincts." (38)

We shall see that many of these ideas were continued in the next stage, which is that of the Jewish Center proper. We shall also see that ideas that are applicable in one phase of Jewish Center history, may not be applicable in another stage.

Part four.

THE JEWISH WELFARE BOARD AND THE JEWISH CENTER

As a further method to meet the needs of the time, there were established between 1895 and 1900 seven federations of charities, and by 1915 there were approximately forty-seven such federations to be formed. (39) Coupled with this was the trend toward education, and what was termed "character building" agencies.

It was natural then, to expect that sooner or later there would be a merger of functions, and the erection of buildings to house the several organizations. These buildings frequently afforded facilities for federation headquarters, the Hebrew School, the Young Men's and Young Women's Hebrew Associations, B'nai B'rith, and similar Communal Activities. Without centralized authority, they were, in the literal sense of the words, Community Centers. Two of the earliest such Centers were the St. Louis Jewish Charitable and Educational Union (known as the Jewish Alliance) 1901, and the Detroit Hannah Schloss Building and Jewish Institute, 1903. (40)

In the decade preceding the first World War, this tendency became more marked, and similar were built in Atlanta, Georgia in 1910; Syracuse, New York in 1910; Indianapolis, Indiana in 1911; Savannah, Georgia in 1912; Toledo, Ohio in 1913; and Buffalo, New York in 1913. Most of these were mergers of Jewish groups into one building which represented a co-ordination of a number of local activities.

By this time the name Jewish Social Center, and Jewish Educational Center were in vogue. The term communal, or community, however, was being incorporated in the newer centers.

In Indianapolis, in 1911, a community-wide campaign preceded the formation of the Jewish Communal Building. At its opening in 1913, Dr. Boris Bogen verbalized

the new concept:

"It is an expression of a community of its needs. It is not made for the poor, nor is it going to serve the weak. It shall serve the community at large, and in this respect it is a new departure in Jewish philanthropic work." (41)

In practice, however, these institutions fell short of the philosophy of the Jewish Center. All of them, including the above-mentioned Indianapolis Jewish Communal Building, were maintained and governed by local federations of Jewish philanthropics, or by wealthy contributors. The concept of having the organization governed democratically by its members had not yet arrived. Moreover, most of these institutions reverted, within a few years to the status of the settlement house. The ires of the Jewish Center, and the population shifts which were constantly occurring, were among the causes for this move.

We cannot say just how these matters would have progressed without outside influence. However, the war arrived, and the potential force, which was to define and help create the Jewish Center, came into being for an entirely different reason.

At a conference in New York on April 9, 1917, which was attended by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the United Synagogues of America, the Council of Young Men's Hebrew and Kindred Associations, the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of American, Aggudath Ha-Rabbanim, and the Jewish Publication Society of American, it was decided to form a new organization which could, and would, speak for the totality of American Jewry. It was to represent American Jewry in a joint welfare program sponsored by the Commission on Training, Camp Activities of the United States War Department. (42) The new organization was known as the "Jewish Board for Welfare Work in the United States Army and Navy." Its name was subsequently shortened to the Jewish Welfare Board, and its work, already cut outfor it, was begun immediately.

It is not within the purvue of this paper to follow the Jewish Welfare Board throughout the war years. It suffices to say that the Board perfomed its task

well. So well, in fact, did it do its job, that when the war was over, and the cause for which the Jewish Welfare Board had been created, was no longer present, still the Board had become an organization which no one though to dissolve. So long as there were any Jews in the peace time armed services, the organization had to continue, even though on a reduced scale. As Janowsky explained it: "Organizations with well-defined functions do not easily go out of existence. (43) Indeed there was still work to be done. War records of Jewish participation, or honor received, and casualties incurred, and a host of similar tasks awaited the Jewish Welfare Board.

However, the Board had grown. It had money. (44) It had prestige. It needed new fields to conquer, and a raison d'etre to establish. It fel that Jewish Centers must be made available to Jewish soldiers on furlough. A Joint Conference Committee of the Jewish Welfare Board, and the Council of Young Men's Hebrew and Kindred Associations met to establish these centers, and in September, 1920, the Conference reported concerning the desired project.

"These Centers should be based on no particular form of Jewish religious point of view, and should be restricted to no particular group of members, but should furnish a common meeting ground for all the Jews of the community, and maintain those activities which would contribute to their Jewish consciousness as a constructive force in American Life." (45)

It was to achieve this, that the Jewish Welfare Board took over that work which was then being done by the Council of Young Men's Hebrew and Kindred Associations. The merger took place July,1, 1921, and Judge Irving Lehman became the first president of the Jewish Welfare Board. (46)

The Board began its new task, not so much by expanding the number of centers, but rather by building up those already in existence, into becoming effective Jewish Centers. Although there were three hundred and seventy societies listed by

the Council, when the Board took over, one hundred and twenty-five of these were Young Women's Hebrew Associations which met in the same quarters as the men's groups, while many others were little more than clubs.

The Jewish Welfare Board pledged itself according to its constitution adopted at the time of the merger: "To promote the religious, intellectual, physical, and social well-being and development of Jewish young men and women, and to that end to stimulate the organization in the several states and territories subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, and in the Dominion of Canada, of Jewish Centers, Young Men's Hebrew Associations, Young Women's Hebrew Associations, and other Kindred societies; to assist, advise, and encourage such societies already in existence, and when formed, to further the correlation of their activities, and the mutual interchange of the advantages which they afford, and to co-operate with other organizations for the development of Judaism and good citizenship."

It is of extreme importance to note by the wording of the above paragraph, that the Jewish Welfare Board both was, and was not, a service organization. Its phraseology is misleading. 'To assist, advise and encourage,' appears to mean a service organization. However, the lack of a definition of such words as "encourage" and "promote", resulted at a later date in great differences in opinion concerning the function of the Board.

At its inception, the Board helped to bring about a merger of Young Men's Hebrew Associations and Young Women's Hebrew Associations, and similar organizations. It found that in some cases two or more organizations were engaged in the same activities in the same city. It found that other organizations were in such condition that their continued existence was inadvisable. Simply stated, the Jewish Welfare Board began "To weed out, and pull down; to plant and to build."

The program widened to include both sexes of all age groups, and gradually the Jewish Center became a community-wide agency. The Board divided the country into regions, with field secretaries to advise the executives of what other groups were doing, to provide profiles on applicants for positions in the center, and

to correlate and unite the work of various Centers.

The Jewish Center was becoming a nation-wide organization. Was it also a national organization? The National Association of Jewish Center Workers came into being. It felt keenly its responsibility toward the movement. The movement became the important thing. The Jewish Welfare Board began to worry about the Center movement, and the National Association of Jewish Center Workers, began to worry about the Jewish Welfare Board. The Board was composed of laymen and professionals, the Association was open only to professionals. On whose shoulders, then, should fall the responsibility of defining and re-defining the movement. The local autonomy of the individual center could never be threatened by the Jewish Welfare Board either, so long as it remained purely a service organization. But was it remaining so? This problem was brought to a head by the now famous Janowsky Report, but the seeds of this tension had been present almost from the very beginning.

In order better to understand the points of conflict without either magnifying or minimizing them, it will be necessary first to survey the center field as it is today; to view the scope of its activities, and the emphasis of certain types of projects. When this is accomplished, we will be able to evaluate more correctly the issues which have been brought to the fore during the past two years.

Part five THE JEWISH CENTER TODAY

The task of presenting a composite picture of the Jewish Center movement today, will be undertaken in this chapter. The method used will be two-fold. First, I shall present the statistical data that have been compiled concerning Centers, their facilities, and their staffs. Secondly, I shall attempt to portray the movement in greater detail, as it evolved in Cincinnati.

In 1942 there were seventy-nine Jewish Centers affiliated with the National Jewish Welfare Board. (47) Today there are three hundred and one. Of these, forty-three percent are entitled Young Men's Hebrew Associations or Jewish Center. Thirty-seven percent are synagogue centers. Nine percent are settlements or neighborhood houses. Four percent are branches to Centers already mentioned, and the rest are either non-functioning or defy classification. (48)

It is interesting, in acquiring the national picture, to note that of the twenty-seven settlement houses and neighborhood houses, fifteen are in metropolitan New York, (49) and of the one hundred and twelve synagogue Centers, forty-nine are in metropolitan New York. (50) Thus fifty-seven percent of New York's eighty-seven Centers are synagogue Centers, and seventeen percent are neighborhood houses. There are only fifteen institutions in New York that can be termed Young Men's Hebrew Association or Jewish Center.

As for facilities, of the three hundred and one affiliated Centers, only fifty-five of them have ten rooms or more. Fully a third of the organizations have between four and six rooms. (51) Further, two hundred and eleven of the total have auditoria, seventy-four have kitchens, one hundred and eighteen have gymnasiums, and two hundred and thirteen have office facilities. (52)

Concerning the professional staff, one hundred and two Centers have one full time worker, seventy-five have either two or three. Forty-three have either four or five, twenty-five have from six to ten. Seven have from eleven to nineteen, while thirty-five have none at all. (53) It should be noted, moreover,

that of the one hundred and two who report having one worker, a large number are synagogue Centers whose only professional worker is the Rabbi.

The Cincinnati Jewish Center is generally considered to be above the average center, as far as activities, facilities and professional staff are concerned. However, it is only within recent years that the Cincinnati organization could be so classified.

I believe that a brief history of the Center movement, as it evolved in Cincinnati, will offer us a more concrete description of the movement at large, than could be attained through series of charts and statistical figures. While no Center can be considered as perfectly typical of the national movement, each individual organization contains the essential characteristics of the evolution of the movement within the nation.

The population trend away from the basin area in the west end of Cincinnati, posed problems with which the Jewish Community House was unable to cope. The two Reform Congregations had attempted individually to carry on Center programs. At a Board meeting of the Wise Center held Tuesday May 24, 1927, Mr. Malvin Haas, newly elected president of the board, suggested that a merger of activities with the Rockdale Center might be of mutual advantage for both congregations. The feeling was shared also by Mr. Julian Schwab, president of the Rockdale group. (54)

After a good deal of discussion, it was decided to investigate the possibilities of such a merger. It was not until Tuesday July 30, 1929, however, that the plan became an actuality. On that day, the following resolution was presented at the Sinton Hotel:

"Whereas, the activities of the two Centers have become largely parallel, and

Whereas, in view of the increased success of the activities that have recently been undertaken by the two Centers,

Therefore be it resolved that it is the unanimous sense of the Wise-Rockdale

Joint Cooperative Committee that the two Centers be now merged." (55)

On December 16, 1929, the Board of Directors of the newly-formed Wise-Rockdale Center called its first meeting with Milfred Meiss as chairman. Their first business was to discuss the proposed constitution. A Forum was planned for January 19, 1930 at the Wise Center. The speaker was to be Dr. George Pierce Baker of Yale University who would discuss "Drama Since 1900." Two scholarships were awarded, one to a musical, one to a medical student. (56)

The activities of the Wise-Rockdale Center can best be understood by a glance at the budget for the year, 1930. This budget was approved at the February meeting of that year. It was as follows: Boy scouts - twenty-five dollars; Workshop - two hundred dollars (increased at meeting to three hundred and fifty dollars; Philanthropic Activities - one hundred dollars; Forum - twelve hundred dollars (as a minimum); Dances - two hundred dollars; Musicale and Supper Seminar - one hundred and fifty dollars; Membership and Administration - one thousand dollars. (57)

This organization, apparently dealing with adults and young adults, flourished as the only group of its kind in Avondale, until the Jewish Community Center Association was organized in May 1932. At this time a meeting was called for all Jewish organizations, by the director of the United Jewish Social Agencies, at the request of the Young Men's and Young Women's Hebrew Associations. In the fall of 1932, the organization was incorporated, and an executive secretary was engaged. (58)

The Jewish Community Center Association, and the Wise-Rockdale Center continued along together until March 31, 1934. At this date, Maurice W. Jacobs, president of the Wise-Rockdale Center mailed a letter to all its members. The following letter has been quoted in part. Please note that the word Center, when used alone, refers to the Wise-Rockdale Center.

"There will be a meeting of the membership of the Wise-Rockdale Center on

Thursday April 12, 1934.....at the Wise Center Building at 8:00 p.m.

"This meeting has been called upon the resolution of the Board of Directors for the purpose of acting upon a merger of the Wise-Rockdale Center and the Jewish Community Center Association to form a new organization to be called the Jewish Center.....

"Please, we solicit your careful attention in this matter, for this is not an impulsive move by your Board. For a year the matter has been under advisement..... There have been countless meetings and conferences in the matter, and many comprises have had to be made.....

"We feel that the Center as it now exists has outlived its usefulness both to the Temple and to the community. Young people of the Congregation no longer need the Center for dancing and entertainment.....Indeed, its small attendance at Center affairs,.....the diminishing membership list, all testify to the fact that the Center is no longer needed.

"Yet, as we have said before, there is one course open to us by which we may justify our existence in the very act of terminating it. The Jewish Community Center Association no longer needs an introduction to you.....The tremendous success of the recent J.C.C.A. drive for membership testifies to the fact that this service is recognized and whole-heartedly approved by the community.....

"We therefore say.....'Think carefully. Have we not, as we now exist, outlived our usefulness? Shall we continue to expend our futile efforts for things no longer wanted by those who once did want them? Or shall we, without protest, submit to the inevitable smothering of this organization by the incontestable inanition that is engulfing it? Has not a new generation sprung up that needs those things which we, by experience, arefitted to give? Shall we enter upon a campaign of competition with a young and mighty organization, attempting to defeat a purpose which we at heart holddear? Or were it not better to forget that we are proud of our identity, so that we can throw the full weight

of our effort in the balance of a worthy cause where we can individually accomplish much and derive so much of personal value?'

Sincerely yours,

Maurice W. Jacobs

President, Wise-Rockdale Center" (59)

Thus it was that the Jewish Community Center Association, and the Wise-Rockdale Center merged, and the new organization, the Jewish Center, took their place.(60) Under the terms of the agreement, it was explicitly stated that recreational, social and cultural functions were to be relegated to the Jewish Center; and that religious and religiously cultural functions were to be the province of the Temple.(61)

We find here a clue to the feelings of the Temple toward the activities of the Jewish Center. It must be remembered that the very people who are heard to complain about the lack of religious content within the Center, were also the people who carefully legislated such activities of the Center program.

At any rate, the need of a community-wide program, not in the west-side of the city, was recognized, and with the guidance of the Jewish Welfare Board, the Jewish Center was established.

From the autumn of 1932 to the summer of 1935, the Jewish Community Center was operated from an office in Rockdale Avenue Temple Annex. It made use of buildings in Avondale, Walnut Hills and Clifton for its activities. In the summer of 1935, a building at 3800 Reading Road was rented, and the Jewish Center was opened in October of 1935.

Two other affiliated programs were to come under the Jewish Center. One was in Price Hill. Here, meeting in the Beth Jacob Synagogue , a group work program for youth took place. Formerly as a branch of the Jewish Community House, it became a Center project when the Jewish Community House was dissolved in 1940.

The second affiliated program was begun in October 1940 as a result of the closing of the Jewish Community House. This was located on Forest Avenue, and became recognised as the Center for boys and girls under sixteen. Reading Road, Forest Avenue and Price Hill continued as three branches of the Jewish Center until 1943 when the present location was purchased at Blair and Hartford Streets.

In 1941 there were three hundred and thirty-five members in the Forest Avenue Center, and six hundred and seventy-five in the Reading Road Center, while there were approximately 131 members in the Price Hill group. In 1941 Cyril L. Slesnick was appointed executive director of the Jewish Center. One of the first projects completed during his regime was a comprehensive survey, prepared by Helen Jeter under the auspices of the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds. The survey, entitled "Leisure Time Needs and Resources of the Jewish Community of Cincinnati," was submitted to the Advisory Committee composed of Harry L. Lurie, Louis Kraft and Arthur Swift, Jr., and appeared six months after Slesnick arrived in Cincinnati.

A survey is of utmost importance to a Center, for it affords it an opportunity of recognising the needs and the desires of the people it serves. The Jeter Report made available the following picture of the Cincinnati Jewish Community of 1941.

"The conclusion from this study of the opinions of the Jewish community may be disappointing to those who were looking to the community for an answer as to what should be done about group work, recreation and education for the Jewish group. The real value of the opinions lies in the light they shed on what the community is, not on what it wants....the community is isolated geographically..... a large percentage live in Avondale, and Avondale is almost exclusively Jewish. The question remains, however, as to whether the community is isolated intellectually and culturally. The evidence seems to indicate that it is not that.

Its habits and tastes are much like those of the population of any American city of the same size and general location. The Jewish population is interested in going to movies, listening to the radio, visiting friends, entertaining, reading, playing cards or Mah Jong, and swimming. Jewish people in Cincinnati may prefer to play together rather than with non-Jewish groups, but on the whole, they play in the same way that they would play if they were not Jewish. The majority have no burning intellectual or cultural interests. They stay at home during fifty-six percent of their leisure time."(62)

Under Slesnick's guidance, the Cincinnati Jewish Center grew until today it is considered one of the leading Centers in the country. It has a membership of two thousand, eight hundred and fifty one. In addition it has forty-seven scholarship cases. Not counted in the membership (which begins at the age of five) it has an enrollment of one hundred and fourteen in its two nurseries and one pre-kindergarten school. In the Junior Department there are five hundred and eighty boys, and four hundred and ninety-six girls. In the Intermediate Department there are two hundred and fifty-two boys, and ninety-seven girls. In the Senior Department there are one hundred and ninety-five boys. In the Adult Department there are seven hundred and three men, and five hundred and twenty-eight women. To serve the needs of these people there are thirty full time workers. In the course of a single year, eleven thousand different individuals enter the Center, while six thousand regularly attend the Center facilities.

Let us now examine the activities of the Jewish Center as seen in Cincinnati. Its activities, chronologically, begin when a child is two years and five months old. At that age, a child is eligible for Nursery School. There are two such schools, both professionally manned. One is a half day, and the other is for a full, or eight hour day.

A person is eligible for Center membership at the age of five. Prior to that, the parent's membership suffices. The Junior Department for children, aged five to fourteen, has a staff of three full time workers, and carries on club programming, arts and crafts, woodworking, and photography. The Athletic Department extends through all age groups, so that there is one peron in charge of all athletics.

Some of these clubs have what is known as Jewish Content, and the arts and crafts program builds a series of projects around each Jewish Holiday.

An example of Jewish content in club programming is an experiment begun in 1947. A group of nine year old girls, twelve in number, were organized into the "Tri-H" Club. This club treated, in an informal manner, such points of interest as Jewish History, Jewish Current Events, and comparative religions. It was felt that so intangible a goal as "the mature awareness of what it means to be Jewish" could easily be misunderstood by parents who might ask their children: "what did you learn today?" The leader therefore, met with the children once a week, and with the parents once a month.

Concerning the progress made with this group, in comparative religions, two anecdotes should suffice. At the beginning of the program, one girl volunteered the information that she knew all there was to know about Jesus. When asked to tell the group, she explained: "Jesus was a Jew, who got mad at the Jews and turned Catholic." At the end of a year of club meetings, which included visits to various Temples and Churches, another girl embarrassed a local minister with the following question: "If Jesus were not killed, would there be a Christianity today?"

The Intermediate Department, for those aged fifteen to eighteen, is mostly concerned with club programming. The over-abundance of high school fraternities and sororities makes it necessary for the Center to work with this type of club. Although these groups are considered illegal in Ohio, the Center feels that its

task is to work with people. If the people can be reached only via fraternities and sororities, the Center will recognize fraternities and sororities. Professional group workers are not so frightened by names, as the public school administration is. Recognizing the gregariousness of youth, the Center believes that if fraternities and sororities did not exist, clubs and gangs would. The Center will work with them all.

In this age group, athletics plays a dominant role, while arts and crafts and woodwork suffer from lack of interest. Hobbies become apparent, such as photography and sewing, while socialdances reach their height of popularity.

The Senior Department follows the form of the Intermediate Department. Indeed, no great distinction is made at all. With the Adult Department, there are some innovations. Here gymnasium classes are conducted for both men and women. Men are engaged in bowling and baseball leagues. Woodwork, and crafts, find little response, while such activities as the Forum Series are extremely well planned and well carried out programs.

Each year there are from four to five speakers who address Cincinnatians at the Wise Center, under the auspices of the Jewish Center. The question of Jewish content is interesting as applied to these activities. In the 1948-49 season, there were five speakers. Of these, only one spoke on a Jewish subject. Of the five, this one was the most poorly attended.

Painting and photography have recently become extremely popular with this age group, and in March 1949, the second annual art exhibit was displayed. Paintings, photographs and handicraft by Jewish men and women, were exhibited at the Center. There were two paintings that describe Jewish content as conceived by the membership at large. One was a painting of a farmhouse in the country at sprintime. The other was that of a country scene in the fall. The first one was entitled "Iyar", the latter was entitled "Elul." Other than the name, there was no noticeable Jewish content.

There are, however, study groups on Jewish affairs, jointly organized by the Center and the Bureau of Jewish Education. On the whole, these are attended by a very small

number of people.

In the Adult Department, there is one group on geriatrics, known as the Good Times Club. The Center has inaugurated this program to meet the needs of an age group of which little is known. Composed almost entirely of immigrant Jews, there is an abundance of what Janowsky would term Jewish Content. It consists of celebrating the holidays, reading Jewish newspapers and mispronouncing Hebrew.

The summer program makes the Cincinnati Jewish Center unique in the country. A day camp, Camp Hanoar, has an enrollment of two hundred and twenty-five, for boys and girls aged five to ten. The nursery has another hundred. The playground, open to all members without charge, has a daily average of two hundred to two hundred and fifty, while the swimming pool attracts upwards of two hundred a day.

In the evening, an additional forty people use the swimming pool, while an average of eighty-five use the baseball fields from six o'clock until night fall. A dozen men use the handball court each evening. A total of about seven hundred different individuals use the Center facilities daily throughout the summer. A special staff of forty-five workers meet the needs of those who use the Center facilities.

In the summer, the question of Jewish content can become quite fantastic. In the summer of 1947, a group worker was coaching a group of small boys before a baseball game. There appeared, at that time, a young man , a graduate of the Hebrew Union College, who was engaged in speaking for Chautauqua. He stood on the playground, a camera slung over his shoulder, and a look of righteous indignation on his face. "I've come to take pictures of Jewish Content, and I can't find any to snap," he complained. He had come to take pictures of Jewish content, on a baseball diamond!

The above has been an outline of Center activities as seen in Cincinnati, in the hope of presenting a concrete picture of the Jewish Center movement.

Having outlined the history of the Jewish Center movement from 1840-1949,

having presented the statistical data concerning the three hundred and one Centers in America, and having given a picture of the activities of a fairly typical Center, it is now advisable to view the one factor that has caused more discussion in the Center field than any other single factor in the past decade.

Part six THE JANOWSKY REPORT

In 1946, Professor Oscar Janowsky was appointed by the Jewish Welfare Board to conduct a survey of that organization. The results were printed February 17, 1948, in a book entitled "The Jewish Welfare Board Survey," by Oscar Janowsky. During the course of the survey, questionnaires were submitted to one hundred and seventy out of the three hundred and one Centers affiliated with the Board.(63) Questionnaires were filled out by two thousand four hundred and twenty persons, of whom forty-two per cent were board members, twenty-three percent staff members, thirteen percent members of the Center, eleven per-cent national or regional board members, four percent rabbis and five percent general community leaders.(64) The other source was interviews with three thousand five hundred and sixteen persons interviewed either singly or in groups, and for whom eleven hundred and nine schedules were filled out.(65)

In general, the conclusions of the Janowsky Report are as follows: Seventy-six of those who answered are in favor of having Jewish content.(66) Sixty-six percent favor minimal requirements in Jewish education for staff members,(67) and they, furthermore, welcome the guidance of the Jewish Welfare Board in these matters.

Needless to say, when these findings were made public, there was a good deal of furore. It was the feeling of a great many members of the National Association of Jewish Center Workers that the Jewish Welfare Board had an ulterior motive in having the Survey made. Wild accusations filled the air.

However, Louis Wirth set about immediately to write a refutation of the report on technical grounds. Many of his points were extremely valid. His two main arguments against the findings of the Janowsky Report are as follows: First, the findings do not flow either logically or factually from the evidence presented.(68) Second, Janowsky allows the reader to believe that the recommendations arise out of the facts. "However, in science or in logic, recommendations

cannot ever arise out of facts alone; they must rest, in part at least, upon value premises."(69) Worth implies with these two statements that, A) Janowsky had decided upon his conclusions prior to the findings which do not bear them out, and B) while the Board may decide to let Janowsky make its decisions for it, it must not believe that these decisions are being made by the facts alone.

The following factors must be recognized in understanding the Janowsky Report. The reports were self-selective, that is to say the questionnaires were sent out to Centers, and those on the staff who wished to fill them out, did so. Immediately, a bias of interest can be seen. What kind of people did not fill out the questionnaires? Of the one hundred and seventy Centers which were contacted, only forty percent answered the questionnaires with any degree of completeness.(70) In most questionnaires of this type, abstentions rarely fall below twenty-five percent, but in this case, dealing with professionally trained workers, abstentions dropped to between fifty and sixty percent. Worth concludes from this, that the questions were inadequately constructed to a degree that they were too ambiguous for professional group workers to answer.

Certainly the term "Jewish Content" must be defined. We have seen in Cincinnati that the first speaker for the Wise-Rockdale Center Forum was Dr. Pierce who spoke on "Drama since 1900", and the Wise-Rockdale Center was organized organized and guided by two Temples. We have seen also at the inception of the Jewish Center in Cincinnati, the two Temples carefully told the Center that religious, and religiously cultural functions were the sole province of the Temple. The term "Jewish Content" can mean all things to all people. Many people who stated in their answers that Jewish Content was desirable, felt that their Center had a sufficient amount of it.

Indeed, a glance at the results of the questionnaires presents a paradox. If Centers, and Center membership are in favor of this undefined Jewish Content, and if they welcome Jewish Welfare Board guidance, then why do they not have more

Jewish Content as Janowsky feels the facts suggest. Obviously the answer is that they feel they have enough Jewish Content, and are worried only about their benighted colleagues.

At any rate, Jewish Content is never once defined. It is possible however, to see the forces here at play. In his Survey, Janowsky takes issue with two of the leading members of the National Association of Jewish Center Workers. Harold Murray, a young executive of the Bronx Young Men's and Young Women's Hebrew Association, was chairman of a committee which stimulated seven regional groups of the Association to formulate a philosophy for Jewish Center work. Murray's report in 1946 (71) dealt with the role of the Jewish Center in three areas, namely: social action and democratic processes, Jewish survival, and the American and world Jewish community. Janowsky (72) felt that Murray's statement "to prepare Jews to live as individuals, as members of the Jewish group, and as effective citizens," was a vain attempt or synthesis. It was not valid, thought Janowsky, because Murray dealt only with the justification of social action as formulated by Graenum Berger, director of the Bronx House, and leading philosopher of the Jewish Center movement. The issue, as Janowsky saw it was that religion and being Jewish meant to Berger and Murray social justice, while to Janowsky, being Jewish was much wider, if not deeper.

Berger and Murray were no doubt willing to write refutations of the Janowsky Report, but apparently it was felt that Werth's rebuttal was sufficient, especially since Werth was not once mentioned by Janowsky, while Berger and Murray were.

Werth saw in the Survey, more than technical errors, and at one point it is possible to see the great gap between Janowsky and Werth as regards the total picture. Werth states, "A third issue deals with this matter of Jewish group continuity or Jewish survival. The Janowsky Survey found that the great majority of Jewish Center workers and board members were in favor of Jewish survival. But there is still an issue over Jewish survival which Dr. Janowsky does not analyze.

This is the question of whether survival is the end or the means. Some Jews, among whom Dr. Janowsky must be included, feel that Jewish survival is the ultimate goal, and that the Jewish people are simply a means to that end. Other Jews - among whom the majority of Jewish Center workers must be included - feel that an emphasis on Jewish Content and survival is the way to build wholesome and healthy personalities, for Jews in the contemporary world. For the latter Jews, survival becomes the means, and the Jewish people are the end."(73)

There is one final point that must be taken into consideration. There is a feeling that exists among the professional workers that is most difficult to describe. The National Association of Jewish Center Workers prides itself that it is composed solely of professional workers. Group work in general, and Jewish Center work in particular have become a highly skilled science. The professionals believe that they are in a position to guide the destiny of the Jewish Center movement in America. Their approach is toward meeting the needs of the people, rather than legislating for ignorant masses. The goal of the group worker, they believe, is not to make decisions for people, but rather to make clear to them, the issues involved, so that when the people finally decide, that decision will be based upon an intelligent understanding of the factors.

Many members of the Association feel that the leadership of the Center movement is in danger of being taken over by the Jewish Welfare Board. The statement has been made that the Board is a service organization and must remain one. Without local autonomy the movement could never have succeeded. The crux of this dissension, then , is the feeling that the Board is using the Janowsky Survey to change its type of existence from a service organization to a controlling organization. It is the fear of this metamorphasis which accounts in large measure for the adverse response to the Janowsky Survey.

However, fear of ulterior motive is not the sole reason for the dissension. On an intellectual level, there is vast disagreement between the Janowsky forces

and the Werth forces. Janowsky holds that the Center "must be a place where the Jewish aspect of personality should be developed, as distinguished, say, from the public school where the American aspect of personality is formed. The professional Center workers hold that there is no such possiblity of separating a Jewish aspect of personality. Jewish individuals come to them as whole personalities, with certain needs and desires, and the Jewish Center workers feel that they cannot say, 'We shall deal here only with your Jewish needs, and your Jewish interests. Forget about your other needs and interests when you come into the Center.' " (74)

In summing up the Janowsky Report, the following conclusions have been reached. The Jewish Welfare Board erred in appointing, for the survey, a man like Dr. Janowsky. First, his keen interest in 'positive Judaism' immediately causes his objectivity to be suspected. Second, there are men within the group work field that are capable of conducting such a survey, without conveying the feeling to the professionals that the Board had to pick an outsider because the Association could not supply a satisfactory person.

Janowsky performed his task well, as a sociologist, however, he should have realized the amount of value-judgements that were inextricably interwoven with his 'fact-finding.' The Jewish Welfare Board should have been aware of dangers that were present under the best of conditions, and that having Janowsky perform the Survey would infinitely increase the dangers involved.

Part seven CONCLUSION

The evolution of the Jewish Center movement in America, shows in bold relief that the Jewish people have always been desirous and able to meet the needs of fellow Jews. It is true that "no point of view, no characteristic pattern of thought, no ideological foundation" has emerged from the Center movement. Therein lies its strength, Janowsky to the contrary notwithstanding.

The pattern, the form that the Center took in each generation was based upon the needs of the people. When, in the second half of the nineteenth century, America was a growing nation with unknown frontiers and untapped resources, the Jews had problems, it is true, but these problems were of a different character. There had been no huge wave of immigration. There was no depression. There was no great persecutions abroad. The Jews then were interested in cultural and social affairs. The Young Men's Hebrew Associations that sprang up at that time, adequately met the requirements demanded of them.

With pogroms of Russia, and the great mass immigrations of the 1880's, American Jewry took a more sober view of its communal life. It was necessary to institute Americanization classes. It was necessary to form neighborhood houses where the bewildered masses of immigrants could gradually become attuned to the new world. The poverty which accompanied the immigrants' ignorance of the language had to be allayed. The settlement house attacked the problem, and Jewish philanthropy supported the project.

However, the twentieth century saw a great decrease in immigration. The Johnson Bill effectively put an end to America's 'Open Door' policy. Second and third generations of American Jews began to appear on the scene. The Jew

had become a citizen of the United States.

The Jews knew the language. They had been educated in the American public school. They understood the teeming hustle and bustle of American life. They had found their places in the economic and educational scenes. Their religious needs were met, more or less, by the Temple and the Synagogue. A superficial survey of the American scene might lead one to believe that this era needed no Jewish Center. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The Jewish population was divided into many spheres of interest. On the religious scale there were conformists and non-conformists. Of the conformists, there were Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform. These were Zionists, non-Zionists and anti-Zionists. There were divisions based upon wealth, as well as native origins. Surely an agency of unity was needed; a Center to which all the various types of Jews could come and meet on common ground. These considerations pointed the way, not only for a Jewish Center, but for the type of Jewish Center which exists today.

It is this effort to maintain the equality of all that has caused certain dissensions concerning the Center. Each faction among the Jews, religious, political or social, has tried to remake the Center in its own image. The Center has always refused to allow anyone type of thinking to gain control of its policy, and has with equal vigor refused to take sides. This, of course, is one of the basic faults Janowsky finds with the Center, and perhaps a note of clarification is in place.

There are two points of view concerning the Center's stand not to take a stand. Different Jews have different conceptions of Jewishness, whether it be connected with kashruth, Zionism or anti-semitism. One point of view is that these differences are healthy, and should be allowed to work themselves out. The other point of view is that all Jews must be kep together within some type

of philosophic framework, or Judaism will cease to exist. It is important to note that the prime concern of the former point of view is the people. The prime concern of the latter point of view is Judaism, with the people in a subordinate position. It is, indeed, a philosophic chauvanism that makes man a slave to a concept of man. Unhappily, religionists have been prone to follow this point of view.

The feeling prevalent in the Jewish Center movement today is quite the opposite. The professional workers, by and large, believe that if any attempt is made to force Jews into a uniform philosophic framework, many will not conform, and will thus be cut off entirely from the group. No Center worker can view with equanimity the loss of a single Jew, merely because that Jew cannot fit himself into the "right" framework of attitude ordained by his peers.

The Center believes, and rightly so, that it is an agency of unity. Jews with all shades of opinion feel free, and must continue to feel free, to use it. Should the Center take a stand in any of these divergencies, whether it be on Zionism, Orthodoxy or minimal requirements of Jewish Content, it will become an agency of division like all the rest, and its goal would thereby be defeated.

The task of the Center is to work with all. It dare not allow itself the dubious luxury of declaring one point of view to be the absolute right, to which all of its members must conform, orbe cut off.

Thus the Center, in our time also, has risen to meet a definite need. However, the shape that it has assumed was due equally as much to another further consideration.

The Jewish Center is more than a place where all Jews can meet together. It is more than a gymnasium and a club room. Its antecedent, the settlement house, was a haven from the tremendous economic problems of the outside world.

In a way, the Center is a haven from the personality problems of the outside world. But it is more than that. A haven is a shelter, a restingplace , a fortress, but outside the fortress the problems still remain. The Center is now equipped with professionally trained men and women who do more than protect people. They prepare people to meet the problems that await them. They help them to help themselves.

A note of caution must be injected here, lest the reader derive from the foregoing, a picture of the Center as a clinic for neurotics. Life is filled with problems. Merely being alive presents certain problems. Being Jewish is an additional problem. A small minority of our population are incapable of solving their problems in a socially acceptable manner. These few require psychiatric help.

The vast majority of our population have made a more or less acceptable adjustment. The group worker attempts to help these people, both young and old, to make this adjustment in relation to the total personality, and in relation to the group. The ability to work with people was first a problem, and now a science. Here in the Center, a group of idealistically minded, splendidly trained workers have been making a noble experiment. It is based upon the belief that all problems are not economic. Their experiment has been to see if they, with their training, can help boys and girls, and men and women to solve their problems. The experiment has been a success.

It is true that the Temple has not always looked favorably upon the Center. Far too often have spokesmen for the Temple expressed their dissatisfaction with the Center. The one outstanding fault they find with it, is in the matter of Jewish Content. Perhaps it should be noticed that the question of Jewish Content is raised by a certain group of people, while it never even dawns upon

another group. The men on top, and the men outside talk incessantly about Jewish Content, but rarely, if ever, is the question brought up by members of the Jewish Center. It appears to be an issue which is not an issue. It is a problem that exists in the minds of orators, but the workers have never felt it to be a problem from within.

The form that Temple criticism most often takes is to be found in the question: "What is Jewish about the Jewish Center?" That Jewish people meet there does not satisfy the requirements of those who pose the question. It might be interesting to see if all those who ask this question, could decide specifically what would make the Center Jewish. No doubt they could never agree. A certain rabbi who frowns on recreation, once exclaimed, upon hearing that some boys and girls had gone to the Center to jitterbug: "What is Jewish about jitterbugging?" A group worker replied: "That Jews are doing the jitterbugging."

However, in order to understand the nature of this antipathy, it is necessary to strip from it any rationalizations. It is the opinion of the author, that the question of Jewish Content is a rationalization. Indications of this were given recently by a field secretary of the Jewish Welfare Board(75) who stated that prior to the Janowsky Report, the most common complaint heard from the rabbis was that the Jewish Center lacked Jewish Content. Subsequent to the Survey, however, and Janowsky's list of recommendations, the complaint most often heard from the rabbis has been that the Center is encroaching upon the province of the Temple.

Thus the Center is attacked both coming and going. More important than the criticism, however, is the insight it affords us as to the cause of this antipathy. May it not be thecase that the rabbi strongly feels that he has not performed his task adequately? May it not be the case that the Temple is

is keenly aware that the Center might have sprung into existence to do the work it had failed to do?

There is no historical basis to the statement that the Temple's inadequacy brought about the Jewish Center. Nor does the author wish to prove the truth of that statement. The statement is mentioned, not because it is a fact, but because some rabbis believe it to be a fact.

Actually the rabbi and the group worker are very far removed from each other. There are definite differences in approach to life which characterize the two professions. However, it must be stated that, while these differences exist in actuality, there is nothing in the definition of the term rabbi and the term group-worker, that makes these differences necessary.

The first major difference is in the ability to perform a job analysis. The group worker is trained to define his boundaries. The rabbi receives no such training. The group worker is prepared to say: "This activity, or problem falls outside the realm of my knowledge." The rabbi, so far as we can perceive, is neither willing nor able to make that statement.

The second difference is that the rabbi is not aware of one characteristic of religion. He too often believes that his Temple should carry on the community wide activities which are the province of the Center. This is due to his failure to see that his Temple is devisive, inasmuch as religion is devisive. The Center is quite the opposite. It is all embracing because recreation is all embracing. This factor must be recognized if rabbi and group worker are to learn to work together.

A third difference is that the rabbi, by his training, is authoritarian. It has been pointed out that if the College has not made the rabbi authoritarian, his congregation has. It is he who says "yes" or "no". He is the final arbiter who either does not, or cannot get off the pedestal upon which

he has been placed. The group worker, by his training, is incapable of saying "yes" or "no". The group worker says instead: "These are the factors involved, now let us see if we can reach a solution."

Of course it is true that the above statements constitute generalizations. They are not, however, hasty generalizations. There are many rabbis who, fortunately, do not fall into this pattern, and there are group workers, unfortunately, who also do not fit the foregoing description. However, it is the belief of the author, based upon seven years' experience of working both with rabbis and with group workers, that the majority of both groups have been amply described.

The differences that exist need not exist. Moreover they need not lead to antipathy. Happily, headway is being made. In recent years, there have been examples of fine teamwork between the Temple and the Center.

In 1948 Cyril Slesnick, executive director of the Cincinnati Jewish Center, sent a letter to all of the local Temples and Synagogues, in which he offered the use of his services. If any rabbi wished to form a group of any type within the congregation, the Center would send him a professionally trained worker to accomplish it. The worker would organize the group. The rabbi could then take it over.

Another step in the right direction was initiated by Slesnick. He instituted, in 1948, a series of conferences with the officials of the Hebrew Union College, in the hope that all rabbinic students might receive a minimum of group work training. It was his wish that a course in group work might be conducted by the College. Failing that, it was further hoped that a plan might be begun whereby all rabbinic students would do some group work at the Center, under professional supervision. At this writing, the proposals have not been acted upon.

Incidents like these give promise to a new future where both group worker and rabbi can together discuss the needs of the people, and together work for the fulfillments of these needs.

The Center is faced with many problems today. But it is aware of the problems. These problems will be solved, as they have been in the past. They will be solved according to the one principle which the Center has evolved, and from which it has never swerved. It is the principle which has been the cause of a great many of its conflicts with men of definite points of view. It is also the principle which has made the Center strong and useful. That principle is that the people are always the end, and never the means. People are the medium with which the Center works. But the people are never tools for the Center to use. No concept of life, no individual point of view must be allowed, if the people, thereby, are to suffer.

The goal of the Jewish Center is the welfare of the people; not Judaism, not Zionism, not Orthodoxy, but the people - all the people. It will continue to serve the people, and work unceasingly to bring about happy, well-adjusted persons out of the problem ridden men and women who avail themselves of its facilities.

FOOTNOTES

1. A professional group worker, with a master's degree, receives a starting salary of $2800.00 to $3200.00. A graduate rabbi, with a master's degree receives a starting salary of $6000.00 to $7000.00. The average Center worker, with twelve to fifteen years experience, and as executive director of a Center, receives $7000.00.
2. At times the letters were transposed, thus the H.Y.M.L.A. in St. Louis, 1877.
3. The Jews of Philadelphia, Henry S. Morais p. 162
4. A Jewish Calendar for Fifty Years J. J. Lyons p. 167
5. American Israelite - A.I. April 20, 1855
6. A.I. April 27, 1855
7. Occident Feb. 1856
8. A.I. Jan. 1, 1864
9. The Young Men's Hebrew Associations 1854-1913 - Y.M.H.A. Benjamin Rabinowitz pp. 3-12
10. A.I. Jan. 23, 1857 and April 5, 1861
11. A.I. Jan. 25, 1856
12. A.I. Nov. 24, 1865 and Jan. 8, 1870
13. Y.M.H.A. p. 6
14. A.I. Feb. 21, 1868
15. A.I. April 23, 1869
16. History of North American Y.M.C.A.'s. Richard Morse, pp 73 and 137
17. Association Bulletin 1881-1883
18. Y.M.H.A. pp 16-17
19. Jewish Messenger May 21, 1880
20. American Hebrew May 14, 1880 - A.H.

FOOTNOTES - cont'd.

21. A.I. Dec. 31, 1869

22. Y.M.H.A. p 30

23. Y.M.H.A. p 31

24. The JWB Survey - J.W.B. Survey Oscar Janowsky, P238

25. Statistics of Jews and Jewish Organizations in the U.S. H. S. Linfield in American Jewish Year Book vol. 40, pp 61-84

26. Y.M.H.A. p 66

27. Y.M.H.A. p 66

28. Social Settlements in New York Kennedy & Parra p 6

29. A.I. Dec. 28, 1883

30. A.H. May 23, 1884

31. The Aguilar Free Library was the merger of the libraries of the Y.M.H.A. and the Hebrew Free School Association.

32. The Y Days of Long Ago, Samuel Greenbaum, in the Jewish Center, March 1924

33. Ibid

34. A Century of Jewish Life, Elbogen, P337

35. For more complete list, see Y.M.H.A. p 73

36. National Conference of Jewish Charities, Nov. 1916, p 140

37. The Settlement Horizon, Woods & Kennedy p 372

38. I. Edwin Goldwasser, Chief of Board of Experts of the National Conference of YMH & HA, in National Conference of Jewish Charities, July 1913, p 291

39. Federation Movement, J. Jacobs in American Jewish Year Book 1915-1916 pp 159-198

40. Y.M.H.A. p 80

41. National Conference of Jewish Charities, Nov. 1916 pp 140

42. J.W.B. Twenty Years Old, Cyrus Adler, 1937 pp 149-150

43. J.W.B. Survey p 63

44. The J.W.B. emerged from the first World War with a surplus of approximately $2,000,000.00 JWB p 73

FOOTNOTES cont'd.

45. J.W.B. Twenty Years Old p 161

46. Colonel Harry Cutler had been chairman of J.W.B. from its inception, until his death in August 1920. Cyrus Adler then became acting chairman until J.W.B. became a permanent national Jewish agency, at which time Lehman was elected president.

47. The Jewish Center Field, Nathan Cohen, in Jewish Center reprint, 1941, p 1

48. J.W.B. Survey Table 6, p 162

49. Ibid

50. Ibid

51. Ibid, Table 7, p 164

52. Ibid Table 8, p 165

53. Ibid Table 9, p 166

54. Minutes, Wise Center Board, May 24, 1927

55. Resolution of merger, passed unanimously at Sinton Hotel Tuesday, July 30, 1929, - unpublished

56. Wise-Rockdale Center minutes Dec. 16, 1929, unpublished

57. Ibid Feb. 1930

58. Leisure Time Needs and Resources of the Jewish Community of Cincinnati, Helen R. Jeter p 49 - Jeter Report

59. Unpublished letter as stated.

60. Merger Agreement - unpublished

61. Statement of merger - unpublished

62. Jeter Report p 72

63. Independent Study of the N.J.W.B. Survey Commission Report - Werth Study p 3

64. Ibid p 2

65. Ibid p 2

66 J.W. B. Survey p 267

67. Ibid p 264

68. Werth Study p 1

69. Ibid p 1

70. Ibid P 3

FOOTNOTES - cont'd.

71. Toward a Philosophy for Jewish Center Work, A. Harold Murray, in proceedings of the NAJCW New York, 1946 pp 8-18

72. JWB Survey p 253

73. Worth Study p 13

74. Ibid p 13

75. David Bonder, Mid-west Field Secretary of J.W.B., in statement March 1949 at Hebrew Union College

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