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Lessons From Kishinev

The Growth in American Jewish Consciousness and Organization 1881-1913

by
Michael Lawrence Moskowitz

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Ordination

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion
Cincinnati, Ohio

1995

Referees,
Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus and Dr. Karla Goldman

To Leslie,
for always supporting and believing in me

To Nana and Papa,
whose lives began in 1903 in Russia
Immigrating to America in the first decade after the Kishinev massacre,
they lived through what I have sought to explain.

Digest

On April 6, 1903, the Russian police remained idle as the rioting population of Kishinev killed forty-nine Jews and severely injured hundreds more in the first pogrom of the twentieth century. As reports of the events in Kishinev spread throughout the world, public outcry was unprecedented. In the United States, Jewish leaders organized massive protest meetings and substantial relief funds to assist the sufferers. During the following decade American Jewry continued to focus on the Kishinev massacre and even used it as a rallying call to action. Even today when discussing the pogroms of the late nineteenth century as well as those of the early twentieth century, Kishinev is often the one mentioned as a reference point.

This thesis has attempted to understand and explain why Kishinev has been regarded as such a pivotal event. What set this pogrom apart from other Russian incidents of anti-Jewish agitation, many of which sustained even more brutality than experienced in Kishinev? As a result, what impact did this massacre have upon American Jewry?

Chapter One looks at the actual events of the massacre in 1903. Beginning with the conditions of Jewish life within the Russian Pale of Settlement and analyzing the other causes which led to the pogrom, this section provides an overview of the pogrom itself. Chapter Two deals with the immediate response to the massacre, concentrating on the response of the American Jewish Community, as particularly seen in the Jewish press and other contemporary sources.

Chapter Three looks at the response the pogroms of 1881 and 1882 received, using many sources similar to those read with the previous chapter.

This section begins to compare the response of American Jewry during these two periods. However, that comparison is completed in Chapter Four. This chapter analyzes the source of Kishinev's impact and how the massacre became a motivating force for the Jewish community. Once again the American Jewish press as well as the papers in the American Jewish Archives of numerous influential leaders of this period were utilized for this comparison.

Chapter Five follows the developments within American Jewry over the next ten years. Through analysis of the American Jewish press, The American Jewish Year Book and annuals of the UAHC and CCAR, this has been thoroughly documented. The shock of Kishinev became the impetus for unification and organizational development within the community. Therefore, the records of the American Jewish Committee, which was established in 1906, further illuminated this trend. As a result of the massacre, Jews recognized the need to work for relief and identification, demonstrating the growing Jewish consciousness and the desire to unite. For this reason, Kishinev not only served as a symbol to American Jewry, but the results of its impact still affect the Jewish community today.

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Preface

This thesis began with the stories of my grandparents, both of whom were born in the Spring of 1903. I remember my nana reflecting on her childhood in Russia. The memories she shared with me were unbelievable for a child - tales of hiding under the kitchen table as Cossacks ran through the streets attacking helpless individuals. The picture she created in my mind with her description of the Cossack upon his horse as he brandished a giant sword will remain with me forever. While Papa's family fled the Russian Pale of Settlement in the midst of the pogroms of 1905, Nana's family did not leave until 1911.

These two remarkable individuals contributed to the growing numbers of eastern European immigrants in the United States during the decade after the Kishinev massacre. They matured and lived through the period of American Jewish history which I have sought to understand and explain, a time of increasing Jewish consciousness and developing organizations. One result of the Kishinev massacre was the heightened desire for information, particularly information concerning foreign events. American Jews in 1903 learned the ramifications of not being informed. Prior to Kishinev, American jewry knew little about Russian events and dedicated only minimal attention to experiences of their foreign brethren. Even after the pogroms of 1881-1882, interest in Russia soon faded away as this wave of pogroms ended. Therefore, when news of the Kishinev massacre reached the United States, the Jewish community was shocked. Over the years, American Jewry placed more and more emphasis on staying informed and the power of knowledge. My papa embraced this American Jewish philosophy. Although mostly a self-educated man, he devoured lessons of history, fascinated by the study of the past and what it

teaches us. This thesis definitely reflects his passion, a passion which he shared with me.

I selected this thesis topic partly because the Kishinev massacre occurred in the year both my grandparent's were born. The parallels of the beginning of their lives with the outrage of 1903 and its impact on the American Jewish community led me to further reading. Yet I must admit that a suggestion of my brother also directed my work. Although his interest focused on the theological developments in response to Kishinev (which he pointed out in Eugene Borowitz's Renewing the Covenant: A Theology for the Postmodern Jew), his advice helped create this thesis. I am indebted to him for his constant interest in my studies and the suggestions he has made throughout the process. As a rabbi he has established an example for me which I respect and embrace. I am thrilled to enter the rabbinate as his colleague.

One of the greatest experiences of this process has been the opportunity to work with Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus. As I complete this thesis I truly believe that I have studied at the foot of a master. His insights and understanding of American Jewish history are astounding and give light to the most intricate times. At the conclusion of reading my thesis, Dr. Marcus proclaimed, "mikal talmidai hiskalti - from all my students I have learned." I have been honored with the opportunity of studying with this scholar and for his reflecting upon my thoughts. My knowledge and understanding of history and Judaism have increased because of this experience.

I am also indebted to my other teacher in this process, Dr. Karla Goldman. She has provided me with direction throughout the year and served as a mentor. I greatly appreciate her thoroughness and time as she helped me create something of which I am proud. Her guidance and knowledge has been

invaluable as I have ventured into American Jewish history on the academic level.

As I waded through the American Jewish Archives, Kevin Proffitt offered useful suggestions for the directions of my research and helped me find materials on numerous occasions. I very much appreciate his assistance as well as the entire staff of the American Jewish Archives.

Finally I would like to thank my parents for their support and encouragement throughout my education, particularly these years of rabbinical school. They have instilled within me a love of Judaism and a love for learning, both of which have brought me to this thesis.

And, to my fiancee Leslie, whose patience during this process I will always remember. Her support gives me strength and her love I treasure.

Cincinnati, Ohio
March 1, 1995
1 Adar 29 5755

Note on Spelling:

Whenever discussing Kishinev, I have used the spelling which most commonly appears today (Kishinev-1995). However, in 1903, no uniform English spelling for the Russian town had been established. Therefore, numerous different spellings appear throughout the press, the annuals, in personal correspondence and in histories. In quotes, I have preserved whatever spelling the author originally used. This remains true for the various other Russian towns (as well as anything else Russian) which has been mentioned in this thesis.

Chapter 1 - Introduction
The Shock of Kishinev
An Overview of the Massacre

Only three months after the Kishinev massacre, an article in The American Hebrew made a bold assertion regarding the future impact of the pogrom:

> Kishinev will mark a decided turn in Jewish history: this black mark on its pages has had a decided influence on the Jewish position far beyond Russia... It has made the work of the Jews much clearer. It has made American provincialism impossible with self respect and dignity. American Jewry has stretched out its hands to its brothers. America has been brought into the republic of nations by recent affairs; even so has American Jewry been made a member, by right of sympathy and ready response, in the great brotherhood of Israel. American "Judaism" has become a futile assertion. Place it to the credit of Kishinev.[1]

The Jews of 1903 definitely sensed a change in their community and in world Jewry. But the impact went well beyond 1903. Regularly when discussing the pogroms of the late nineteenth century as well as those of the early twentieth century, Kishinev is the one mentioned, still today, as a reference point. Even in scholarly articles the name Kishinev seems to represent an entire period of Russian history, a time of fear and concern regarding Russia's treatment of the Jews.[2]

Yet, why Kishinev? Why is this atrocity mentioned as such a pivotal event? What set Kishinev apart from the other incidents, ensuring that it would receive such attention as compared to the other atrocities Jews experienced in the

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[1] "The After Effects," The American Hebrew 73:9 (17 July 1903): 270.

[2] See Ismar Elbogen's, A Century of Jewish Life or Peter Wiernik's History of the Jews in America both of which use "Kishinev" to describe a period. Wiernik even calls later smaller pogroms, "little Kishinevs." (358)

Russian Pale of Settlement before and after 1903? Of course, the amount of coverage devoted to the massacre in 1903 dwarfs the references made to Kishinev today. So we ask, why did so many elements of American society initially dedicate massive attention to Kishinev? Why did the American Jewish and non-Jewish communities respond with such unanimous concern and support? Compared to incidents prior to the massacre, these responses were uncharacteristic. After looking at these contrasts, the next logical inquiry relates to the lasting impact of the Kishinev massacre, not merely on those who experienced this atrocity first hand, but also upon American Jews who learned about the event. Overall, the shock of the outrage and the reaction it received contribute to and demonstrate the significant and extensive influence of Kishinev. Yet we cannot engage in this discussion until we understand what actually occurred in Kishinev in 1903. When we say Kishinev, to what exactly do we refer?

Kishinev - Prior to the Massacre of 1903

In 1903 Kishinev was the capital of Bessarabia. This region, which borders Rumania, is now known as Moldavia. Under the laws which governed the Pale of Settlement, authorities in this area prohibited Jews from purchasing land in the rural districts. Therefore, many of them turned to the pursuits of commerce and industry. Because Kishinev existed in one of the more fertile and prosperous districts of Russia, its Jewish inhabitants were better off than their brethren in other parts of the country.

Until the end of the nineteenth century, Jews and Christians in the region maintained tolerable relations with each other. In a publication marking the one year anniversary of the Kishinev massacre, Isidore Singer discussed the earlier positive feelings among the population emphasizing, "[n]othing is more

characteristic of the relation existing at that time between Jews and Christians than the fact that they founded common benevolent societies, and that Jews were members of the Board of Alderman."[3] Even at the end of the previous century, when pogroms were not uncommon in Russia, Christians and Jews in Kishinev fostered relations which allowed the two groups to interact and benefit from their associations. Singer recounted an episode which he believed shed light on the feelings that existed between Jews and the peasants of Bessarabia. With recurring pogroms late in the nineteenth century, we might assume that the peasants in Kishinev threatened the Jews. Yet their actions painted a different picture. When the government drove the Jews out of the villages, the peasants rallied together and petitioned authorities so that Jews could return to their homes.[4] However, Singer's assertions and stories must be tempered by the contrast he wanted to accentuate with the violent eruption in 1903. Amidst all this outwardly tolerant behavior, anxieties did continue as a result of the comparative success Jews experienced and the continuous proliferation of anti-Jewish propaganda. Essentially these factors had created centuries of distrust. By 1903, mutual supportiveness had dissipated. The massacres of Kishinev demonstrated a totally different sentiment from that portrayed by Singer on the part of the Christian peasants towards the Jews.

The tolerable relations which once existed were severed in a large part because of the actions of Pavloki Krushevan, a petty official and journalist who published a newspaper in Kishinev called Bessarabetz. This paper, the only press organ in the province, fostered anti-Semitic agitation through its style of vehement, yellow journalism. Not only did the paper receive government support; it also became the mouthpiece of the province's reactionary groups.

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[3] Isidore Singer, ed., Russia at the Bar of the American People: A Memorial of Kishinef (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1904) 2.

[4] Singer, 3.

Although a tolerant attitude may have existed prior to the twentieth century in Kishinev, Krushevan's journalism gave support and encouragement to the anti-semitic, underlying sentiment of the Russian population. The establishment of the Pale of Settlement in the eighteenth century, the May Laws of 1882, the quotas on Jewish participation in higher education, in local government and in certain professions had all sent a clear message. Why would the government create these laws if, in their understanding, the Jews were not inferior? Thus, the average Christian easily believed that their Jewish neighbors were dangerous, an alien force against which others needed to be protected. The structure of society gave the distinct impression that every Jew should be regarded as a potential exploiter, criminal, and enemy.[5] For many non-Jews, anti-semitism seemed to be a facet of the patriotism and national pride their leaders supported. The Jews were outsiders, not Russians, not citizens. The Moldavians and Ukrainians, even though they too were not Russians, at least had a homeland of their own. The Jews did not. Thus, Jewish individuals faced the continuing sense that they did not fit in, they could not be accepted.[6]

By 1903, the Jewish population had become the largest ethnic group in Kishinev, a statistic which increasingly concerned the Moldavians as well as the Russians.[7] Although Jews and Christians had lived in relative peace along side one another, anxieties had existed for some time. Many beliefs based on "age-old hostilities . . . [and] . . . rooted in religious rivalry and cultural differences," were brought to the surface once they were coaxed along by the flagrant accusations of Bessarabetz.[8] Christian businessmen began to talk of Jewish exploitation. In a sense, the Jews were seen as presenting a triple threat to their Christian

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[5] Edward H. Judge, Easter in Kishinev: Anatomy of a Pogrom (New York: New York University Press, 1992) 135.

[6] Judge, 135.

[7] Judge, 136.

[8] Judge, 135.

neighbors. First, many Jewish individuals seemed to dominate the town's commerce. In addition, the large number of Jews involved in skilled trades posed an apparent threat to non-Jewish artisans. Last, the growing number of impoverished Jews who were ready to work for minimal wages, fostered concerns among and threatened the employment of unskilled non-Jewish workers.[9] As Krushevan's work spread the fuel for the anti-semitic fire, he did not limit himself to the publication of his newspaper. His office served as the source for handbills and posters which encouraged hatred and violence against the Jewish population.[10]

Immediate Causes of the Massacre

Two incidents provided the spark which ignited the population of Kishinev into an anti-semitic fervor. In February 1903, Michael Rubalenko, a young Christian boy, was found murdered in the nearby village of Dubossary. Immediately accusations began to spread that Jews had orchestrated the killing because they needed this child's blood to make their Passover matzah. To provide support for these claims Bessarabetz published numerous articles and editorials discussing not only what the Jews must have done in this instance, but also documenting "historical" incidents in which Jews had supposedly obtained and used Christian blood. Even after a medical autopsy of Rubalenko proved that no blood letting had occurred and an investigation demonstrated that the young boy had been killed by a relative who had planned on benefiting financially from the murder, Bessarabetz continued to aggravate the volatile situation.[11] Because Krushevan's newspaper had been funded partially by the

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[9] Judge, 136.

[10] Judge, 136.

[11] Shlomo Lambroza, dissertation "The Pogrom Movement in Tsarist Russia, 1903-1906" (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers, The State University of NJ, 1981) 67.

government, it appeared to the general population that the government gave sanction to these publications. Therefore, although the claim had been proven false, many still believed that Jews had actually murdered the young boy for his blood.[12]

Such accusations appeared throughout European history. A characteristic example of a blood libel can be seen in the fifteenth century Italian case of Simon of Trent. Over four hundred years prior to Kishinev, this young Christian boy disappeared after Good Friday services. A trial record manuscript compiled three years after this libel "purported to tell of the evil deeds of the Jews by documenting the motives and details of the alleged ritual killing of Simon Unferdorben."[13] Although this document is riddled with contradictions and inconsistencies, it exemplifies the claims often made in blood libel accusations. The trial record included "the fabricated murder charge they [Jews] confessed to under torture; the accusations of Jew haters, motivated by religious zeal or greed; . . . the legends of Jewish rites and magic, repeated by the simple and the learned; and, finally, of course, the story of the judicially sanctioned executions."[14] This blood libel against the Jews of Trent, including the torture and confessions of the town's rabbis, represented neither the first nor the last of such recurring attacks throughout European history.

Soon after the Rubalenko murder in Dubossary and the ensuing reports of ritualistic blood sacrifice, the mysterious death of a Christian girl further exacerbated anti-Jewish sentiment. One night, a girl who had lived and worked in the house of a Jewish merchant poisoned herself in an attempted suicide. Upon finding the girl seriously ill, the Jewish individual called a doctor who sent

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[12] Lambroza, 67.

[13] R. Po-Chia Hsia, Trent 1475: Stories of a Ritual Murder (United States of America: Yale University, 1992) 2.

[14] Hsia, 2

the girl immediately to a Jewish hospital. At the hospital, the girl explained that she had taken poison and even stated that the Jewish merchant had nothing to do with her condition. Although the staff at the hospital tried to save her, she died that evening. Upon hearing of her death, reports circulated claiming that the Christian girl had been killed by Jews who wanted her blood. At her funeral a government official made a statement essentially saying that often young girls died prior to the Jewish Passover. This remark spread through all of Kishinev.[15] When the government rabbi of Kishinev went to the head bishop, pleading with him to denounce the ritual murder accusations, the bishop refused.[16] The first international journalist who arrived in Kishinev to report on the excesses concluded that "the peculiar atrocity of most of the crimes perpetrated . . . were directly attributable to the horrible influence of the ritual murder propaganda upon untutored minds possessed of an ignorant and fanatical conception of religion."[17]

Inflamed by the accusations of the press and the existing sentiment among the peasants, a "need" for anti-Jewish action fermented within the town's population after these murders. Rumors even spread that the emperor had proclaimed a three-day period during which Christians could take vengeance against their Jewish neighbors. One pamphlet began with the sentence, "[a]n ukas (order) of the Czar permits Christians to execute bloody justice on the Jews during the three holy days of Easter."[18] As the holiday approached Christians openly discussed taking violent action against the Jews. As a result, local Jewish leaders pleaded with both the governor and the bishop to denounce the accusations and prevent the ensuing agitation. Neither official would protect

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[15] Singer, 7.
[16] Singer, 7
[17] Michael Davitt, "Within the Pale," The American Hebrew 73:18 (18 Sept. 1903): 572.
[18] Singer, 8.

the Jews from the impact of the increasing rumors. Although the violence seemed to explode spontaneously, the Kishinev riots were actually provoked, encouraged and even supported.

The Massacre at Kishinev

On Easter Sunday, April 6, 1903, the riots erupted in Kishinev, lasting for a full two days. Not until late in the afternoon of the second day did the authorities activate soldiers from local garrisons in order to control the disorders.[19] Because of this delayed action, much of the population initially believed the rumors which suggested that the violence had been granted official approval. This understanding only inspired the rioters to increase their actions. Those same violent instigators were also spurred on by excessive drinking which in turn created a macabre "festive" atmosphere for many of them.[20] Initially, the mobs directed most of their action towards the property belonging to Jews. When no one attempted to stop or prohibit this violence, the rioters directed their attacks against individuals, thus enacting even more gruesome crimes.[21] Mobs marched through the streets of Kishinev screaming their hatred of the Jews with loud voices. They came upon Jewish shops, homes, and synagogues and attempted to destroy them all. In one reconstruction of the riots, the writer Isidore Singer pointed to a single incident as having a decisive impact on the excesses and the length of the pogrom. While admitting the biases of this memorial volume a year after the pogrom which sought to heighten American sympathy purely by emphasizing Russian cruelty, it still paints a vivid picture of the atmosphere in Kishinev:

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[19] Judge, 49.
[20] Judge, 138.
[21] Judge, 138.

> The chief of police was out making calls, and was driving in his carriage through a street in which plundering was going on. A band of robbers surrounded him and asked: "Is it permitted to kill Jews?" The chief of police drove on without answering. His silence was a decisive event. The organizers of the movement and the leaders of the outrages had hitherto kept in the background. Now they saw, as did all Christians, that no hindrance was to be feared on the part of the police. . . From this moment the police, who had until now merely let everything happen, joined the marauders as active helpers.[22]

The raping, pillaging and destruction reached truly barbaric levels. A survivor whose letter was printed in The American Hebrew echoed these sentiments in saying, "[m]y soul sickens and the world grows dark at the thought of what I must tell."[23] His letter continued with details of the outrages he had witnessed. In another account of the massacre, the author dedicated three pages to detailing these unspeakable atrocities:

> In one house, the mother was outraged by all the bandits in time, in sight of her two little daughters, and the children were then outraged in sight of the mother. They were then driven into a slaughter-house, killed there by blows of a hatched, and then hanged.
>
> Chaja Sarah Panaschi had nails driven into her nostrils until they came out through her skull.
>
> David Chariton had his lips cut off, and his tongue and larynx were then torn out with tongs. . .
>
> Meyer Weissman, who was blind in one eye, had the sound one put out. He pleaded earnestly to be killed, but the persecutors delighted in his agony. . .
>
> One Jewess received blows on the head, her one-year-old child being used as the implement. As the child was not dead yet, the finishing touch was given by breaking panes of glass with its head. . .[24]

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[22] Singer, 13-14.

[23] Ferenz Brencow, Printed Letter of Kishinev Survivor, The American Hebrew 72:26 (15 May 1903): 859.

[24] Singer, 20-21.

The list continues with equally horrifying particulars of the massacre. Although the Jews of Kishinev had been sensitive to the changing tenor of the times, no one expected anything of this magnitude. According to the Encyclopaedia Judaica, 49 Jews lost their lives, over 500 were injured, some seriously, 700 houses were looted and destroyed, 600 businesses and shops were looted, 2000 families were left homeless and over 2.5 million gold rubles worth were lost in material damages.[25]

The Jewish population sustained such substantial loss because the Russian government responded to the Kishinev massacres with inaction and gave sanction to the behavior of the mobs. By May 18, The London Times had found and printed a confidential dispatch from the Russian Minister of the Interior, Vyacheslav Konstantinovich von Plehve, to the Governor of Bessarabia. This document was dated March 25, 1903, twelve days prior to the beginning of the Kishinev pogrom.[26] Although the authorities had attempted to explain the inactivity on the part of the troops as a result of their inadequate numbers or because of the incapacity of the police, this dispatch fully explained the conduct of the authorities at Kishinev. The secret letter stated, "no recourse shall be taken [if there should be anti-Jewish disorders] to armed interference with the urban population, so as not to arouse hostility to the Government in a population which has not yet been affected by the revolutionary propaganda."[27] At this period in Russian history, authorities feared increasing revolutionary sentiment which threatened the Czarist Empire. By allowing the massacre to occur, the government used the Jews as a scapegoat, hoping that such an incident would redirect potential revolutionary feelings within the population. If they had

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[25] "Kishinev," Encyclopaedia Judaica, vol. 10, 1971 ed., 1065.

[26] Judge, 86.

[27] Simon Dubnow, History of the Jews in Russia and Poland translated by I. Friedlaender (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1916-1920) 3: 77.

actively opposed the rioting Christian population, Russian leaders believed that many rioters would turn against them and then possibly support the revolutionary movement. Therefore, Minister von Plehve "had tied the hands of the local authorities, and they had done nothing but comply with his express and recent orders. The real villain, it now seemed clear was the Russian Government itself."[28]

Not until early May did the rest of the world, let alone the rest of Russia, learn of what had occurred on April 6-7, 1903. As part of his reactionary policies, the Minister of the Interior, von Plehve, also controlled the Russian press. He was thus able to suppress any potentially accurate reports of what had happened. The great Russian Jewish scholar Simon Dubnow wrote, "the entire Russian press was forced by the government to publish the falsified version embodied in its official reports, in which the organized massacre was toned down to a casual brawl."[29] In time, reports of what had occurred in Kishinev began to leak out to the European press. Soon thereafter, letters from the survivors to relatives arrived in American cities describing the atrocities which had been experienced. Initially the intensity of the moment prompted calls from every part of the community for action, both to help the Kishinev Jews and against Russia. Yet even with that unified action, nobody knew then the lasting impact this one massacre would have on the Jewish community, particularly the American Jewish community. No one knew how deeply the name Kishinev would become ingrained upon the American Jewish psyche and how significantly this massacre would influence the future of American Jewry.

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[28] Judge, 86. Based on an editorial from The London Times.
[29] Dubnow, 3:77.

Chapter 2
"It Had to be Improvised"
Initial Reactions

Press Coverage of the Kishinev Massacre

Although the Kishinev massacre occurred on April 6-7, factual reports of the events did not reach the pages of the American press until early May. The earliest accounts came from letters of survivors written to relatives in America. These emotional pleas, published by the secular and Jewish press, often expressed the feelings of horror which pervaded the event but offered inaccurate or few details explaining what actually had happened. As early as April 10, 1903, The Jewish Exponent published a short article about rising anti-Jewish sentiment in Kishinev. This article discussed the blood libel accusations made against the Jews after the murder of a Christian boy named Michael Rubalenko. The paper reported that the eighteen knife wounds in his body caused the peasants to spread rumors that Jews had killed him in order to use his blood for the baking of Passover matzah. The writer of this article concluded that the Jews had been protected by the governments' precautionary measures and that no riots had occurred, as of yet.[1] Although in reality this incident spurred on the massacres in Kishinev, throughout April few reports in the world indicated what had happened. The American Hebrew made no mention of the massacres and did not include any accounts of current events in Russia in their April 1903 issues.[2]

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[1] "Blood Accusation Again," The Jewish Exponent 36:25 (10 April 1903): 6.
[2] The American Hebrew 72:20-23 (3, 10, 17, 24 April 1903).

Not until May 1, 1903, did The American Hebrew first print information regarding the pogrom at Kishinev. In a short article of ten lines, the paper picked up a report from a Russian paper in St. Petersburg which indicated that the Jews of Kishinev had suffered during anti-semitic riots. The article provided broad descriptions of what had occurred, such as the fact that scores had been shot and beaten to death, but otherwise provided few specifics of the event.[3] Within a week, more reports filtered into the United States. Yet these too lacked the specifics which would be revealed later. On May 8, The American Hebrew reported only the stark facts, that the death toll from the massacre had exceeded 200 Jews, over 1000 had been maimed and that the incident had brought general distress upon 40,000 Jewish inhabitants of Kishinev.[4] By the conclusion of the week substantial facts reached America concerning what had actually occurred.

By May 11, The New York Times vividly detailed the happenings of the Kishinev pogrom. As early as May 14, the paper reported that 44 Jews had been murdered and another 84 seriously wounded; these figures were close to the final numbers of victims.[5] This periodical's editors titled some of their initial articles "The Misery of the Jews is Undesirable"[6] and "The Kishineff Massacre: Additional Details of the Anti-Jewish Outbreaks,"[7] which demonstrated the immediate concern and sympathy of the non-Jewish community. In these early stages, the United States' press provided similar coverage to the Jewish press, giving realistic and brutal descriptions of the event. In addition to covering the stories from Kishinev, papers like The New York Times also gave detailed accounts of the American response, both Jewish and non-Jewish, to the pogrom.

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[3] The American Hebrew 72:24 (1 May 1903): 796.

[4] The American Hebrew 72:25 (8 May 1903): 824.

[5] "The Kishineff Massacre: Additional Details of the Anti-Jewish Outbreaks," The New York Times (14 May 1903): 5.

[6] The New York Times (11 May 1903): 3.

[7] The New York Times (14 May 1903): 5.

That challenge came eight years later when Benjamin Shalit appealed to register his children (born of a non-Jewish mother) as Jews. The first case to be examined here, though, is that of Oswald Rufeisen, also known as Brother Daniel, a Jew (born of two Jewish parents) who converted to Christianity and became a priest, but who nevertheless appealed to the Israeli Supreme Court that he should be considered a Jew under the Law of Return since he conformed to the halakhic definition of Jewishness.

The extensive coverage found throughout the Jewish press included references to the financial collections of various communities as well as the amounts which had been collected. A typical article providing this information was titled "Baltimore Sends $4000 to Kishineff."[10] During May and June coverage of the impact of the Kishinev pogrom became the unanimous focus for the Jewish press.

By the end of June 1903, such extensive coverage began to subside. By that time, an issue of The American Hebrew contained only five articles relating to Kishinev, including an editorial.[11] This less extensive coverage continued in the press into early August. By then most articles updated the situation in Russia and reflected on what had taken place in America. At that point, the initial stage of response to the Kishinev pogrom had come to an end. Most likely, coverage of the pogrom faded out because the protest meetings already had taken place and most of the aid to help the victims had been collected. In addition, the massacre was no longer the primary concern of American Jewry. For over two months Kishinev served as the focus for almost every Jewish publication, collection, meeting, sermon, speech, and discussion. Although it then ceased to dominate the press, this initial intensive and extensive blitz of Jewish awareness left a lasting impression on the American Jewish community.

In the months after Kishinev, American Jews pursued a number of avenues of relief, motivated partly by the Jewish press in addition to the meetings and enormous attention devoted to the incident. For example, the reports of Michael Davitt, a non-Jewish Irish journalist, sent to Kishinev, carried much credibility and served as a major stimulus for action in America. From his previous work this individual "was known as a champion of the oppressed and

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[10] The Jewish Exponent 37:6 (29 May 1903).
[11] The American Hebrew 73:6 (26 June 1903).

[he] brought an air of righteous indignation to the pursuit of the Kishinev story."[12] Davitt's work, first printed in the New York Journal and American, thereafter received extensive reprinting in nearly every Jewish newspaper, as well as most other periodicals. His articles provided the first Western eye-witness confirmation of all the atrocities initially reported by survivors. Possibly more influential than his stories, his photographs, particularly those of the Jewish hospital and cemetery, created a vivid and powerful image.[13] The New York Times reported scenes of East Side Jews who anxiously bought up periodicals wanting to hear any reports concerning their relatives and friends.[14] In addition to such descriptive reporting, the Jewish press editorials also had a significant role in influencing sentiment and action. These editorials called for collections, mass meetings, and in general conveyed a feeling of indignation directed at Russia

Initial Action - Relief Funds

According to Cyrus Adler's retrospective collection of responses to the massacre published a year after its outbreak, the horror the American people experienced upon learning of the Kishinev atrocities "took practical expression in two ways, one looking to the immediate relief of acute suffering at Kishineff, the other to the amelioration of the condition of the Jews in Russia."[15] The American Jews sought to provide immediate relief for their fellow Jews in Russia through monetary assistance. With this goal they set out to raise funds which could be distributed among the survivors.

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[12] Edward H. Judge, Easter in Kishinev: Anatomy of a Pogrom (New York: New York University Press, 1992) 88.

[13] Judge 88.

[14] "New York Sends Aid to Kishinev Victims" The New York Times (16 May 1903): 3.

[15] Cyrus Adler, ed. The Voice of America on Kishineff (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1904) 467.

The Alliance Israelite Universelle based in Paris served as the organization most ready to help with the collection of relief funds. Individuals sent contributions either directly to the Alliance's central office or to a local branch in the states. Emanuel Lehman set up the New York agency of the Alliance right after the Kishinev massacre; Daniel Guggenheim served as the treasurer for this relief committee.[16] Another committee organized because of the crisis was the Central Committee for the Relief of the Kishinev Victims, popularly known either as the Kishinev Relief Committee or the Central Relief Committee. Samuel Dorf, the Grand Master of the Order of B'rith Abraham, put together this committee of businessmen. This group appointed Kasriel Hersch Sarasohn, the publisher of the American Yiddish weekly (Di Yiddishe Gazeten), as chairman and Arnold Kohn, the vice-president of the State Bank, as treasurer.[17] Many newspapers, Jewish and secular, also facilitated relief contributions by initiating drives to collect funds from their own readers. The American Hebrew, The Daily News, The Jewish World, The Jewish Herald, The Forward, and the Yiddish newspapers all solicited for funds.[18] In addition, William Randolph Hearst used his New York, Chicago, and San Francisco periodicals to raise public awareness of the devastation in Kishinev and urged readers to make monetary contributions which were then passed on to the Kishinev Relief Committee.[19] In smaller towns and in country districts as well, individual leaders established committees with the same purpose of providing immediate assistance to the survivors of the Kishinev pogrom. Often these were connected with local charitable or congregational bodies.

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[16] Peter Wiernik History of the Jews in America (New York: The Jewish Press Publishing Company, 1972, 1st ed., 1972) 355.

[17] Philip Ernest Schoenberg, "The American Reaction to the Kishinev Pogrom of 1903," American Jewish Historical Quarterly Vol. LXIII, no. 3, 1974: 263.

[18] Schoenberg, 264.

[19] Wiernik, 355.

American Jewry felt compelled to send financial assistance to the survivors of Kishinev. To a degree, the call for relief directed at all Jews and even to non-Jews, helped create a sense of unity within the Jewish community. Diverse groups came together with the common goal of helping the Kishinev sufferers. Abraham Cahan, a leader in the Socialist Movement, emphasized these universal sentiments. He said, "in such calamity there should be no distinction between socialist, orthodox, and radical."[20] The newspapers spoke of these universal necessities in order to motivate all readers to contribute to relief funds. Typical editorials printed soon after Kishinev read, "[l]et your purse strings open quickly to aid the distress in Russia. Not in the days of the Inquisition were such horrible deeds done as those inflicted upon the Jews in Kishineff."[21] Another paper contained a similar plea shortly after the pogrom which said, "[w]e. . must not ignore the fact that there is a present and imperative duty confronting the Jews of America. Survivors must be assisted and that assistance must be forthcoming at once."[22]

Such strong requests for contributions, imploring the readers to donate, continued weekly through June in Jewish periodicals. The papers utilized various strategies to encourage individuals to donate more. They listed by name those individuals who had made contributions during the previous week. Of course, they would always include the amount donated for further encouragement. According to The American Hebrew, "[t]he Jewish people are responding to the call, as they have ever done, from the richest to the poorest, from those who boast of this country as their native land to those who but Yesterday landed."[23] Initially, however, this statement did not represent the total

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[20] Protest Against Kischineff Outrages," The Jewish Exponent 37:3 (8 May 1903): 3.
[21] The American Hebrew 72:25 (8 May 1903): 823.
[22] "The Kischineff Tragedy," The Jewish Exponent 37:3 (8 May 1903): 4.
[23] "Work for the Jewish People," The American Hebrew 72:26 (15 May 1903): 856.

picture. The contributions from Russian Jews of the United States, who were survivors or descendants of those who had experienced the pogroms of 1881 and 1882, made up a significant percentage of some of these funds. Even though Arthur Kohn of the Kishineff Relief Committee sought out prominent and wealthy businessmen, he initially reported that the greatest share of contributions came from Russian immigrants and their children.[24] Yet it did not take much time before native American Jews began to contribute and take action to help their co-religionists in Russia. Jews who had been in the United States for more than one generation and who were often of German rather than Eastern European descent recognized the necessity of expressing sympathy and support for the victims of Kishinev. In addition, the actions taken within American society placed great pressure on them. Once the public had dedicated such time and money through mass meetings, how could these American Jews not?

As of June 7, 1903, according to a report of the Central Relief Committee, a total of 192,443 Russian rubles had been collected, a little less than $100,000 for the survivors of the pogrom. This total represented approximately one-half of the American money collected during this immediate period on behalf of Kishinev.[25] According to one historian of the American Jewish Committee, the "machinery for action was not at hand. It had to be improvised."[26] Considering that no central organization which focused specifically on relief existed when the massacre occurred, this was not only an impressive sum but also demonstrated what the community could achieve. Even though individual American Jews, such as Oscar Straus, Jacob Schiff, and Cyrus Sulzberger, saw themselves as responsible on a private and voluntary basis to organize relief for their suffering

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[24] Schoenberg, 265.

[25] Adler, Voice, 468.

[26] Nathan Schachner, The Price of Liberty: A History of the American Jewish Committee (New York: The American Jewish Committee, 1948) 7.

fellow Jews, many others rallied to the call to provide. The community as a whole responded to the cry, "give liberally, give all you possibly can spare, give immediately, remembering that charity should begin at Kishineff."[27]

Initial Action - Mass Protest Meetings

To a degree, the success of these relief drives can be attributed to the publicity they received in the press. Yet numerous mass meetings that took place throughout the United States also helped emphasize their importance. In practice these two methods of assisting those who experienced Russian persecution worked side by side. The meetings brought the horrendous acts which occurred in Russia to the heightened attention of various communities. Once individuals realized how they could help, many contributed money to ameliorate the current conditions. Louis Marshall expressed these sentiments and the additional need for meetings protesting Russian cruelties in an eloquent personal letter to Rabbi Adolph Guttman, his rabbi from Syracuse, New York:

> Such public opinion should be evidenced by protests couched in dignified and temperate language, requests made upon our government to do whatever it consistently can to bring about an amelioration of existing conditions, and a declaration of the rights of humanity, which have been offended not only by these recent occurrences, but by the policy adopted by the Russian Government toward their Jewish subjects during the past twenty years.[28]

Marshall's recognition of how these methods could help the Jewish community further established the practices utilized during this period and began to solidify his position of leadership in American Jewry.

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[27] "Holy Russia," The Jewish Exponent 37:6 (29 May 1903): 2.

[28] Louis Marshall, letter to Dr. Guttman, Louis Marshall Papers, 21 May 1903: box 1618, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.

During the months of May and June, more than seventy-five mass meetings took place in fifty different localities in twenty-seven states. The most notable of these meetings was held in New York City on May 27, 1903.[29] Individuals organized large protests in major cities such as Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New Orleans during the same period, and in small towns such as Sioux City, Iowa, La Crosse, Wisconsin, and Fort Smith, Arkansas.[30] The organizers of these meetings designed them to show sympathy, inform the public, collect funds and express indignation. They achieved this by bringing in countless powerful speakers, both Jewish and non-Jewish, including politicians and religious leaders. They read personal accounts of what had happened on those early April days, which had been sent by survivors to friends and family residing in the United States. They read letters from dignitaries who could not attend. They proposed and passed numerous resolutions condemning Russian authorities and their deeds and imploring increased involvement by the American government. All of these actions promoted awareness by American Jews and encouraged donations.

Although such protest could have potentially continued for some time, towards the end of June, the Central Conference of American Rabbis called for an end to the meetings:

> In view of this action by our government [a positive response to the American Jewish requests] it seems wise that all further agitation for public meetings of protest should cease and I, therefore suggest that we adopt a minute to the following effect . . . Advising the public that the exigencies of the situation have been met as far as possible through diplomatic means and meetings of protest and sympathy...[31]

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[29] Wiernik, 354.

[30] Adler Voice, XIX-XX. For a complete listing of all the mass meetings, newspaper articles written and more which protested the massacre, Adler's "American Kishineff Diary" has been reprinted in the appendix.

[31] "Message of Rabbi Joseph Silverman, President of the Central Conference of American Rabbis," Yearbook of the CCAR (Baltimore: CCAR, 1904) vol. 13: 24.

Whether in response to this request of the Reform rabbis or not, most action resulting from the Kishinev massacre had concluded by early July. By that time very few protest meetings occurred. For the most part, only editorials within the nation's periodicals gave attention to Kishinev. Yet even these decreased in regularity and eventually disappeared by the end of July. With this the initial reaction of the American Jewish community ended.

Non-Jewish Protests

In retrospect, the unanimous outpouring of support and protest in those spring months of 1903 was remarkable. Quite a few Jewish individuals attended mass meetings and contributed to relief funds in order to better the situation of their fellow Jews in Russia. In many of the protests, prominent non-Jews also delivered addresses rallying support and at times gave keynote speeches. Without a doubt, some non-Jews acted on their own volition. Just as many rabbis delivered sermons calling for sympathy and denunciation, so too, many Christian clergy saw it as essential to deliver a similar message to their congregations. A surprising number of Christians provided funding for immigrants immediately after the Kishinev massacre, believing this was the best way to help. The Salvation Army offered support in helping settle Jewish immigrant families. The Commander of the Salvation Army wanted to charter vessels which could bring one thousand families directly to the South. They planned on settling these immigrants on fertile lands and educating them in agriculture and in simple forms of industry.[32]

Christian involvement in the protest meetings made great sense to those who wanted to help the Jews of Russia. First, such a universal demonstration of disgust at what had occurred showed the Russian Government, in addition to the

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[32] "American Kishinev Agitation," The American Hebrew 73:3 (5 June 1903): 86.

American public, that this atrocity could not be considered merely a Jewish issue. Humanitarian and ethical concerns made this outrage an ecumenical problem. The protests sent a clear message that no individual who believed in the equal treatment of all humanity, who believed in the values cherished by American society, could tolerate the Russian actions. Second, the organizers hoped that non-Jewish involvement would make Russia recognize that the concern came from more than a small minority of the population. These factors added strength and credence to the international message. Christian participation also helped protect the Jews. Many felt that if Russia believed such indignation only came from those of the Jewish faith, they might have meted out repercussions against Jews stuck in Russia. In considering potential protest meetings, Louis Marshall discussed and encouraged Christian participation. He argued that Jews should organize meetings for the purpose of raising funds but Christian involvement was critical because of their inherent responsibility:

> This is a matter in which Christianity is on trial, not Judaism. . . . It is for Christianity to clear its saints of the foul blot which Christians have placed upon them. . . . [P]rominent citizens of the Christian faith, should give expression to their indignation and to the wrong which has been done to their religion by the Russians, who have murdered in the name of that religion. . .
>
> I do not think that any Jew should take a prominent part at the meeting, either as speaker or otherwise. It should give every indication of spontaneous action by our Christian fellow-citizens.[33]

The result of Louis Marshall's sentiment can be found in the actual protest meetings which occurred. Most of the resolutions passed during these gatherings and the vast majority of speakers focused on a humanitarian point of view, decrying the treatment of fellow humans in such a horrendous manner. During the meeting in Carnegie Hall on May 27, 1903 a resolution was proposed

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[33] Louis Marshall, Letter to Dr. Guttman, 21 May 1903: Box 1618.

that stated, "[w]e protest against the spirit of medieval persecution which has been revived in parts of Russia. In this country the recognition of the equality of all men before the law . . . is a principle."[34] The conviction coming out of such meetings urged the American government and its citizens to do what it could to influence the Russian leaders. Thus another resolution proposed at the Carnegie Hall meeting suggested "[t]hat the people of the United States should exercise such influence with the government of Russia . . . to redress the injuries inflicted upon the Jews of Kischinev and to prevent the recurrence of outbreaks such as have amazed the civilized world."[35] Quite possibly, Christians spoke out feeling a need to oppose Russia's ethical violations but also because they had been shocked by such atrocious actions. Former President Grover Cleveland emphasized these ideas at the Carnegie Hall meeting: "Such things give rise to a distressing fear that even the enlightenment of the twentieth century has neither destroyed nor subdued the barbarity of human nature, nor wholly redeemed the civilized world from 'man's inhumanity to man.'"[36] The distinguished reputations of the individuals who had been invited to speak at the Carnegie gathering imparted great credibility to the words heard. The former President had taken the stage along with the former Mayor of New York, Seth Low, and Dr. Jacob G. Schurman, President of Cornell University, just to name a few. These other highly respected New Yorkers echoed Grover Cleveland's sentiments. Overall, the response of the Christian community in America brought hope to United States Jewry. After the initial shock of the massacre, the Jewish press spoke directly of this adding, "[w]e are glad that the Christian world has not left the Jewish people to raise its voice alone, and we feel

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[34] "The Kishinev Massacre: Proceedings of a Meeting of Citizens of New York," (Carnegie Hall, New York: The American Hebrew, 1903) 10.

[35] "The Kishinev Massacre: Proceedings . . ," 10.

[36] "The Kishinev Massacre: Proceedings . . ," 12."

encouraged when we see so many eminent Christian ministers protesting with vigor and indignation at every opportunity offered them."[37]

The Response of Existing Organizations

American Jewry deserves much credit for its massive response to the Kishinev massacre. The leaders within the community organized protest meetings and established relief funds without a central organization coordinating the efforts. One historian claimed that the lack of such an organization in America had added to the significance of Kishinev, because "when the Kishinev Massacre and the systematic semi-official campaign of persecution of the Jews in eastern Europe again startled the world, there was no Jewish organization or established body that could properly cope with the situation."[38] Still a number of existing organizations did take the initiative to implement united action on behalf of the Jewish community. Prior to this crisis the majority of these groups had not devoted significant energy to relief work for foreign Jews.

The Alliance Israelite Universelle spearheaded the greatest international effort developed in the United States in response to the Kishinev massacre. With the assistance of a number of well known American Jews, the Alliance helped establish one of the most important relief funds. Working from Paris, the Alliance contacted influential and prominent individuals in order to initiate their campaign. In early May, Jacob Schiff, prompted by the Alliance, asked Louis Marshall to join with him as he prepared to organize the community in some fashion:

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[37] "Let Christians Protest," The American Hebrew 72:25 (8 May 1903): 78.
[38] Schachner, 7.

> My dear sir:
>
> I have received a cable from the Alliance Israelite, requesting that we organize a Committee here in conjunction with them for obtaining subscriptions for the Kischineff sufferers.
>
> I have asked a few gentlemen to meet at this office to-morrow, Wednesday, afternoon, at three o'clock, and hope you can make it convenient to be present.
>
> Very Truly Yours,
> Jacob H. Schiff[39]

With the initial efforts of these leaders, the relief committee received much immediate support. In reporting on the Alliance's work, The American Hebrew stated, "[t]his community should cooperate liberally with the Alliance Israelite in providing relief."[40] The newspaper implied that the appeal of such prominent individuals, like Schiff and Marshall as well as others, heightened the stature and significance of this committee in the eyes of the Jewish public.[41] One of the Alliance's leaders suggested, "[n]ow is the time for the opportunity of the Alliance to use its stored energy for the sake of the unfortunates of Kishinev, both in Russian and here, for we have to expect in the next six months the greatest immigration in twenty years."[42] In The American Year Book of 1903, some of the individual American city annual reports of the Alliance Israelite Universelle discussed the work done on behalf of Kishinev during the year. For example, the Baltimore group reported, "[s]oon after the occurrence of the massacres at Kishineff, a meeting of representatives of the Jewish Congregations of the city was called . . : for the purpose of arranging a public meeting. The meeting . . . was among the earliest and most impressive and successful of the public meetings of sympathy and relief."[43] The New York branch reported

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[39] Letter from Jacob H. Schiff to Louis Marshall, Louis Marshall Papers, 5 May 1903, Archives of the American Jewish Committee, New York.

[40] "An Appeal for Help," The American Hebrew 72:26 (15 May 1903): 860.

[41] The American Hebrew 72:25 (15 May 1903): 860.

[42] "Israelite Alliance Meeting," New York Times (18 May 1903): 2.

[43] "Alliance Israelite Universelle," The American Jewish Year Book-5664 (Philadelphia:

something similar. "When the central committee. . . in May requested cooperation in securing financial aid for the Kishineff sufferers, a relief committee. . . issued a circular appealing for contributions, and through its efforts over $30,000 were collected."[44] The Alliance's international network of local divisions was ready to act. Yet even with all this effort, the Alliance alone could not offer the assistance demanded by the atrocities of Kishinev. Hence, after the massacre, the association entertained the idea of widening its scope, in order to strengthen its international influence. Already by 1903, the Alliance had accomplished important work. Because of their activities in the 1880's, many considered them the pioneers of diplomatic methods. They had also engaged in much relief action concerning the mass emigration in the 1880's. With continuing efforts in 1903, its leaders hoped that they could provide even more for the persecuted Jew.[45]

The Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden was another European organization to which American Jewry sent contributions during the Kishinev crisis. This relatively new German organization (established in 1901) had already earned the respect of others through their relief work. These Germans had demonstrated an ability to make their assistance "reach beyond immediate emergencies . . . its skillful negotiations with the governments involved brought it universal respect."[46] Because of this they were able to expand their initial scope in response to the events of 1903. The Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden worked promptly in receiving donations for relief in Kishinev and continued to act in this fashion with similar crises in later years. While the money it collected helped the sufferers, in time, this organization turned its focus to work on Jewish

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The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1904) Vol. 5: 109.

[44] The American Jewish Year Book-5664, Vol. 5: 111.

[45] Message of Rabbi Joseph Silverman, Yearbook of the CCAR, 25.

[46] Ismar Elbogen, A Century of Jewish Life (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1944) 411.

emigration. By the conclusion of the following decade the agency had assisted approximately 200,000 immigrants.[47]

Many other organizations took action by approving and publicizing resolutions. The Central Conference of American Rabbis, The Jewish Publication Society, and the Jewish Chautauqua Assembly, for example, utilized this method in order to communicate their astonishment and abhorrence regarding the behavior seen in Russia. On May 24, 1903, The Jewish Publication Society passed the following resolution, which typifies the language and content of many of the resolutions passed by American organizations:

> ***Resolved***, That we deplore the brutal massacre of our co-religionists at Kishineff and extend our sympathy to those who have been maimed and ruined.
> ***Resolved***, That we respectfully ask the President of the United States to use his good offices in the name of humanity to prevent a recurrence of similar events.
> ***Resolved***, That we respectfully ask of the Congress and the Administration the taking of such steps as will accord equal rights to all American citizens, without distinction of creed, in all treaties hereafter entered into with foreign powers, and the denunciation of all existing treaties in conflict with this people.
> ***Resolved***, That we denounce the heartless attempt made by the Russian ambassador to spread among the American people by means of the public press misleading and calumnious statements as to the character of the Jews of Russia and other countries.
> ***Resolved***, That a copy of this minute, signed by the officers of the society, be forwarded to the President of the United States, the Secretary of State, and, upon the assembling of the Congress, to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.[48]

In the process of creating these resolutions, some groups began to perceive themselves as the leaders of American Judaism. For example, the CCAR, in thanking President Roosevelt for his action taken on behalf of the Jews of

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[47] Elbogen, 411.
[48] Adler, Voice, XIV-XV.

Kishinev after the massacre, seemed to believe that their efforts had directly contributed to the President's action. The Conference even went so far as to call itself "the spiritual leadership of American Israel."[49]

Like some of the organizations mentioned above, the Independent Order of B'nai B'rith also accepted responsibility for assisting the Jews of Kishinev through all possible avenues. B'nai B'rith's leaders sought to activate their organization in order to help the survivors in Kishinev. The organization initially suggested two potential ways through which their leaders believed the most influence could be exerted. First, they proposed the idea of initiating a petition to the Czar of Russia which leading American individuals would sign. Then the United States' government, officially or unofficially, would secure the delivery of this petition to the Russian authorities. B'nai B'rith's second suggestion was meant to achieve an even greater impact. Using Kishinev as the impetus, this organization hoped to convene an international conference focusing on persecutions and oppressions that were a result of racial and religious prejudices. Bringing an end to the intolerant effects of prejudices against any population served as the goal of this envisioned conference.[50] The leaders of B'nai B'rith opted to push the petition idea and encountered enormous success with it, both in heightening awareness of the conditions Jews faced in Russia and by building their own leadership in America. B'nai B'rith's leaders proceeded with the petition but not the conference only after seeking and receiving advice from Secretary of State John Hay. Hay acknowledged the "lamentable events" but he stressed the need "to proceed with care."[51]

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[49] Year Book of the CCAR, vol. 13, 1903: 73.

[50] "President Roosevelt's Views on Kishinev Horror," The Jewish Exponent 37:9 (19 June 1903): 7.

[51] Philip Slomovitz, "American Response to Kishinev," Jewish Heritage vol. 6, no. 4, 1964: 24

Apparently the petition best created this opportunity. The conference idea would have to wait.

The B'nai B'rith petition pleaded directly, yet respectfully, to the Czar of Russia, calling for humanitarian measures in order to protect Russian Jews from future violent anti-Jewish actions. The document reminded the emperor of the cruel atrocities which had recently occurred in Kishinev and repeated the charge that the authorities had not only stood by witnessing the horrific acts but had also instigated and joined in the massacre. The petition pointed out that in the past Russian anti-semitism had produced a wave of immigrants flooding the American shores. Unless they did something to allay the fears of Jews, the Czar would see an exodus to America once again. The creators of the petition appealed directly to the Czar on behalf of the individuals identified as his subjects. The petition concluded with a humility that remained focused on humanitarian concerns:

> Far removed from your Majesty's dominions, living under different conditions, and owing allegiance to another Government, your petitioners yet venture, in the name of civilization, to plead for religious liberty and tolerance; to plead that he who led his own people and all others to the shrine of peace, will add new luster to his reign and fame by leading a new movement that shall commit the whole world in opposition to religious persecution.[52]

This petition apparently struck a resonant chord with many Americans for it received 12,544 signatures after being circulated in 36 states and territories during the month of July, 1903. Those who added their signatures included members of both the Senate and the House of Representatives, Governors, Mayors, high judicial officers, state legislators, clergy of all denominations (even three Archbishops and seven Bishops), educators, and some extremely

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[52] Adler, Voice, 480. For a complete transcript of the B'nai B'rith petition, see the appendix.

significant and prominent individuals from the professional and business world.[53]

When the delegation from B'nai B'rith, including the president of the organization, Leo N. Levi, and Representative Simon Wolf, brought the petition to President Roosevelt, they strongly hoped for an expression of government action. They wanted to know that their concerns were being heard. The President granted their wish. In speaking he praised the Jewish people and confirmed that the American nation looked with horror upon the outrages of Kishinev.[54] After being presented with the signed petition, Roosevelt instructed Secretary of State Hay to transmit the document to the Emperor of Russia. Hay included a note to Russian Ambassador Ridelle in St. Petersburg asking for an audience with the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Hay also informed the ambassador of the extent of the petition and the concern it exemplified on the part of America. In the note Hay inquired, "I am instructed to ask whether the Petition will be received by your Excellency to be submitted to the gracious consideration of his Majesty. In that case the Petition will be at once forwarded to St. Petersburg. . ."[55] In response Hay and the United States' government received the terse statement, "[g]overnment of Russia declined to receive the petition."[56]

In the end, even though the Russian authorities refused to accept the petition, it became a symbol of the Kishinev incident and the legitimation of Jewish concerns in America. President Roosevelt saw the petition as so significant that he had it placed for perpetuity in the archives of the Department of State. Secretary Hay wrote the president of B'nai B'rith to inform him of the

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[53] Adler, Voice, 476-478.

[54] "President Roosevelt's Views on Kishineff Horror," The Jewish Exponent 37:9 (19 June 1903): 7.

[55] Slomovitz, 26.

[56] Slomovitz, 26.

petition's permanent place saying, "[a]lthough this copy of your petition did not reach the high destination for which it was intended, its words have attained world-wide publicity, and have found a lodgment in many thousand of minds."[57] Similarly, the Jewish press spoke of the power of the petition and the understanding it brought to the American public. The Jewish Exponent saw only success in the circulation of the petition. They wrote, "[i]t has enabled the American people and the government to make an enduring record of their views on the Kishinev horror. It has brought the emphatic expression of those views home."[58] With the written support of the Christian community, the petition provided a sense of humanity many Jews hoped America symbolized. The petition conveyed to Russia that the American people and their government, condemned atrocities like Kishinev, which appeared symptomatic of a policy directed at Russia's Jewish subjects. To a degree, this document helped both sides save face. The United States was able to demonstrate their sense of humanity and communicate to Russia their abhorrence of such atrocities. Russia asserted its own pride by refusing to accept the petition. Yet, the petition accomplished the purpose of informing Russia of American sentiment anyway. One periodical commented, "Russia can now preserve its autocratic pride and still make concessions to the Jews without acknowledging, either openly or tacitly, that American opinion or American interference has forced her hands."[59] Unfortunately, Russia did not make the anticipated concessions.

The language used by the American Jewish community to describe the petition gave the impression of success and additionally conveyed the sense of triumph felt by those involved. In many instances, the petition was referred to as a unique and groundbreaking achievement, unparalleled in American history.

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[57] Adler, Voice, 481.

[58] "Good Effects of Petition," The Jewish Exponent 37:14 (24 July 1903): 9.

[59] "The Expected Has Happened," The Jewish Exponent 37:14 (24 July 1903): 4.

For example, Representative Simon Wolf declared, "in the history of the United States there will be no document, outside of the Declaration of Independence, greater in importance than this - the petition of the American people to the Czar of Russia that religious liberty be granted to the oppressed Jews of his domain."[60] Similarly, The Jewish Exponent proclaimed, "[i]t is doubtful if there has ever been in this country such a representative written expression of opinion. The people without regard to racial, religious, or political affiliations have stood behind the President in his manly and humane activity."[61] Even after the atrocity at Kishinev, it appears that American Jews sustained their optimism. Although Russia rejected the petition, the document's numerous signatures proved that it expressed the view of the general American public. This gave the Jewish community hope and pride, something in which they could ground their optimism. Although the petition began with the noble intention of helping the Russian Jews, it was actually more significant because it attested to the legitimacy of the American Jewish community.

With the successful petition campaign, the Independent Order of B'nai B'rith established their legitimate claim on the leadership of American Jewry. The Jewish Exponent, describing the conclusion of the petition's circulation as "The Diplomatic Close of the Kishinev Massacre," mentioned that B'nai B'rith now existed as the representative body of the American Jews.[62] Although individuals such as Levi, Wolf, Oscar Straus and Jacob Schiff were credited with pushing the petition through and convincing Secretary Hay and President Roosevelt of its importance, these leaders did so under the auspices of B'nai B'rith. The absence of concerted action of this level within the American Jewish

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[60] Adler, Voice, 15.

[61] "Good Effects of Petition," The Jewish Exponent 37:14 (24 July 1903): 9.

[62] "The Diplomatic Close of the Kishinev Massacre," The Jewish Exponent 37:14 (24 July 1903): 10.

community made the steps taken by B'nai B'rith even more significant. While other organizations passed resolutions, collected contributions and expressed their outrage through mass meetings, B'nai B'rith added the method of the petition. Every American Jewish leader and individual could visibly participate through this document, by actually signing it and by encouraging influential non-Jews to add their signatures. In reviewing the impact of the petition, The American Hebrew noted that Leo Levi's "action in the Kishinev matter placed the organization he represents in the forefront as the spokesman and leader of concerted action in behalf of the oppressed Jew."[63] The petition's circulation and completion represented the pinnacle of B'nai B'rith leadership and initiative. In the ensuing years as calamities for Jews throughout eastern Europe multiplied, the International Order of B'nai B'rith failed to serve as the primary leader or unifier for American Jews. Although it did offer important contributions over the years, as a fraternal organization, this group could only represent American Jewry to a limited degree.

Initial Reaction - United States' Government

Much of the public response on the government level centered on the B'nai B'rith petition. Behind the scenes, however, the United States' government demonstrated much ambivalence concerning what should be done in response to the Kishinev massacre. As late as May 21, 1903 President Roosevelt questioned his and thus the government's level of involvement when he asked Secretary Hay in a personal letter, "if it would be advisable for me to contribute one hundred dollars to some fund for the relief of the Russian Jews."[64] At that time, Roosevelt also received advice through Hay from the Secretary of War, Elihu

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[63] The American Hebrew 73:21 (9 October 1903): 661.

[64] Theodore Roosevelt, Letters (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1951) vol. III: 477. As used by Philip Schoenberg, 276.

Root. Root recommended to the President that such a personal contribution would be seen as improper.[65] From these interactions and responses we see that the government wanted to avoid accusing Russia of humanitarian offenses. After the first reports of the pogrom, the State Department asked its ambassador in St. Petersburg to acquire reliable information about the outrages and about the possibility of providing relief aid for the victims. Official reports about the massacre were never given to the ambassador. Thus, as late as one month later, the United States government refused to get involved. At that time, the Secretary of State saw no possible advantage in involving America in such an incident. Because the government perceived these issues as domestic Russian concerns, official United States' involvement did not seem advantageous.[66] In 1903, examples of persecution directed at minority groups could be found throughout the globe. Even more, if America began to point fingers and accuse other nations of minority oppression, those same statements could be turned around and directed at the United States. Between 1881-1911, over 3000 African Americans were lynched within this country's borders, killed purely because of their race.[67] Yet few influential individuals made this an issue of national conscience. So too the United States could be blamed for the poor treatment of the Chinese immigrants in California, or the abuse and abandonment of Native Americans. Why would President Roosevelt choose to involve himself and thus, the country, in the issues surrounding the Kishinev massacre when similar persecutions were occurring in his own states? The idea in 1903 of one nation telling another how it should treat its citizens seemed to be an extremely bold measure. Additionally the United States' Government recognized that such action would place great strains on existing positive relations. Over a month after the atrocity, the State

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[65] Schoenberg, 276.

[66] Judge, 90.

[67] Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus, lecture 12 October 1994, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Department truly believed it could do no more to help those facing Russian persecution, even though concerned individuals were pouring into national offices pleading for American involvement.[68]

When news first arrived of the Kishinev massacre, American Jews expected that President Roosevelt would publicly denounce the oppressive Russian behavior and also intervene on behalf of the oppressed Jewish communities. Only when he did not respond in such a way, did the Jews truly begin to organize. By June 1903, public outrage in America had become very intense, so much so that the government leadership recognized the need to change their policy. At that time, government representatives met with the leaders of B'nai B'rith and other prominent American Jews. The government authorities also spoke of their concerns for oppressed Jews, repeatedly praising the achievements of the Jewish community and deploring the reported violence. Still they avoided directly criticizing the Russian authorities.[69] A number of regional politicians began supporting Jewish concerns a little earlier than the President. The Central Conference of American Rabbis pointed out, "[s]ome politicians have not been slow to see the benefit of suddenly espousing the Jewish cause at the expense of Russia."[70] By mid-June, the President had been convinced of the necessity of American influence regarding Kishinev. Therefore, we find speeches made by him and Secretary Hay which expressed sympathy and also recognized that this incident was an American concern, not merely a Jewish concern. In deciding to receive the petition, President Roosevelt shared in the feelings of the Jewish community, but did not go so far as to accuse the Russian government of failing to care for its citizens. He declared admiringly, "I

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[68] "United States Attitude on Kishineff Massacre," The New York Times (17 May 1903): 1.

[69] Judge, 90.

[70] "Message of Rabbi Joseph Silverman, President of the Central Conference of American Rabbis," Yearbook of the CCAR (Baltimore: CCAR, 1904) vol. 13: 25.

have never in my experience in this country known of a more immediate or a deeper expression of sympathy for the victims of horror over the appalling calamity that has occurred."[71] Understanding the international implications of the Russian disturbances and acknowledging the continuing unrest and fear for Jews who resided in the Pale of Settlement, the President continued, "I will consider most carefully the suggestion you have submitted to me, and whether the now existing conditions are such that any further official expression would be of advantage to the unfortunate survivors."[72] The American Jewish Year Book calculated that the increase in immigration in 1903-1904 from the previous year exceeded twenty thousand.[73] Continued discriminatory Russian policy would inevitably lead to even greater numbers of immigrants. Possibly the American leadership ultimately dedicated attention to Kishinev because of the probable increase in immigration and the rising concerns with which immigration plagued the government.

By agreeing to transmit the B'nai B'rith petition, while not publicly condemning Russia, the leaders of the United States sent a strong, if cautious message. The government demonstrated their consideration of Jewish concerns as well as their acceptance of the Jewish community. With this in mind, the Jewish community felt it had succeeded in accomplishing what was necessary. The American Hebrew commented on what it had observed:

> Given the petition secured by the B'nai B'rith, it did the very best that could have been done under the circumstances; it tried every means at its command to present the petition, in order that the Russian government might see what is the opinion of the American people. It would have been the height of folly for us to insist on our government going any

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[71] Wiernik, 354.

[72] Wiernik, 356.

[73] The American Jewish Year Book-5665 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1905) Vol. 6: 23.

> further. We cannot afford to involve our government in any controversy with Russia on a detail.[74]

Initial Reaction - Zionists

While Kishinev received widespread attention in America and many groups worked to alleviate the suffering of the Jews who remained in Russia, the international Jewish community dedicated much less energy to the massacre. While Kishinev generated significant international concern, Jews outside of America often chose not to offer comparable assistance. Throughout the world, a few individuals, such as Claude Montefiore in England, contributed and worked to heighten the awareness of Kishinev. Yet overall the English Jews did relatively little to inform and arouse the general public. Although British Jews became aware of the atrocity, "the actual collection of funds for the sufferers was not begun in London until a considerable time after the efforts in that direction were started in the United States."[75] For American Zionists, this type of ineffective international response, made a strong argument supporting their desire for a Jewish state.

Shortly after the Kishinev pogrom, Professor Richard Gottheil, the president of the Federation of American Zionists, invoked the Russian events in an impassioned plea for his cause:

> Protests are useless. The Jews have protested for 1800 or 1900 years. It is for us now to do something. If we do not ourselves find some way out of this terrible impasse into which the Jews are driven, we might well give up hope.
>
> To us in this country, where we have a free home, comes the cry to do something. We are unworthy of the privileges we enjoy here unless we act. . .
>
> I cannot see how you can read these terrific accounts received from day to day, and hour to hour, without having

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[74] "The Kishinev Incident Closed?" The American Hebrew 73:10 (24 July 1903): 302.

[75] "Excessive British Conservatism," The Jewish Exponent 37:8 (12 June 1903): 6.

> your eyes directed to the only salvation. I feel and trust that an impetus will be given to the Zionist Movement so as to strengthen our hands for this cause.[76]

The massacre at Kishinev buttressed the arguments which Zionists had believed for decades. Gottheil used Kishinev as a watchword, as a rallying cry to motivate the Zionists and attempt to convince other Jews of its true need. Although he spoke of protests being useless, Gottheil did recognize their significance in motivating American Jews and in helping his cause grow. He began by heading up a massive movement on behalf of the New York Zionist societies to raise funds for the sufferers of Kishinev. His universal approach in seeking to assist all Jewry, particularly those in Kishinev, greatly helped the image of the Zionist movement. When the Federation of American Zionists actively collected funds and asked Jewish merchants to set aside two percent of their May 11 gross receipts, he demonstrated that the Federation would cooperate with other Jewish organizations to benefit the entire Jewish community.[77] By working with the other groups, he only strengthened the Jewish community's overall commitment to Zionism.

The Zionists' created an effective strategy by combining contributions they received with those of other Jewish organizations. They exhibited significant vision and initiative in recognizing the benefit of working together in order to first help the immediate victims. Prior to the Kishinev massacre the Federation of American Zionists had resolved to serve as a helping force when times necessitated immediate action. They affirmed their willingness to work in conjunction with any other Jewish organization in moments of crisis in order to take whatever means would help remedy the situation.[78] In the wake of the Kishinev massacre, this policy enabled Zionists to extend their appeal to a much

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[76] "Professor Gottheil's Speech," The Jewish Exponent 37:5 (22 May 1903): 7.
[77] "The Riot in Kishineff," The American Hebrew 72:25 (8 May 1903): 830.
[78] "The Zionist Convention," The American Hebrew 73:4 (12 June 1903): 110.

greater degree. Even after their unified fundraising, the Zionists did not lose their focus. With the cries of Kishinev still echoing loudly, the yearning for an actual physical homeland became even more real. Gottheil, representing the Federation of American Zionists stated on June 7, 1903 that the only solution for Jews was a safe and secure homeland of their own.[79] At a Zionist protest meeting at Cooper Union in New York, the Ohave Zion Society put these thoughts into a resolution:

> That the recent Kishinev massacres have proved that the Russian Jew was doomed to martyrdom as long as he remained in that country; that there had grown up in the United States an unwarranted tendency in some quarters to restrict immigration and that therefore all Jews ought to help the Zionist Movement, and ultimately settle Palestine with Jews.[80]

Initial Reaction - Russian Response

The Russian authorities' reaction to the atrocity at Kishinev provided the American Jewish community with more reason to take action. They recognized something fraudulent in the Russian response and in their treatment of Jewish residents. The Russian press' first reports of the riots in addition to the Czar's ultimate refusal to accept the American protest petition confirmed these concerns. The first articles that appeared in Kishinev's daily paper, Bessarabetz, failed to mention either how the pogrom began or the inaction of the police. Rather, this initial coverage focused on the apparent crowds of drunken rioters who ultimately responded to the police direction to end the disturbances. The paper underplayed the anti-Jewish component of the violence.[81] By April 11, the Saint Petersburg daily provided readers with a bit more information, yet still

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[79] Schoenberg, 267.
[80] Martin Feinstein, American Zionism: 1884-1904 (New York: Herzl Press, 1965) 244.
[81] Judge, 84.

gave few details. In their reports, the paper acknowledged that Kishinev's Jews had been attacked by workers in a seemingly spontaneous manner. These government-supported publications, which American periodicals reported on, perpetuated the myth that the disorders took place despite efforts to prevent them by the police and military.[82]

Even more disconcerting than the lack of truth within Russia's press was the official Russian response. The Minister of Interior von Plehve circulated a letter to Russia's governors, town supervisors and police chiefs which presented an extremely different scenario than the one American Jews were hearing about from their relatives in Kishinev. Essentially, the government letter attributed the disorders to the long-standing aggravated relationship which existed between Christians and Jews in the region. Even more appalling, the letter failed to mention the anti-Jewish articles published by Krushevan, the lack of action taken by the military and police, as well as the initial barbarity of the rioters themselves. Rather, the letter attributed the difficulties to the disorganized police who lacked proper leadership.[83] Worst of all, this document propagated an attitude which soon became the official government belief. The letter blamed the riot on the Jews themselves, implicating the victims as the impetus and long-standing reason for anti-Jewish violence. The official Russian position affirmed that the first day of rioting began only after a Jewish carousel operator struck a Christian woman causing her to drop her baby. Disturbances continued on the second day because of attacks made by Jewish merchants on Christian peasants at the marketplace.[84] Needless to say both of these reports were false.

Quite possibly, the Russian authorities did not realize the potential damage the news of the Kishinev pogrom would have on their international

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[82] Judge, 84.
[83] Judge, 80.
[84] Judge, 81.

image. Yet after the circulation of the letter, higher government authorities removed the Bessarabian governor and the Kishinev chief of police from their positions, apparently making them the official scapegoats. Besides that action, the Russians did little to placate the fears of the Jews in the region or of those abroad. As news of the massacre and its extent reached America, relief committees were organized to spread the information they had received from Russian witnesses and from leaked reports. In contrast to this, the United States ambassador to Russia, McCormick, continued to strongly deny these reports. The American Hebrew reported, "[t]he Russian Government has authorized a formal denial of the truth of the story circulated by the Central Committee for the Relief of the Kishinev Sufferers to the effect that there have been terrible massacres of Jews in that town."[85] Upon hearing these conflicting reports coming out of Kishinev, American Jews became increasingly concerned not only about what had occurred in Kishinev but also about what the future held for their co-religionists. Shortly thereafter, Count Cassini, the Russian ambassador to America, heightened those fears when he released a public statement which attempted to deflect criticism from his government by blaming the Jews for the pogrom. Rather than demonstrating any sympathy, he openly reiterated the belief previously suggested in the Minister of Interior's internal letter that the Jews provoked the treatment they received. The Russian government, he claimed, afforded the same protection to all its citizens. The Jews, according to Cassini, brought peasant resentment upon themselves: "They will not work at agriculture . . . but are money lenders who oppress the peasants and cause them to show their resentment by such outbreaks as that which recently took place."[86] Cassini continued, "[t]he Russian readily assimilates with the people of all other

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[85] The American Hebrew 72:26 (15 May 1903): 858.
[86] "Count Cassini's Statement," The Jewish Exponent 37:5 (22 May 1903): 4.

races, and if he cannot assimilate with the Jew it is apparent that the fault must lie with the Jew and not with the Russian."[87] Despite the spuriousness of such claims, the Russian authorities never disavowed them or supplemented them with additional statements. In the eyes of America then, Cassini's statements were accepted as the official Russian position. Thus, Cassini's claims, which concerned and angered American Jews, also hurt the Russian government on an international level.

In time, the Russian authorities began to punish some of the instigators of the pogroms. They limited their actions to those whom they could definitely prove had been involved in murders. By July 1903, individuals investigating the Kishinev incident had made over 700 arrests, 500 of whom were released. The courts handed down fifty-three indictments on riot charges by the fall.[88] But soon thereafter, Americans realized that the investigation was conducted with the goal of obliterating any evidence which might demonstrate the deliberate organization behind the pogrom. While Russian leaders brought charges against many peasants who had acted in the massacres, they ordered that the case be tried behind closed doors. In this way, they could prevent the public from learning the truth behind the pogrom.[89] From this action American Jews realized that the situation in Russia had not improved. Even if the Czar had the best intentions, they did not appear evident in his conduct regarding the Jews. Rarely, if at all, did his words and actions correspond. He spoke of religious tolerance yet he maintained the existence of the Pale of Settlement. He refused to pursue the truth regarding the Kishinev massacre or support Jewish pleas for compensation for the massive damages sustained. His actions discouraged any

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[87] "Cassini Defends Russians," The Jewish Exponent 37:5 (22 May 1903): 4.

[88] Shlomo Lambroza "The Pogrom Movement in Tsarist Russia, 1903-1906" (New Brunswick: Rutgers University, The State University of New Jersey, 1981) 72.

[89] Simon Dubnow, History of the Jews in Russia and Poland, translated by I. Friedlander (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1984) 3: 90-91.

hope for change in Russia's policy towards its Jews. To compound the problem, the Holy Orthodox Church had embedded a sense of medieval bigotry and anti-semitism into Russian society which could hardly be eradicated in one day.[90] In addition, the Minister of Interior von Plehve, publicly speculated that Russia's anti-government institutions, particularly the revolutionary groups, were made up primarily of Jews. He even attempted to prevent Zionists from meeting because he believed that the Russian Zionists acted on seditious impulses.[91]

After the pogrom, more of the Russian realities became known to American Jews. The amount of information that poured out of Russia helped provide a full picture of the Kishinev atrocity and thus demonstrated quite clearly that this massacre was not an isolated incident. Moreover, the existing anti-Jewish sentiment which made Kishinev so volatile continued on a daily basis, unchecked and even provoked in Russian society. In 1903 too much information had been handed to the American Jewish community for them not to act. Coming together and speaking with a united voice, American Jewry recognized the impact they could have with coordinated efforts. As a result, their organizing efforts in response to Kishinev established a significant precedent which the community would emulate throughout the next decade.

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[90] "How Can Russia Change," The Jewish Exponent 37:5 (22 May 1903): 4.
[91] Judge, 101.

Chapter 3
1881 and 1903:
Changes in Community and Consciousness

Every level of the American Jewish community responded to Kishinev. Details from the massacre motivated individuals and organizations to help the sufferers by taking action. However, if similar responses had arisen earlier in American Jewish history, Kishinev might not appear nearly as significant now. But such a unanimous and extensive outpouring had not been seen before 1903. Although the Russian Jews encountered similar persecutions in the 1880's, the response of the American Jewish community and the international Jewish community to their suffering differed greatly when compared to the response twenty years later. By assessing the differences in American Jewry's reactions, we can truly gauge the impact of Kishinev. Hence, we turn to the Russian pogroms which began in 1881.

Atmosphere in Russia and the Causes of the Pogroms

As of early 1881, American Jews believed that the Russian empire had demonstrated signs of improved treatment of their brethren. While Russian Jews still faced numerous restrictions, they increasingly found ways to succeed. Acknowledging the restrictions on travel and in careers, the American newspaper, The Jewish Messenger reported with pride that the most upright merchants, the most skillful financiers, and the largest contractors in Russia were all Jews.[1] The paper praised the Russian military's inclusion of Jews in its ranks, although conceding that no officers were Jewish. Even more, they rejoiced in the

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[1] "Foreign Gleanings," The Jewish Messenger 49:11 (18 March 1881): 5.

overall success Jews had seemingly achieved: "Jewish students are first and foremost in the Universities . . . The Russian Jew, moreover, is no longer the traditional exclusive being."[2] Even after the assassination of Czar Alexander II, editorials in the American Jewish press looked hopefully to his successor Alexander III, believing that he would likely bring greater freedoms to the Jewish community. One editorial went so far as to predict that by bestowing such favor upon his Jewish subjects, the new czar would activate "[a] bodyguard of three million [who] will spring up in his dominions, who will protect his life and his land from the bullets and threats of the Nihilists."[3]

Despite the optimistic outlook favored by American Jewry, however, oppression still pervaded the lives of most Russian Jews. Much of the Christian population viewed the Jews as their foes and believed that they should be restrained in order to protect the general population. In early March 1881, before news of the Czar's assassination had reached the West, the "Foreign Gleanings" section of The Jewish Messenger reported on the recurring threat of blood libel accusations which had appeared with the approaching Easter season.[4] In August 1881, the government of Russia issued a police constitution. Officially calling "upon all faithful subjects to eradicate the hideous sedition and to establish faith and morality," this manifesto gave power to local governors to arrest and deport any citizen without due process of law.[5] The Russian creators of this document saw Jews as potential agents of sedition. Thus, the decree effectively could be used against them. Simon Dubnow, a historian of Russian Jewish history, illustrated how much the situation for the Jews worsened within the next year:

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[2] "Foreign Gleanings," 5.

[3] The Jewish Messenger 49:12 (25 March 1881): 4.

[4] "Foreign Gleanings," The Jewish Messenger 49:9 (4 March 1881): 4.

[5] Simon Dubnow, History of the Jews in Russia and Poland, translated by I. Friedlaender (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1920) 2: 246.

> The Jews were publicly told that the Government wished to get rid of them, and that the only "right" they were to be granted was the right to depart; that no enlargement of the Pale of Settlement could possibly be hoped for, and that only as an extreme necessity would the Government allow groups of Jews to colonize the uninhabitable steppes of central Asia or the swamps of Siberia.[6]

As a result of this perpetual anti-Jewish atmosphere, pogroms erupted in 1881.

Although the Czar's assassination provided the immediate incendiary cause for the pogroms, these violent outbreaks took place within a much broader context of economic, political, cultural and social tensions. These tensions suffused the lives of Russia's vast peasantry, particularly since their emancipation in 1861. Encountering Jewish moneylenders, traders and innkeepers in many towns, and experiencing extreme poverty, peasants developed a severe animosity toward the Jewish population. Peasant frustration only increased after the European depression of 1874 which caused a decrease in employment as well as food shortages for many.[7] Add to all this poverty, the feelings of xenophobia and Pan-Slavism accentuated by the Russo-Turkish War of 1873-74, and we see many factors which led to heightened anti-Jewish sentiment within the peasant population.[8]

These feelings built upon anti-semitic ideas which were prevalent throughout Russia. Such sentiment helped solidify an anti-Jewish foundation which still existed in 1903 and contributed to those later pogroms. In the decades preceding the 1880's, anti-semitic ideas frequently appeared in literature and other periodicals. The great Russian writer Dostoyevsky focused on this belief in his writings:

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[6] Dubnow, 2: 285.

[7] Stephen M. Berk, "The Russian Revolutionary Movement and the Pogroms of 1881-1882," Soviet Jewish Affairs 7:2 (1977): 23.

[8] Edward H. Judge, Easter in Kishinev: Anatomy of a Pogrom (New York: New York University Press, 1992) 12.

> Dostoyevsky . . . hammered at the idea that the Jews were devouring Russia, sucking the peasants dry. Not only in Russia but in all of Europe and the United States . . . the Jews were exercising nefarious influence. The Jews have no respect for Gentiles and humiliate them at every opportunity. They want to exterminate or enslave the non-Jewish populations of the world. Their banks will inherit the property of a world plunged by the Jews into anarchy. Dostoyevsky feared that Jewish triumph on a global scale was totally assured.[9]

The right wing press, poisoned with anti-Jewish sentiment, also influenced the population. The press propagated themes of alleged Jewish corruption and attempted to link all the Jews to the revolutionary movement.[10] Having legalized certain anti-Jewish actions, the government, military and police helped instigate the pogroms as well. In addition to this governmental encouragement and tolerance of anti-semitism, the Russian Orthodox church also contributed to the spread of libelous beliefs about the Jews. Konstantine Pobedonostov, the Procurator of the Holy Synod, adamantly believed and articulated his hatred of the Jews:

> [They] undermined everything . . . They are at the root of the revolutionary socialist movement and of regicide; they own the periodical press; they have in their hands the financial markets. . . they even control the principles of contemporary science and strive to place it outside of Christianity.[11]

Given all these factors, the time was ripe for anti-Jewish violence to emerge. The assassination of the Czar merely provided the spark needed to ignite such an outbreak.

On March 1, 1881 Russian revolutionaries murdered Alexander II. As a result, shock waves and fears of further violence rippled throughout the country.

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[9] Stephen M. Berk, Year of Crisis, Year of Hope: Russian Jewry and the Pogroms of 1881-1882 (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1985) 50.

[10] Berk, Year of Crisis, 50.

[11] Berk, Year of Crisis, 58.

Not only did rumors spread insinuating that the Jews had a hand in the assassination (one of the murderers was actually Jewish) but the anti-Jewish press fostered this belief and wrote of proposed organized attacks by "mysteriously" encouraged peasants upon the Jews.[12] By the middle of the month, an anti-semitic newspaper in Odessa, Novorossiiskii Telegraf specified that the attacks upon the Jews would take place during the approaching Easter season. These reports spread throughout the region.[13] The violent press campaign coupled with Easter, the customary time for attacks against Jews throughout history, served as the most immediate causes for these pogroms. Lack of interest on the parts of the government and police in preventing the violence only increased the outrages once they began. In addition, Pobedonostov, who remained in power as the Procurator, greatly influenced the new emperor, Alexander III. He convinced the Czar that because of their seditious and financial desires, the Jews themselves were to blame for the pogroms. With Pobedonostov's influence, the Russian government reverted to reactionary and repressive polices towards the Jews, abandoning any possibility of liberalizing Russian society.[14]

The Pogroms of 1881 and 1882

On April 15, 1881 the first pogrom against the Jews erupted in Elizabethgrad, in the Ukraine. As violence spread across this region and eventually extended into other areas of Russia, more than two hundred communities experienced attacks. In the ensuing two year period, hundreds of

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[12] Dubnow, 2: 247.

[13] Irwin Michael Aronson, Troubled Waters: The Origins of the 1881 Anti-Jewish Pogroms in Russia (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1990) 44.

[14] Aronson, 4.

Jews were killed, wounded, mutilated or raped. Many others lost their homes and faced damages totaling millions of rubles.[15]

Many of these pogroms began in similar ways to Kishinev and the massacres which followed it. For instance, in Elizabethgrad on the eve of Easter, as a result of a blood libel rumor, local Christians spoke to one another of the fact that "the Zhyds are about to be beaten."[16] To facilitate the violence, Christians coordinated their actions. The organizers of the violence sent a drunken man into a bar owned by a Jew. Due to his condition and the disturbance he made, the owner threw him out shortly thereafter. The assembled crowd witnessing this shouted, "the Zhyds are beating our people" and began to attack Jews passing by in retaliation. The fury then moved to the market place where the mob attacked, demolished and looted Jewish stores.[17] As with the Kishinev riots, soldiers often stood idly by, giving the rioters the impression that their supposedly illegal activities had the tacit approval of the government. On April 26, 1881, Kiev experienced an outbreak more severe than Elizabethgrad. An eyewitness provided readers of the Russian Jewish press with this vivid description:

> At twelve o'clock at noon, the air echoed with wild shouts, whistling, jeering, hooting, and laughing. An enormous crowd of young boys, artisans and laborers was marching. The entire street was jammed with the barefoot brigade. The destruction of Jewish houses began. Windowpanes and doors began to fly about, and shortly thereafter the mob, having gained access to the houses and stores, began to throw upon the streets absolutely everything that fell into their hands. Clouds of feathers began to whirl in the air. The sound of broken windowpanes and frames, the crying, shouting, and despair on the one hand, and the terrible yelling and jeering on the other, completed the picture . . . Shortly afterwards the mob threw itself upon the Jewish

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[15] Berk, Year of Crisis, 35.
[16] Dubnow, 2: 249.
[17] Dubnow, 2: 249.

> synagogue, which, despite its strong bars, locks and shutters, was wrecked in a moment. One should have seen the fury with which the riff-raff fell upon the [Torah] scrolls, of which there were many in the synagogue. The scrolls were torn to shreds, trampled in the dirt, and destroyed with incredible passion. The streets were soon crammed with the trophies of destruction. Everywhere fragments of dishes, furniture, household utensils, and other articles lay scattered about.[18]

Even this horrendous picture left out descriptions of the ghastly physical assaults. The mobs beat numerous Jews to death, threw some into burning flames, raped women and girls, and murdered many defenseless children.[19] Local authorities showed little sympathy for their Jewish residents. Not only did the government refuse to condemn the violence in any way or push police to end violent outbursts, they also refused any monetary assistance to the Jewish sufferers. While they had provided financial help to other mistreated populations, the Jews received nothing.[20]

By the summer of 1882, this wave of pogroms began to dissipate. On May 30, 1882 Count Dmitry Tolstoi was appointed the new Minister of Interior. Immediately, he attacked the violent eruptions, threatening local officials with prosecution if they did not take action to prevent the recurring violence. Prior to this period, very few instigators of violence had been brought to court; those who had been tried received only minor sentences. During this summer, however, Tolstoi instigated numerous prosecutions and meted out various severe punishments.[21]

Although the pogroms died down, the atmosphere for the Jews in Russia did not get better. Many officials in the government continued to place the blame for the pogroms upon the Jews themselves. This sentiment led to the

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[18] Razsvet (St. Petersburg) 19 (8 May 1881): 741-742. Translated in Berk, Year of Crisis, 35-36.

[19] Dubnow, 2: 254.

[20] Dubnow, 2: 263.

[21] Berk, Year of Crisis, 75.

government instituted "May Laws" of 1882. These laws restricted Jews in a number of ways removing liberalizing measures which had been introduced in an earlier period. They could no longer purchase or lease land, they lost the ability to move to other towns, and they had to close their businesses on Christian holidays. As a result of the increasing panic among the Jewish population, a Jewish student movement, Am Oilom, appeared. The most idealistic of this group saw their future hope in emigration and resettlement in America.[22] The sentiment of this group represented the wave of the future. As a result of the pogroms, emigration rose dramatically. Between 1881-1884, nearly 75,000 immigrants arrived at the American shores. While the outrages did not initially grab the attention of Jews in the United States, with the spread and desire for emigration, American Jewry would inevitably become more aware and concerned with the situation in Russia.

Initial Response - Great Britain

As would be the case with Kishinev, news of these late nineteenth century pogroms did not reach areas outside of Russia for some time. However, whereas the news from Kishinev took weeks to reach Europe and America, it took months for the actual details from the first pogroms of 1881 to arrive at these same destinations. The combination of very few foreign correspondents coupled with the strict censorship enforced by the Russian authorities greatly delayed the dissemination of information.[23] But when the news finally arrived, full of explicit and shocking details, it "unleashed a response on the part of Jews and Gentiles which in magnitude and vociferousness was unprecedented."[24] Yet even with

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[22] Jacob Frumkin, Gregor Aronson, & Alexis Goldenweiser, eds., Russian Jewry (1860-1917) (New York: A.S. Barnes and Co., Inc., 1966) 436.

[23] Berk, Year of Crisis, 65.

[24] Berk, Year of Crisis, 65.

early news of violence against the Jews and the desire of some to respond vehemently, The Jewish Messenger suggested a stance of Jewish determination and optimism:

> What is the remedy? Enlightenment for Russia . . . patience and decision on the part of the Hebrews . . . For Russia, there is hope in the reign of the young Czar and his intimate associations with the royal family of England. For ourselves, we must sternly pursue our straight way as citizens of the land wherein we dwell.[25]

Many initially did not believe in taking action. While they may have termed their inactions a stance of patience and hope, in reality the fear of undermining their achievements and acceptance in America truly motivated their position. By 1880 American Jews, mostly of German descent appreciated the integration into society they had achieved. When anti-semitism intensified during this period, many German Jews believed it had resulted from recent eastern European immigrants instead of recognizing the impression their own conspicuous success had made on non-Jews.[26]

Overall, the most impressive demonstration on behalf of the Russian Jews came from Great Britain. Most initial news of the atrocities came from the daily wire and revealed few details describing what had occurred. Yet even with such few details, the British community mobilized quickly in response. For instance, a letter published in The Jewish Chronicle shared with readers what had been learned about the pogroms and asked for contributions for a fund to help the sufferers:

> Unoffending and law-abiding citizens have been turned out of their homes with their wives and children, and exposed to the attacks of a fanatic mob; and persons who had been hitherto in easy, and occasionally even in affluent

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[25] "The Old Story," The Jewish Messenger 49:18 (6 May 1881): 4.

[26] Gerald Sorin, A Time for Building: The Third Migration, 1880-1920 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992) 9.

> circumstances, have found their property destroyed and themselves suddenly plunged into the lowest depth of distress, without any immediate means of help or support.[27]

The individual who submitted this letter created a committee to receive donations which would be forwarded to Russia. As a result, a significant number of British Jews made contributions in order to help their co-religionists in Russia. According to monetary standards of the 1880's, "there appear[ed] to be a genuine desire to help."[28] By the late summer months, the main source of detailed information concerning the atrocities came from a small group of Orthodox Jews who lived in Russian Lithuania. These individuals, who called themselves "Hayay im pipiyot - Inspire the lips," had gathered extensive information about the pogroms and secretly passed it on to prominent Jewish leaders in other countries.[29] Their letters contributed significantly to Great Britain's understanding of the events in Russia. After receiving the letters from Russia, Baron Nathaniel Rothschild turned them over to The Times in London. They were printed as two articles in the January 11 and 13, 1882 editions.[30] The articles included graphic descriptions of the pogroms and openly blamed the atrocities on the Russian government:

> Men ruthlessly murdered, tender infants dashed to death, or roasted alive in their own homes, married women the prey of a brutal lust that has also caused their death, and young girls violated in the sight of their relatives by soldiers who should have been the guardians of their honour - these have been the deeds with which the population of Southern Russia has been stained since last April.[31]

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[27] Daniel Gordon, The British Reaction to the Persecution of Russian Jewry, 1881-1882 (Baltimore: Daniel Gordon, 1974) 38.

[28] Gordon, 41.

[29] Berk, Year of Crisis, 66.

[30] Berk, Year of Crisis, 66.

[31] "The Persecution of the Jews in Russia," The Times, reprinted by Daniel Gordon in The British Reaction to the Persecution of Russian Jewry, 1881-1882: 422.

Depicting the atrocities and tallying the numbers of victims, these articles helped instigate a great outpouring of support from British society. The community heartily responded to the press reports with public demonstrations. Significant British personalities, most of whom were not Jewish, attended and participated in these demonstrations to a much greater extent than in the past when confronted with similar circumstances.

The British were horrified at the conditions Russian Jews encountered and many in the community joined forces for concerted action. This sentiment spawned the Mansion House meeting of February 1, 1882, which was attended by "members of Parliament, dignitaries of the church, the titled aristocracy, and men of learning."[32] This mass meeting demonstrated what the community could achieve. The Carnegie Hall meeting which responded to the Kishinev Massacre in 1903 used many of these same techniques. In 1882, the British Jews, like their later American counterparts, effectively utilized non-Jewish support and highlighted what the community could accomplish. Numerous speakers delivered addresses which called upon the Russian authorities to stop the systematic persecution of the Jews. Letters from elite dignitaries who could not attend delivered the same message. Overall, the meeting produced positive tangible results. The leaders of the meeting established the Mansion House Relief Fund which collected contributions to assist the sufferers in Russia. Putting great faith in their powers of influence, they also passed a resolution which called the pogroms an "offense to Christian civilization" and expressed the hope that "Her Majesty's government may be able, when an opportunity arises, to exercise a friendly influence with the Russian government in accordance with the spirit of the preceding resolution."[33] Prime Minister

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[32] Gordon, 169.

[33] Berk, Year of Crisis, 68.

Gladstone disappointed the attendants of this meeting, as well as others similar to it, by dismissing the matter as an internal affair of another country. By defining the pogroms in this way, he made it clear that "[they] could not become the object of official correspondence or inquiry on the part of a foreign government."[34] In keeping with this position, Gladstone refused to transmit a petition to the Russian government signed by British Jews and other prominent citizens. Although the official government response frustrated the British Jews, the uproar from the mass meetings, and the abundance of financial donations contributed to help the Russian Jews, demonstrated the community's overall sentiment. They recognized the catastrophic nature of the pogroms and were willing to sacrifice in order to help their brethren. In contrast, the American Jewish community did not extend itself in response to the 1881-1882 pogroms to the degree seen in Great Britain. Although immigration forced this issue upon American Jews, not until Kishinev would they perceive themselves as truly responsible for their foreign brethren. At this time American Jewry had not extensively linked their actions to those affecting Jews throughout the world.

Initial Response from the American Jewish Press

During the period of the 1881-1882 Russian pogroms, the American Jewish press received its information through the news wire reaching the United States. Therefore, the Jewish newspapers, whether printed in New York, Chicago, or Cincinnati reported the same events, with only minor variations. Each newspaper's editorials may have taken differing view points, depending on the leanings of the staff. However, during this period, even these editorials were extremely similar.

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[34] Berk, Year of Crisis, 68.

The initial reports of the 1881 persecutions found on the pages of America's Jewish newspapers appeared very similar to the earliest reports about Kishinev in 1903. Descriptions offered of the general Russian atmosphere in 1881 reflect perceptions similar to those expressed over twenty years later. The American Hebrew summed up the situation in Russia in this way:

> Probably we will learn after our brethren in Russia . . . have been persecuted and slaughtered into destruction or exile that the prejudice which exists against our people is not a spasmodic rancor, but a deep-seated hatred which takes every possible pretext to mete out its malignity . . . It is time to realize that we have nothing to expect from the Russian people but violence nor from the Russian government, but temporizing.[35]

As more and more information concerning the pogroms reached America, reports of specific attacks began to appear in various articles each week. On the average, by early May 1881, The American Hebrew contained usually one or two articles related to the persecutions Jews experienced in Russia. The extent of the coverage rarely consisted of more than this. Prior to the pogroms, news concerning Russia infrequently appeared in the articles of this periodical. Small paragraphs making up a section called "Foreign News" usually contained stories from Germany, Italy, England and other countries, but not until late April 1881 did Russia appear in this section. After that, reports about the pogroms became regular additions to the "Foreign News" section.[36]

Even after news of the pogroms gained more extensive coverage in Jewish periodicals, rarely did the reports contain graphic details of what had occurred. Early in the reporting, very dry stories appeared only giving the end results of such outrages:

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[35] "Russia" The American Hebrew 6:13 (13 May 1881): 146.

[36] The American Hebrew April & May 1881.

> The fanatical populace of Elizabethgrad, in Kherson, in the recent riots pillaged several houses belonging to Jews. One Jew was killed and several others were injured by the rioters. An examination is in progress. The walls of 100 houses occupied by Jews were laid bare by fire.[37]

As the events in Russia continued, similar stories dotted the pages repeatedly:

> The end is not yet . . . Add another cruel series of persecutions to the recent atrocities at Kiev. In the government of Poltava, the Jews have been pillaged in seventeen villages, and have been constrained to flee from their homes.[38]

Throughout the next few months, comparable stories appeared during most weeks, yet they still did not contain extensive descriptions or details. Not until the following winter was there any substantial and detailed coverage relating to the pogroms. In early February 1882, The American Hebrew produced a total of three pages full of articles and essays mostly related to the Jewish crisis in Russia. They dealt with a number of issues, including some specifics of the outrages, the work done in protest both in America and in England, and the sympathy expressed by non-Jews for the sufferers.[39]

Through their reports, the Jewish press attempted to evoke a response of concern from their readers. A typical article read, "[f]or several weeks past the cable has been laden with tidings of constant repetition . . . of horrible outrages upon the Jews in Russia. Almost every day has added its quota of horrors to the already long and painful list."[40] Along with drawing attention to the continuous atrocities during this two year period, the press issued a call for aid. At first, the requests consisted of righteous pleas:

> We must face the situation manfully or go down to posterity as a generation devoid of Jewish feeling and

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[37] The American Hebrew 6:12 (6 May 1881): 139.
[38] The American Hebrew 7:11 (29 July 1881): 121.
[39] The American Hebrew 9:12 (3 February 1882).
[40] The American Hebrew 10:11 (28 April 1882): 121.

> common humanity . . .
>
> Blessed be, whoever it be, Jew or Gentile, that will aid us in the name of God and Humanity to rescue our own and to give them a space whereon they may breathe the air in peace, and toil in security. [41]

Within the next months, the calls for financial contributions became more intense and demanding:

> The thousands of miles that separate America from Russia renders it difficult for the American to conceive in its intensity the dire distress from which the Russian Jewish exile is fleeing . . .
>
> That the fullness of the misery of the Russian Jews has not been appreciated in America is apparent by the response to the appeals for aid. England, France, Germany, and Austria have with large hearted benevolence with righteous recognition of the need, contributed according to their means to aid the sufferers. The American Jewish community, untrue to its best traditions, has not yet done its duty.[42]

By the beginning of 1882, The American Hebrew castigated, even more strongly, those who had not yet contributed:

> Every human heart with a spark of humanity left, must beat with a responsive chord to the noble, manly, sympathetic utterances of the highest intellects of the age, in denunciation and abhorrence of the gross cruelties which our unfortunate brethren have suffered in the dominion of the Czar.[43]

One editorial accused American Jewry for neglecting their brethren and then suggested possible reasons for this neglect. No holds were barred in this deliberate challenge:

> The comparative apathy on this side of the Atlantic, in the matter of the Russian barbarities towards the Jews, reflects little credit upon their sympathies and their judgment. Whether it is because almost daily repetitions of shocking

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[41] The American Hebrew 6:13 (13 May 1881): 146.

[42] "Russian Jewish Exiles," The American Hebrew (12 September 1881): 26.

[43] "The Voice of England and America," The American Hebrew 9:12 (3 February 1882): 134.

> brutalities have made them regard these occurrences as a matter of course, or because the almighty dollar tenaciously clings with avaricious greed to their pockets, or because it is feared that our Russian brethren clad in oriental garb may disgrace and tend to lower them in the eyes of our gentile neighbors, the fact stares us glaringly and unmistakenly in the face, that the American Jews have thus far, as a class, acted niggardly indeed in this awful crisis.[44]

Such accusations and calls for more financial aid appeared throughout the Jewish press through the end of this wave of pogroms. These articles revealed how, for the most part, American Jews focused their energy on America and American concerns. By 1903, this perspective would change drastically as American Jewry embraced the concerns of their Russian brethren. The much more extensive coverage dedicated to these issues in 1903 best exemplify their heightened Jewish consciousness.

Mass Meetings and the Reaction of the United States Government

By early 1882, the news of the Russian barbarities had led many Americans to organize large protest meetings. As would happen with Kishinev, many influential Christians attended these mass protests, and in many cases Christian individuals even organized them. In New York, former President Grant together with Senator Carl Schurz took the initiative for a February convocation. In Philadelphia, the Mayor in conjunction with other prominent citizens coordinated a meeting on March 4.[45] As a result of various meetings of this sort, an assortment of resolutions went through congress. One typical resolution proposed by James B. Belford of Central City, Colorado which successfully passed both houses protested, "the persecution of Russian Jewry and called upon the President of the United States to request the Tsar to protect

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[44] "Rouse Up," The American Hebrew 12:2 (26 May 1882): 18.
[45] Berk, Year of Crisis, 143.

his Jewish subjects from violence."[46] Although some influential Jewish individuals might have made personal pleas of concern to their friends in Washington D.C., many American Jews continued to be cautious at this juncture in history and few Jews took an active role in the leadership of these protest meetings. Possibly, Jewish individuals remained concerned with their status in America. While Jews still experienced some religious bigotry, they had gained numerous benefits in this society. Many feared making a public uproar and thus hesitated in taking major public action. As assimilated Jews, they did not represent a community ready to proclaim its identity. American Jewry would not be prepared to take such action until twenty years later.

Even with the concerns of many Jews in the 1880's, the meetings which were organized marked an important development for the Jewish community. In his analysis of the American response to the pogroms, Stephen Berk summarizes the work of the large protests and the perception of their organizers:

> The protest movement was the forerunner of many similar episodes in the United States later in the nineteenth century, and in the twentieth century as well. Like nearly all of them, this one of the early 1880's failed to achieve its primary purpose . . . In the 1880's, however, this was not yet clear, and the participants in the protest meetings in behalf of Russia Jewry and the sponsors of the Congressional resolutions, were sincerely convinced that they could bring about substantial amelioration in the condition of Russian Jews.[47]

Apparently those working to help the Russian Jews felt that their actions had a significant impact, particularly on the Russian authorities. Thousands of people joining together and focusing concerns on humanitarian issues gave these Americans hope. Ironically, the organizers of the meetings after the Kishinev

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[46] Berk, Year of Crisis, 143.
[47] Berk, Year of Crisis, 144.

massacre, adhered to a similar sentiment, truly believing in the ground-breaking nature of their protests as well as the impact they would have.

During the years of 1881 and 1882, the response and action taken on behalf of Russian Jews by the American government often reflected the sentiment and concerns of this country's citizens. During the height of government involvement, congress passed supporting resolutions and publicly condemned the actions of the Russian authorities. On the other hand, after many months of extreme concentration on Russia's outrages, the government tired of the constant attention dedicated to the pogroms and focused on issues perceived as more significant.

The administration of President Garfield worked to alleviate the situation in Russia during the second half of 1881. Initially with the assassination of the President and a change in the administration, the policies directed at and the actions taken against Russia remained the same. The new administration under President Arthur demonstrated a desire to engage Russia on the issue of pogroms when the Secretary of State, Frederic T. Frelinghuysen, sent a dispatch to the United States Minister in St. Petersburg:

> The prejudice of race and creed having in our day given way to the claims of our common humanity, the people of the United States have heard with great regret the stories of the sufferings of the Jews in Russia . . . [He therefore notified the Minister] . . . that the feeling of friendship which the United States entertains for Russia prompts this Government to express the hope that the Imperial Government will find means to cause the persecution of these unfortunate beings to cease.[48]

With this sentiment setting the stage, Representative Samuel S. Cox of New York delivered a scathing speech in Congress attacking Russia's actions and the need for America to respond. In his analysis of these events, the historian Stephen

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[48] Dubnow, 2: 294.

Berk called Cox's speech of July 1882, "the clearest explication of the problem and the sharpest denunciation of the Russian authorities that had ever been made by an American public figure. . . Simple feelings of humanity, he claimed, demanded that the United States of America speak out."[49] Cox actively pursued and initiated increased congressional action. On February 22, 1883, the House of Representatives passed a significant resolution, specifically directed at the events in Russia:

> WHEREAS the Government of the United States should exercise its influence with the Government of Russia to stay the spirit of persecution as directed against the Jews, and protect the citizens of the United States' resident in Russia, and seek redress for injuries already inflicted, as well as to secure by wise and enlightened administration the Hebrew subjects of Russia and the Hebrew citizens of the United States resident in Russia against the recurrence of wrongs; Therefore
>
> RESOLVED, That the President of the United States if not incompatible with the public service, report to this House any further correspondence in relation to the Jews in Russia not already communicated to this House.[50]

Quite possibly, this powerful resolution appeared in response and contrast to the increasing apathy apparent within President Arthur's administration. The results of previous American action, whether officially from the government or in the form of protest, had thus far proven mostly ineffective. The pogroms not only had increased but had become even more brutal in many instances. Yet the leaders of the Arthur administration had grown concerned with the pressure such public disapproval had placed on a government which they considered a friendly ally. The administration wanted to maintain amicable relations with the Russian empire. Therefore, President Arthur created a new policy which attempted to deal delicately with the crisis. In bringing his feelings to the

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[49] Berk, Year of Crisis, 143.
[50] Dubnow, 2: 296.

attention of Congress he shared his confident hope that "the time was not too far off when Russia would be able to insure tolerance for all religions within its borders."[51] Although this was the goal, it did not occur. Unfortunately, specific action taken by Americans within this country, whether delicate or vociferous, did not affect decisions within Russia. The pogroms did not end until significant changes had occurred within the Russian administration. In a sense, the pogroms behaved like a living organism, thriving at certain times and lying still at others. Yet even after the pogroms ended in 1882, the organism lay dormant waiting anxiously to rear its ugly oppressive head once again.

The Work of Organizations

Twenty years prior to the 1881-1882 pogroms, the Alliance Israelite Universelle had been established in France. By 1881 the Alliance had become a significant international Jewish organization, with representatives in various foreign branches which helped provide it with worldwide scope and membership. However, even with its great wealth and prestige, and with individuals working on its behalf throughout the world, the Alliance still was ill equipped to alleviate the problems of the Russian pogroms. A historian of American Jewish organizations who reflected on the Alliance's actions in the 1880's claimed, "[t]hey possessed neither authority nor adequate funds nor tight-knit structure. And, with the passage of the years, they lapsed into narrower and more local objectives."[52] Much of this criticism would be leveled at the Alliance in 1903 as well.

Yet, with the initial reports of the pogroms, the Alliance was the first major organization to respond in a unified manner, as it would do over twenty

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[51] Berk, Year of Crisis, 142.

[52] Nathan Schachner, The Price of Liberty: A History of the American Jewish Committee (New York: The American Jewish Committee, 1948) 7.

years later in response to Kishinev. By late May 1881, the organization made pleas through the press, looking for aid to help those afflicted. The American Hebrew reported that, "[t]he Alliance has issued a circular for subscriptions to aid the Jews who have suffered by the late outrageous action of Russian barbarism."[53] Already in 1881, this organization recognized the advantage of bringing Jewish groups together. Therefore, the Alliance attempted to play the role of a central organization, unifying the actions of various other European groups in order to assist their co-religionists. With efforts centered in France, the agency sent Charles Netter to Brody, Austria where a number of eastern Europeans, who hoped to emigrate, congregated. Netter had been sent in order to ascertain how this could be best accomplished. He then coordinated other European committees' actions in order to provide clothing, food, train and ship passage to the refugees.[54]

Although the Alliance's action may have proved successful, increased focus on immigration concerned Jewish leaders throughout the Western world. At first even the organization's European leaders opposed the emigration of these Russians, particularly to Palestine, America, and most of all to Western Europe. Some Alliance branches, particularly those in America, did not embrace this solution. American Jews expressed apprehension and often dislike with the suggested increase of eastern European immigrants. Although not fully accepting the idea of increasing immigration, this negative attitude did diminish when American branches of the Alliance, along with American Jews, learned that only immigrants who could contribute to their new society would be allowed entrance. Therefore, articles and editorials appeared in the American Jewish press which addressed the obvious concern with immigration but

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[53] "The Persecutions of the Jews in Russia," The American Hebrew (24 May 1881): 63.
[54] Berk, Year in Crisis, 158.

justified it simultaneously by citing the benefits such new members of society could offer:

> The Alliance Israelite has undertaken to send these homeless ones to this country . . . In no case can this be considered as relieving the necessities of paupers, but the noble task of enabling these mechanics and agricultural laborers to provide work.[55]

This statement represented the ideal the Alliance hoped to achieve. The "records, inner correspondence and public statements of American Jewish organizations," echoed this concern with immigration as the influx of Eastern Europeans placed a strain on the existing institutions within the nation. With numbers of immigrants growing, the skepticism of Jews and non-Jews, that America could barely care for its own only increased.[56]

As part of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the Board of Delegates of American Israelites also addressed the conditions in Russia and the wave of new immigrants. The Board, created to counter threats to Jewish civil and political liberties, worked vigorously on behalf of Jews in the United States and less vigorously on behalf of Jews abroad. Rather than attack Russia for the atrocities committed, this organization directed their comments to the treatment of American Jewish citizens who legally traveled to Russia but faced persecution. Their remarks, nevertheless, lacked anger, passion or even concern about the deplorable conditions facing their brethren. They hoped that Russia would, "adopt a hospitable tone toward American citizens who are Jews in race and by religion and this will constitute the beginning of a more liberal policy toward Russian Jews."[57] This naive hope was criticized by most of those who recognized the reality of the grave situation. The editors of The American Hebrew mocked

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[55] The American Hebrew 8:5 (16 September 1881): 49.
[56] Irving Howe, World of Our Fathers (New York: Schocken Books, Inc., 1989) 31.
[57] The American Hebrew 7:9 (15 July 1881): 27.

the Board of Delegates by calling their statement "a beautifully complacent view of affairs in Russia," and then printed more details of the most recent outrages asking the Board to take notice of this reality.[58]

Some new organizations did arise as a result of the pogroms of 1881-1882, yet their beginnings had more to do with the massive influx of immigrants than it did with increasing Russian persecution. Although this issue would still be a force promoting new agencies, many organizations beginning in the twentieth century after Kishinev also focused on protecting the civil liberties of Jews and heightening their identity. In 1881, the Hebrew Emigrant Aid Society (HEAS) was established. HEAS attempted to tackle the immigration crisis head on, but found itself truly unprepared for the numbers which entered America during this period. HEAS along with the Hebrew Sheltering Society, organized in 1882 with a similar purpose, extended aid to some fourteen thousand Russian refugees between 1881-1883.[59] In 1882, HEAS set up European Jews in farming communities throughout the United States. But this venture collapsed due to the insufficient training of the immigrants and inadequate funds supporting the organization.[60] Soon thereafter, the Hebrew Emigrant Aid Society made it clear that they could only receive immigrants in exceptional cases. They, like other relief organizations, had their hands full with the already massive immigration, and they felt that they could do no more to help additional immigrants. In analyzing these events and their increasingly significant repercussions in America, one prevalent attitude which guided most organizations in the period of 1881-1882, was the belief that they "operated according to the principle that

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[58] The American Hebrew 7:9 (15 July 1881): 27.
[59] Sorin, 49.
[60] Howe, 47.

resettlement of the Jews was desirable as long as it was not in one's own country."[61]

The Shift to Immigration

An editorial within five months of the first pogroms in Russia, typified the developing focus and concern with immigration for American Jews:

> The Central Committee of the Alliance Israelite Universelle has advised that all funds received in America for the relief of the Russian Jewish sufferers be retained in the country, and used for the purpose of providing employment for the emigrants who may arrive here, and for transporting them to points where the employment of them may be secured.[62]

Other editorials contemporary with the above statement adhered to this sentiment. The drastic increase of immigrants in 1881 and 1882 compared to the American Jewish population justified their concerns. With a population just exceeding 200,000 in 1880, American Jewish citizens feared the impact of approximately 75,000 immigrants who arrived from 1881-1883.[63] With the imminent problem this increase would cause for the Jewish population, the press shifted their focus away from helping those persecuted in Russia to providing for those who had made it to America. Although the organizations as a whole attempted to limit immigration, they still solicited for donations to offer assistance. Specific groups such as the United Hebrew Charities expended over $500,000 annually during this period on immigrant welfare. But even when added to the usual $500,000 spent annually for general relief, this still proved insufficient. During this time three-fourths of all immigrants sought assistance through charity, but only one-tenth of them received any help at all.[64] With so

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[61] Berk, Year in Crisis, 163

[62] The American Hebrew 8:6 (23 September 1881): 61.

[63] The American Jewish Year Book - 5674 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1913) v. 15: 425, 428.

[64] Howe, 31.

many in need, the Jewish press continually asked its readers for donations to help immigrants. The American Hebrew called every American Jew to recognize his or her responsibility. They deemed contributions as "urgent" and "incumbent."[65] Groups working on behalf of the immigrants obviously needed help and their stories began to provide a focus for the press. Articles in Jewish periodicals concentrated on the impact of Russia's persecution and how American citizens should and could offer assistance. Such earnest demands climaxed in the early summer of 1882 as the editors desperately pleaded with America's Jews:

> Up! Duty calls upon every American Hebrew at this hour to prove his devotion to American institutions and patriotism to his race, by helping the Russian Refugees. Several thousand are now in our city, without shelter, without employment, and unless immediate help is rendered, without the merest necessities of life. Can you with hold your mite? Dare any American Hebrew omit to lend a helping hand? Give all you can afford and save American Judaism from disgrace.[66]

In order to ensure a response and strike an emotional chord with the reader, this plea had been placed as the opening article and set in large print. It boldly stood out from everything else, demonstrating the enormous concern and burden eastern European immigration had placed on American Jewry. The urgent pleas found earlier in the Jewish press of 1881 and 1882 focused on the need to help those suffering from the pogroms. These earlier demands did not seek to assist immigrants, but instead hoped to alleviate the persecution Jews faced in Russia. In contrast to this, the later articles concentrated on the need to help the new immigrants. It is interesting to note that the imperative above focuses on the desire to "save American Judaism," as opposed to saving Russian Judaism.

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[65] "The Work Well Begun," The American Hebrew 9:9 (13 January 1882): 99.
[66] The American Hebrew 11:6 (23 June 1882): 65.

Therefore, by contributing to assist new immigrants, an individual helped the American Jewish community. Although the press appealed for immigrant assistance, in reality helping Russian Jews did not seem to be the motivation here. Once again, the press revealed the community's concern with American issues, on American Jewry.

By May 1882 a number of Jewish papers included small sections designated for Russian refugees. Articles on this page described specific conditions of those who had landed in America, where they had been placed, what work had been done to help these new immigrants, and what was needed from the rest of the community. The American Hebrew devoted the most attention to this section during the summer months. Yet in the later fall issues, reporting on both immigration and conditions in Russian had disappeared from most periodicals, receiving occasional mention only in connection with immigration issues.[67]

While publicly the Jews of America appeared to speak out on behalf of their Russian brethren, in reality they only did so to a limited degree. Without a doubt American Jews wanted the persecution of their co-religionists to end. However, the primary motivation for concern came from fear of increased immigration rather than from humanitarian interest. That is not to say that they did not abhor the cruelties of which they learned. With their population estimated between 250 to 300 thousand, the Jews of America often were apprehensive about raising a loud voice and drawing attention to themselves. It is for this reason that very few Jews participated in the mass meetings protesting the pogroms. The American Hebrew reminded readers in 1881 that public protest meetings should occur only if they represent "an American expression of

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[67] The American Hebrew (May - Dec 1882).

opinions and not simply Jewish Americans."[68] Anti-semitism continued to exist among many Americans and quite a few Jewish individuals who felt that they had gained equality in this country were hesitant to cause an uproar. Encouraged by anti-foreign nativist fears and because of the predominance of Jewish peddlers and shopkeepers throughout the country, the perception of the Jew as Shylock continued to exist.[69] In 1877 a dignified hotel, Sarasota Springs, refused to admit the prominent Jewish banker, Joseph Seligman. Despite public protests, various other hotels followed suit and adopted the same anti-Jewish policy.[70] This made clear that the Jewish position in the United States was far from established and secure.

The anticipation of increased immigration instigated much concern among the Jewish community. Most existing Jewish organizations in America had been set up by German Jews who over the previous years had found a somewhat comfortable life in this country. Many among these acculturated American Jews held strongly to their stereotypical beliefs about the incoming Russian Jews. Some of these individuals, who had organized the Russian Relief Fund (which later became the HEAS), sent a letter to the Alliance stressing the predicament of the American Jews in October 1881. The letter shared the concerns immigration produced within the American Jewish community. These individuals feared that with more "unadaptable" and "burdensome" Jews, America might hold the Jewish community responsible for bringing these new residents to the United States.[71] American Jews believed that the Russians would present an impression of Judaism, an unfavorable, stereotypical impression, which they in America wanted to avoid. The Russian immigrants would

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[68] The American Hebrew 7:3 (2 June 1881): 25.

[69] John Higham, Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925 (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1955) 27.

[70] Higham, 28.

[71] Berk, Year of Crisis, 161.

adamantly hold on to their religion. They would continue to wear clothes which marked them obviously as Jews, and as primitives. They would arrive poor and in need. Hence, these Jews would likely cause embarrassment to the existing Jewish community and would additionally become an exhausting burden upon the cities and the benevolent charities.[72] The Jewish Messenger, initially opposed immigration for these reasons and suggested an alternative which would save the established Jewish community from embarrassment over the new immigrants. They proposed sending Jewish missionaries to Russia with the purpose of "civilizing the backward brethren." If immigration of these civilized Jews then did take place, at least American Judaism would not experience "Russification."[73]

In the face of an immigration influx, periodicals like The American Hebrew continued to demonstrate this restrictionist perspective throughout 1882. At first, hoping to protect the somewhat established Jewish image in America and to help the community, organizations advocated limited admission of immigrants who at least possessed skills as workers or farmers. Their skills would enable them to quickly find work so that they would not become an additional burden on the community. The desire of European groups to send refugees and the reservations of Americans who would receive them caused much tension between these two communities. The Hebrew Emigrant and Aid Society relayed many messages to Europe in the following vein: "Send few emigrants and make certain these are skilled workers able to make a living."[74] The Union of American Hebrew Congregations was ready to welcome immigrants but proclaimed that the process, "must be a selective one. Only immigrants who would have no difficulty finding work should be allowed to

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[72] Howe, 31.
[73] Berk, Year of Crisis, 159.
[74] Berk, Year of Crisis, 161.

come."[75] This somewhat apathetic and even unfriendly attitude toward immigrants only worsened as floods of immigrants began to form ghetto-like concentrations in the nation's urban centers. By 1882 many Jewish communities were sending immigrants back to Europe truly believing they could do nothing to help them here in America. Reports of such seemingly unbelievable actions dotted the pages of the Jewish press: "New York has just sent back hither nine useless emigrants forwarded from Hamburg . . . this may be a lesson to the well meaning but thoughtless people who think they have only to rid themselves of troublesome refugees by a shipping process."[76]

A great contrast existed within the actions of the American Jewish community through 1882. On the one hand, Jewish leaders often attempted to restrict the numbers of those who could enter the United States. On the other hand, they repeatedly pleaded with Jewish Americans to contribute significantly in order to help those who had arrived. Finally in 1882 when the outrages in Russia decreased, the American Jewish community seemed thrilled by the possibility that immigration would end:

> The latest news from Russia as portrayed in our Jewish contemporaries, seem to indicate that feelings are becoming calmed, and the old, amicable relations of Jew and Christian are being restored. This is a consummation devoutly to be wished; "repatriation" is the best for all parties concerned.[77]

Unfortunately, many American Jews, anxious for an end to discussions of immigration problems, were eager to accept the above statement as reliable truth. They could thus limit their own guilt in neglecting co-religionists who did not desire repatriation. When representative Jews from European and American institutions met in Vienna and agreed to repatriate the remaining Russian

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[75] Berk, Year of Crisis, 159.
[76] The American Hebrew 11:7 (30 June 1882): 79.
[77] The American Hebrew 12:1 (18 August 1882): 1.

refugees stuck in Austria, "[w]ith an efficiency not seen during the large-scale emigration, the Jewish organizations proceeded, with the assistance of the Hapsburg authorities who were equally eager to get rid of the emigrants, to implement this decision."[78] Overall, this negative sentiment among the American Jews, does not convey a positive image of relief and support offered to their co-religionists in the early 1880's. Although we can understand the predicament of United States' Jewry at that time, their response illustrates a self-serving position that did not emphasize Jewish solidarity. As the American Jewish population grew in numbers and importance, over the next twenty years, American Jewry reacted with a much more giving and positive response to the Kishinev massacre.

Comparing the Response

In comparing the pogroms of 1881-1882 and the Kishinev massacre, as well as the events leading up to and surrounding them, we find many apparent similarities. Both massacres arose in anti-Semitic communities which had a history full of mistreatment of Jews. The outrages in both Elizabethgrad and Kishinev exploded immediately after rumors of a blood libel and both were followed by numerous other pogroms in neighboring areas. As for the brutality of both atrocities, descriptions and reports demonstrate relatively equivalent circumstances. In addition, the Russian government provided tacit approval during both periods by not interfering and by even participating in some instances. As a result, few individuals in either the 1880's or in the 1900's faced prosecution for their barbarism. With all this in mind, the similarity of the two events is extremely valuable for it teaches us a great deal about the American

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[78] Berk, Year of Crisis, 164.

communities which responded and the differing impact of the outrages upon them.

The press of 1903 as well as later histories of these events have linked the two sets of atrocities, making comparisons and pointing out the similarities. When the massacre took place in 1903 nothing of that severity had occurred since the pogroms twenty years before. Thus, it seemed natural to look back to the pogroms of 1881-1882 as a point of reference. In the History of the Jews in America, the author Peter Wiernik, writing in the early twentieth century, emphasized the impact of Kishinev by contrasting it with the pogroms saying, "[t]his [Kishinev] massacre which is still within our memory, aroused the press and the people of the United States more than the riots of 1881."[79] The American Jewish Yearbook made a similar comparison claiming, "[a]s 1881 was made memorable in Jewish annals by the Elizavetgrad pogrom . . . so 1903 will be known as the year of Kishineff."[80] To many learning about what had occurred in Kishinev, a sense arose that the world had reverted to the cruelties of the 1880's, a time of barbarism to which the Jewish population did not want to return.

Whereas many of those acting on behalf of the Kishinev sufferers believed that the scope and tactics of their response was unprecedented, in reality the American Jewish community responded with many of the same techniques as had been exercised in the previous crisis. The events of 1881 also had a precedent, from the recounting of events in the press to the utilization of governmental diplomacy. American Jewry had rallied together, to a much smaller degree, in 1858 when news spread of the abduction of Edgar Mortara, an Italian Jewish boy taken from his parents by papal authorities. Between the

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[79] Peter Wiernik, History of the Jews in America (New York: The Jewish Press Publishing Company, 1972, 1st ed. 1912) 353.

[80] American Jewish Year Book-5664 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1903) vol. 5: 17.

1880's and 1903, the differences that did exist stemmed from their contrasting societies. Overall, the American Jewish community's varied responses provide significant insights into those American communities and their contemporary world.

Before sifting through the specific differences marking these two events and their relevant significance, we must obtain a basic understanding of these communities' essential differences. Their concerns demonstrate that much more than twenty years separated them. In 1881, American Jews existed in a number of distinct, homogenous groups, divided mainly upon ethnic lines. Because of their differences and their varying concerns, these groups often regarded one another with suspicion.[81] The Jewish population totaled approximately 280,000 in America, of which many had some German roots. Although eastern Europeans were already arriving in America and even began to form a sizable group, German Jews still dominated the community, both numerically and culturally. A number of organizations continued to record their minutes in German and the most extreme, identified themselves ethnically as Germans rather than as Americans.[82] Feeling culturally German, a sense of superiority pervaded their attitude toward new Russian Jewish immigrants. For example, both the B'nai B'rith and the Young Men's Hebrew Association refused to welcome Jews with eastern European roots.[83] The dress, language and style of the Russians made them conspicuous in American society. Most German Jews strongly wanted to assimilate and wanted to distance themselves from traditional Jews of past generations. This fact combined with the arrival of a number of talented German Reform rabbis and the lack of a powerful Orthodox

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[81] Louis Marshall, "The American Jewish Community," The American Hebrew 84:12 (22 January 1909): 303.

[82] Berk, Year of Crisis, 152,

[83] Berk, Year of Crisis, 155.

community, brought many of these individuals to Reform Judaism. In contrast to this, the Russian immigrants typically adhered to traditional orthodoxy. Generally speaking, the Germans were wealthy, the Russians poor. The Germans dispensed charity, the Russians received it. Thus, with all these differences, significant tensions pervaded the American Jewish community when the pogroms of 1881 began.

The changes which occurred over the next twenty years in the United States were extremely significant. German Jews still held most of the leadership positions in Jewish organizations. They maintained these roles even after eastern Europeans, who had recently arrived, greatly outnumbered them in the population. Between 1881 and 1903 over 750,00 Jews immigrated to America bringing the American Jewish population to a total of 1,127,268 by 1903.[84] Inevitably, the quadrupling of America's Jewish population also meant significant societal transition and formation. By the early twentieth century Russian Jews had made their presence felt and had forced many organizations to adapt to their needs. Although some older organizations continued to exclude Russian Jews, other groups very much acknowledged their presence. For example, by 1903 The American Hebrew, a historically German Jewish periodical, included an occasional section called "A Voice from the Ghetto," which was signed by "one of the submerged." Although this only represented a small addition, it highlights the inclusion of the Russian co-religionists. This inclusion had much greater ramifications. With the influence of Russian Jews in the United States, American Jewry became more closely bound with the Jewry of other countries. Because of this link, American Jews were more willing to help whenever they could provide assistance.[85] The community of 1881-1882 had

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[84] American Jewish Year Book-5664, 1903, 5: 163.
[85] Frumkin, 435.

been much more self-centered, focused on issues that directly affected the Jews of this country. By 1903, the different dynamics within the population, coupled with the shock of the Kishinev massacre, helped American Jewry see itself as directly tied to world Jewry. Overall, the drastic change in the population led to many variations in action in responding to the two periods of massacre.

While both atrocities received press coverage, significant differences can be found in the extent of that coverage. Comparison of the coverage is problematic since Kishinev lasted two days and the pogroms considered here continued for over a year. Yet with this in mind, the extent of Kishinev's coverage truly dwarfed that which appeared in the periodicals of the 1880's. First of all, papers picked up accounts of what had happened in Kishinev with relative quickness. This was noticed particularly by those accustomed to learning of international events only months after their occurrence.[86] We find such a delay with the pogroms of the early 1880's. Although some information reached the press, most details did not appear until months later. To a degree, the differences in journalistic technology and style during the two periods contributed to these variances. Current events spread across the globe much more rapidly in the early twentieth century. Kishinev additionally remained in the papers as the focal story long after the details of the pogrom had been gleaned. This coverage reached its zenith with the inclusion of entire sections dedicated to Kishinev, often called Kishinev supplements. Not only did the articles and essays address what had happened, they also covered the various Jewish and non-Jewish responses throughout America. Early after the 1881 pogroms began, references concerning Russia began to appear in the foreign sections of some Jewish papers. The greatest coverage these nineteenth century pogroms received only came later in reference to increased immigration spurred

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[86] The American Hebrew 73: 22 (16 October 1903): 704.

by the brutalities. Not only was the coverage of the 1880's less extensive, it also contained fewer details, particularly graphic details. In comparison to these earlier events, the articles and essays about Kishinev set a precedent for a new level of graphic description connected with passionate and emotional pleas. The coverage of Kishinev upset the reader with the intensity of details and left that individual with a sense of rage and righteous passion to help Russian co-religionists. Many of the Kishinev reports made reference to pogroms of the 1880's, but most additionally concluded that the massacre at Kishinev had achieved a new level of brutality and slaughter.

Both periods of Russian outrages provoked public responses in the forms of meetings and financial contributions. Yet these also differed considerably. In order to raise public awareness, Jewish and Christian individuals organized a number of mass meetings in both cases. In sheer numbers those during the Kishinev period greatly outnumbered the meetings twenty years prior. This seems logical since three-quarters of a million more Jews lived in the United States, as did a great many more non-Jews. Thus, a larger population created a larger pool of potential attendees for these meetings. Still, another reason might have contributed to the few meetings in the 1880's, as this 1881 report of The American Hebrew illustrates:

> Several mass meetings have already been held, convoked and mainly attended by Jews, for the purpose of expressing indignation and condemnation of the riotous and incendiary onslaughts upon the Jews of Russia. It is to be hoped that no further meetings of such character will be held in as much as any practical effort that could ensue upon an American expression of opinion would only be the case if it be essentially and truly American, and not simply Jewish American. Russia, or the Czar . . . would not be much moved by any such partial expression of opinion, as long as

> the rest of the community, as represented by the press, pulpit and people, is cruelly silent!"[87]

If Russian authorities perceived the public indignation as American and not as Jewish, the editor believed that Russia might respond. Of course, many of this country's Jewish leaders wanted to be considered Americans and not always Jewish Americans. With the relative equality achieved by the extremely small Jewish population in 1881, most Jews were concerned about the negative, or possibly too Jewish impression they would make by publicly speaking out for Jewish causes. Although some still felt this way in 1903, with the larger community and the greater number of Russian Jews, more were willing to stand up and raise their voices for Jewish causes. The potential for anti-semitic sentiment in this country did not inhibit them as greatly as it had earlier.

A very interesting difference appears when looking at the pattern of contributions during these two periods. Immediately following news of Kishinev, calls for financial subscriptions appeared in every Jewish publication. The organizers of these funds quickly sent them to Russia to assist the survivors of the massacre. This continued throughout 1903. In 1881, although initial calls sought money to help those who had suffered from the pogroms, the pleas soon thereafter sought to assist those who had immigrated to America. In addition, the contributions were insufficient and slow to arrive in 1881. Editorial after editorial castigated and accused the Jewish and non-Jewish citizens who contributed small if any sums at all. In contrast to this, the press in 1903 praised the outpouring of financial support which continued to arrive after the Kishinev massacre. In part, this difference can be attributed to the huge increase in eastern European Jews in America by 1903. Upon learning of the barbarity near their birthplace, where friends and family still lived, they found themselves filled with

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[87] The American Hebrew 7:3 (2 June 1881): 25.

sympathy and a desire to help. Many also had experienced the atrocities in the 1880's which had motivated their own emigration. Thus, they felt a great compulsion to assist their fellow Jews back in Russia. Another contrast apparent in these two massacres exists with the European response. In 1903, the United States led the way in protest meetings and financial contributions. However, in 1881, many European communities, particularly England, set a standard which leaders hoped could be replicated in America. One editorial in an accusatory fashion described, "subscriptions to the fund for the relief of the Russians are in England reaching far up in the hundred-thousands. Is American-Jewish munificence a thing of the past?"[88] Another article in The American Hebrew argued in a more poignant manner:

> That the fullness of the misery of Russian Jews has not been appreciated in America is apparent from the response to the appeals for aid England, France, Germany and Austria have, with large-hearted benevolence, and with righteous recognition of the need, contributed according to their means to aid the sufferers. The American Jewish community, untrue to its best traditions, has not yet done its duty.[89]

Similar pleas for contributions continued throughout 1882 as immigrants poured into this country, yet the funds never matched the need.

The prevailing sentiment in the early 1880's and in 1903 condemned Russia. On both occasions American Jews definitely wanted to assist the sufferers. This desire just represented a greater priority to the community in 1903. To a degree, in both periods, Russian cruelties provided a spark emphasizing the importance of unifying the community organizationally. In 1882, recognizing the difficulty involved in achieving the task at hand, whether

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[88] The American Hebrew 10:4 (10 March 1882): 37.

[89] The American Hebrew as quoted by Mark Wischnitzer, To Dwell in Safety (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1948) 41.

that was helping the refugees or helping those suffering, the desire to unite the Jewish community increased:

> The further the progress made in providing for the Russian refugees, the more it becomes apparent how formidable the task is, and how necessary that all efforts made throughout the country should be systematized into a civilized and concentrated effort.[90]

Not until Kishinev, did this unifying passion gain enough support to spur the community into action. Even with the critical mass of many more American Jews in 1903, the twentieth century community needed the total shock of this massacre to heighten the desire for unification and identification.

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[90] The American Hebrew 11:3 (2 June 1882): 29.

Chapter 4
"The Sound of its Reverberations"
Kishinev as an Initial Motivating Force

While the reactions of the American Jewish community to the massacres of the 1880's and 1903 may appear quite similar, the immediate and long term impact of these events did differ greatly. The President of the Central Conference of American Rabbis described the ramifications of the Kishinev massacre and its lasting effects on American Jewry in this way in 1903:

> The Kishineff massacre has served many different purposes, not only for the arch conspirators and assassins, but also for the sympathizers of the victims."[1]

Little did Rabbi Silverman realize how insightful his comments would be. As 1903 drew to a close, it became evident that the events of Kishinev would leave a deep and lasting imprint on American Jews.

Changing Dynamics in America and in American Jewry

The fact of the matter remains that Kishinev had an enormous impact. Why, in contrast to the earlier pogroms or other incidents affecting Jews across the globe, did this massacre not only receive extensive attention but also make such a powerful impact? By 1903, the dynamics of the American Jewish community had changed significantly from the conditions of 1881. The growing numbers of eastern European Jews in the United States, along with the gradual decrease in German Jewish dominance, greatly influenced the actions of this

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[1]"Message of Rabbi Joseph Silverman, President of the Central Conference of American Rabbis," Yearbook of the CCAR (Baltimore: CCAR, 1904) vol. 13: 25.

developing community. With American Jewry's response to Kishinev, these changes became even more apparent. Before the massacre, many Jews wanted to blend into the fabric of American society, avoiding behavior which would mark them as different. The American Jewish response to Kishinev, however, was far from an act of assimilation. The community's actions declared proudly the anticipated equality of Jews in America and the legitimacy of Jewish concerns.

In addition to developments in the Jewish community, America as a nation also had changed significantly. In the late nineteenth century, this country could be best described as a relatively rural, mostly homogeneous and overall Protestant nation. By the time of the Kishinev massacre, urbanization, heterogeneity and mobility distinguished the United States.[2] These progressive changes affected the citizens and the levels of diversifying communication. With more newspapers in this country, and more Jewish periodicals in 1903 than 1881, we would logically expect the details of Kishinev to spread throughout the population more rapidly and thoroughly. Even The New York Times, considered by many to offer the most extensive news coverage, represented "insignificant journalism" in the 1880's.[3] The editors merely took stories from the news' wire, as did most other current event publications. Twenty years later, with a change in ownership, this periodical had become a reliable source of information to which many Americans turned. As a result, the events at Kishinev received greater attention in America in 1903 than did the earlier pogroms, replete with more details during this later period. With extensive coverage, American Jews learned of Kishinev and how they could offer assistance to their suffering brethren sooner than they had with previous

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[2] Gerald Sorin, A Time For Building: The Third Migration, 1880-1920 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992) 9.

[3] Jacob Rader Marcus, Director of American Jewish Archives, personal conversation, 7 December 1994.

outrages. As news of funds and mass meetings received attention in the press more rapidly, the public's potential to help only increased.

Yet there lies another important reason, one much more difficult to gauge and document, which brought heightened attention to Kishinev and as a result left a significant imprint on American Jewry. A new century had begun only a few years prior and individuals had already referred to this century as an enlightened era. Out of this belief came the shock value of Kishinev and its ensuing impact:

> Here we are at the beginning of the twentieth century, in a country that calls itself civilized, that occupies a foremost place in the concert of nations, that dictates terms to the great Powers of Europe, and that poses as the protector . . . Will the civilized world utter any protest, or will international "comity" again be pleaded as a bar to remonstrance and reproof? . . . Why should the Czar be exempt when his subjects devote their energies to ruthless massacre and pillage?[4]

Most American Jews, did not expect anti-Jewish action three years into a new century. They had anticipated something different than previously experienced; they hoped for a new era. An expectation existed that in the modern air of the twentieth century the days of violent anti-semitism had come to an end. Yet the Kishinev Christian population reverted to practices and actions seemingly characteristic of a previous generation. As Rabbi Silverman, a leader in the Reform movement noted in 1903, "the twentieth century civilization does not look favorably upon robbery, pillage, rapine and murder."[5] Although no civilization looks favorably upon violence, Silverman implied that such horrendous actions were not anticipated in the twentieth century. In The

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[4] "The Bessarabian Massacre," The Jewish Exponent 37:2 (1 May 1903): 4.
[5] "Silverman," Yearbook, vol. 13: 23.

American Hebrew an article from 1900 titled "The Exit of the Century" alluded to the potential hopes that Jews projected on to the new century:

> [I]n the religious field . . . the horizon is bright and full of hope. Dogmas receding; brotherhood approaching with its sentiment of the solidarity of all human kind. Science has brought the intellect to look upon fact and has called the theologic eye from heavenly contemplation and fastened it upon the earthly habitations of men.[6]

A poem printed in The American Hebrew called "Hail, All Hail The Twentieth Century!" further illuminates much of the sentiment within the American Jewish community as it called for a time of hope and peace:

> Ring, ring, ring - bells for the New Year,
> Ring bells, joy bells, ring far and near,
> Hail, hail, hail - hail the great New Year-
> The Twentieth Century is here. . .
>
> Bringing all the hopes of ages
> To fruition by quick stages,
> And teaching peace with sweetest lore,
> To drug to sleep the God of War.[7]

The events of Kishinev shattered the hopes and desires articulated in this poem. Kishinev alerted America and much of the world's Jewry once again to the continued prevalence of anti-semitism. In its intensity, this massacre forced the Jewish community to recognize that the era of pogroms was far from over.

The Impact of the Press - Comparisons of the 1880's and 1903

At the time of the 1881-1882 pogroms, the press offered relatively few details concerning the conditions of Jews in Russia. The events of Russia were not a priority for Jews. Stories provided some of the history of Judaism in Russia and told of what had occurred. When compared to the extent of coverage after

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[6] "The Exit of the Century," The American Hebrew 68:6 (28 December 1900): 200.

[7] Annette Kohn, "Hail, All Hail The Twentieth Century!" The American Hebrew 68:7 (4 January 1901): 231.

the Kishinev massacre, we can see the details and significant reports the papers had lacked during the earlier pogroms. In the 1880's, press coverage of immigration and the concerns it entailed dwarfed the stories dedicated to the actual pogroms and the plight of Russia's Jews. This focus of the press helped shape public understanding of the situation.

With Kishinev, all of the press, including secular, Jewish and Yiddish periodicals, found the massacre to be of such significance that they offered extensive reports on it. By presenting these stories, the newspaper editors demonstrated their significant role in decision making, "by determining the kinds of information about Jewish life presented to different audiences, controlling its flow, and shaping the channels of information flow with the communications network as whole."[8] Jews in America learned of the conditions which their co-religionists endured in Russia from the extensive journalistic attention devoted to the massacre. When the journalist Michael Davitt journeyed to Russia shortly after the violence had concluded in order to compile a non-biased report, his stories introduced native Americans to Russian realities of which they had previously not been aware. The legal and cultural anti-semitism which regularly appeared within the Russian Empire, the extent of the Pale of Settlement, the expulsions from within the Pale which occurred frequently due to the slightest technicality and the expulsions from towns where Jews had resided for centuries all became known through Davitt's reporting.[9] These stories also served as painful reminders for recent eastern European immigrants of the conditions they had left behind.

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[8] Daniel J. Elazar, Community and Polity: The Organizational Dynamics of American Jewry (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America) 1976: 281.

[9] Philip Ernest Schoenberg, "The American Reaction to the Kishinev Pogrom of 1903," American Jewish Historical Quarterly Vol. LXIII, no. 3, 1974: 272.

Press coverage also brought to light many other realities of Russian Jewish life. American Jewry learned of the influence of a few militant anti-semites, armed with rhetoric and propaganda, who brought to life superstitions many believed dead. They saw supposedly respected middle-class Russian citizens and Christian clergy do nothing, rather than offer some protection. They learned of the police and government officials' inability and ineffectiveness in preventing violence against Jews. In his recent analysis of the riot's impact, Edward Judge, summed up the lesson for American Jewry:

> It laid things out for the whole world to see how terribly vulnerable were the Jews who lived in Christian Europe, and how few Christians could be expected to come to their aid in the event of a monstrous attack. This, sadly, was an important part of the legacy of the Easter riots in Kishinev.[10]

Because native American Jews had lived without the constant concern of attacks for some time, these detailed reports shocked them. With the new century in the United States, many saw their dreams of equality nearing realization. Similarly, many had maintained hopes that with the appearance of progressive political forces in Russia, it would be possible for Jews and Christians to live in peace throughout the Empire. Kishinev rudely shattered this latter dream.[11] With hope for Russia crushed, Jews in America felt a need to reinforce their own security. Thus, Kishinev motivated a great number of Jews to reaffirm and prove their love for this country as well as demonstrate that America continued to remain a haven for those in need.

Within a few months after the Kishinev pogrom, the constant press coverage and mass meetings dissipated. American Jews felt they had done what they could. The petition organized by B'nai B'rith had been signed in the United

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[10] Edward H. Judge, Easter in Kishinev: Anatomy of a Pogrom (New York: New York University Press, 1992) 146.

[11] Judge, 141.

States and refused by Russia. The call for immediate action was over, but the Jewish press predicted that Kishinev's influence was not about to disappear. The editors of The American Hebrew predicted that Kishinev would remain a powerful symbol :

> [W]hatever has been done with the petition, the Kishinev incident is not closed. It still rings in the ears of all those who believe in fair play. It will be remembered by every man and woman who condemns tyranny. They will continue to hold that government in contempt . . . the Kishinev incident will remain an unofficial, but just as potent, protest against its methods.[12]

As pogroms continued to strike other Jewish communities in Russia, writers and speakers kept the Kishinev comparison alive. Similar riots left eight Jews dead in September 1903. The trend continued with pogroms at Bender (May 1, 1904) and at Zhitomir (May 6, 1905) where twenty-nine Jews lost their lives. One historian characterized these events as miniature Kishinevs.[13]

Reflections on Kishinev - The Impact of the Artist

It became quickly apparent that the events of Kishinev had made a deep impression upon the American Jewish psyche. Reports detailing the atrocities of the massacre provoked many to donate money, supplies and time. Some used their individual talents to raise funds for the sufferers. The newspapers reported and advertised dramas, created by individuals only days after the extensive news reached this continent. Jews and non-Jews packed into theaters for performances which in content or theme brought to life the conditions Russia's Jews continued to endure. These initial efforts were focused towards helping the survivors of the massacre. One Jewish professor wrote a benefit play in three

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[12] "The Kishinev Incident Closed?" The American Hebrew 73:10 (24 July 1903): 302.

[13] Peter Wiernik, History of the Jews in America (New York: The Jewish Press Publishing Company, 1972, 1st ed. 1912) 357.

days called, "The Rioting in Kishinev." This led to the production of other such plays, the raising of much needed funds, and continued attention devoted to Kishinev by the American public.[14] Playwrights gave other benefit presentations similar names, such as "The Destruction of Kishineff" and "The Story of Kishineff."[15] A Russian writer, Vladimir Korolenko, traveled to Kishinev and produced a short story titled, "House Number 13," which detailed the most horrendous atrocities and openly accused Christian Russia of responsibility for this pogrom.[16] Others created poems, essays or short stories which they contributed primarily to the Jewish press in hope of both educating as many as possible to the horrendous nature of Kishinev and obtaining more funds to assist those in need. During the peak months of Kishinev's press coverage, most Jewish periodicals included poems of which "The Prayer of the Russian Jew," in The American Hebrew, and "Russian Refugees" in The Jewish Exponent, were typical. The papers' editors printed both poems on their respective front pages two months after the massacre:

The Prayer of the Russian Jew
We are brothers and your kin. Help us!
By your right hand we can win. Aid us!
Open now your Gates of Freedom.
That we, slaves and shackled bondmen,
To the tents of peace may come, Free us!
Hailing welcome unto me.
For the God of Liberty, Free us![17]

Russian Refugees
For all earth's nations, now awake,
  Step forth to quell the dire misdeed;
And words whose ring shall make thee quake
  Break out from men of every creed, -
O cruel, blinded Muscovite -

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[14] Judge, 85.
[15] Schoenberg, 264.
[16] Judge, 89.
[17] "The Prayer of the Russian Jew," The American Hebrew 73:3 (5 June 1903): 84.

Defiant of man's holiest right!

Canst thou not read the words of fire
That blaze the protest of mankind?
Their flame will light thy funeral pyre,
And like the roaring of the wind
Proclaim the message of the time:
"Thine is the cycle's darkest crime!"[18]

These poems inspired sympathy for the sufferers and contributions for their assistance. "The Prayer of the Russian Jew" found its hope in the freedom immigration offered. This poet expressed unambiguous and positive sentiment regarding potential eastern European immigrants, particularly when compared to the general expression of American Jews twenty years prior.

One Russian Jewish poet in particular had a profound effect on the period and helped engrave the name of Kishinev upon Jewish history. Sent by the Jewish Historical Commission in Odessa, Chaim Nachman Bialik went to Kishinev shortly after the massacre. He prepared his report by interviewing survivors and observing what remained. Before leaving the city, he wrote the poem "Al ha-Shechitah" ("On the Slaughter").[19] These lines of fear which cry for justice remain equally as powerful today as they did ninety years ago:

Executioner! here's the neck - come and butcher me!
Behead me like a dog - you have the arm with the ax,
The whole earth is a slaughtering block to me -
And we - we are few!
My blood is permitted - Strike the skull and murder's
blood will spurt
The blood of nursling and of aged, on your garment -
It will never be erased, ever.

And if Justice exists - let it appear at once!
But if Justice should appear after I am annihilated under the sky,
let its throne be hurled down forever!

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[18] Felix N. Gerson, "Russian Refugees," (excerpt) The Jewish Exponent 37:9 (19 June 1903): 15.

[19] "Hayyim Nahman Bialik," Encyclopaedia Judaica (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1971) vol 4: column 800.

And let the heavens rot with eternal evil,
And you too, evil-doers, go forth in this your violence
And live in your blood and be found innocent.[20]

The Kishinev massacre seemed to reveal a Godless world. The conflict of this possibility with traditional Jewish beliefs was extremely problematic for Bialik as well as for his contemporaries.

Bialik wrote his next poem "Be-Ir ha-Haregah" ("In the City of Slaughter") after leaving Kishinev with visions of what he encountered still vivid in his memory. This poem left an indelible mark on the Jewish psyche not only because of the detailed descriptions of what had occurred ("Behold on tree, on stone, on fence, on mural clay, / The spattered blood and dried brains of the dead"), but even more, because of its condemnation and indictment of the surviving Jewish men. Bialik portrayed them as cowardly, unable to defend themselves or their families. In this poem, Bialik scorned these Jews and held them accountable for the suffering of their families and community:

Crushed in their shame, they saw it all;
They did not stir nor move;
They did not pluck their eyes out; they
Beat not their brains against the wall!
Perhaps, perhaps, each watcher had it in his heart to pray:
A miracle, O Lord, - and spare my skin this day!
Those who survived this foulness, who from their blood awoke,
Beheld their life polluted, the light of their world gone out -
How did their menfolk bear it, how did they bear this yolk?
They crawled forth from their holes, they fled to the house
of the Lord,
They offered thanks to Him, the sweet benedictory word.
The *Cohanim* sallied forth, to the Rabbi's house they flitted:
Tell me, O Rabbi, tell, is my own wife permitted?
The matter ends; and nothing more.
And all is as it was before.[21]

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[20] "On The Slaughter," translated by Tuvya Rubner in The Modern Hebrew Poem Itself ed. by Stanley Burnshaw, T. Carmi, and Ezra Spicehandler (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1989) 32-33.

Bialik wrote of a horrifying reality which confronted the Jewish community after the pogrom. As a result, Jewish defense groups began to form within the Pale only weeks after the pogrom.[22] During the next wave of pogroms a few years later, these groups not only helped save lives but they also provided a very different image of the Jew. In emphasizing poignantly the impotence of these traditional Jewish men as well as the gruesome nature of the atrocity, this poem influenced many movements within Russia and America. For many of the same reasons, "'In the City of Slaughter' probably did more to advance the cause of Zionism than had a thousand Zionist speeches. Bialik demanded that the Jew stand erect while Zionism offered him the ground on which to stand."[23] The image of the traditional Jew who had endured oppression and abuse for generations disgusted many Jews of the modern era. This, in conjunction with the details of what had occurred in Kishinev, motivated some Jews to seek non-traditional options, not just self-defense and Zionism, but even revolution within Russia. In America all these options received additional support because of the publication of both of Bialik's poems. By 1904 they had been published in English as well as Hebrew. After hearing Bialik's poems, along with their accusations and vivid descriptions, the American Jew further associated the name Kishinev with more than the actual massacre.

Kishinev as the Motivation to Unify

A summation of the events of 1903, published in The American Jewish Year Book, credited Kishinev with affecting the world in two major ways. First, the flood of attention, the media coverage, the work of artists and other

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[21] "In the City of Slaughter," in Steven L. Jacobs, Shirot Bialik: A New and Annotated Translation of Chaim Nachman Bialik's Poems (Columbus, Ohio: Alpha Publishing Company, 1987) 134-137.

[22] Judge, 144.

[23] Marnin Feinstein, American Zionism: 1884-1904 (New York: Herzl Press, 1965) 244.

responses to the gruesome April events had brought the Jews of the world nearer to one another.[24] Even more significant from an historical perspective was The American Jewish Year Book's premonition that the massacre "brought the urgency of the Jewish problem to the attention of the entire world as ha[d] no previous event in modern history."[25] Recognizing both the concerns of Jews throughout the world and the continuing anti-semitism provided American Jews with a new understanding of their world. In order to combat the problems they were so aware of, American Jewry identified the essential need for a central Jewish organization. By anticipating such outrages and utilizing a more unified, universal approach, such an organization could achieve much more than those existing at the time of Kishinev.

Most individuals conceded that no existing American Jewish organization could have approached the crisis and been able to provide the necessary assistance. Some organizations certainly tried. As has been previously discussed, the massacre motivated organizations such as the Alliance Israelite Universelle and the Independent Order of B'nai B'rith to coordinate fundraising efforts. These groups proudly publicized the success they had in collecting contributions for the sufferers of the pogrom. Even at the outset, as subscriptions poured in from every state in America, The American Hebrew suggested that "it seems to be the part of wisdom to limit the central bodies to which funds shall be forwarded to as small a number as possible."[26] Alliance leaders entertained the hope that their efforts for the Kishinev sufferers would widen their scope and strengthen their influence. The result, they believed, would produce potential salvation for the persecuted Russian Jew.[27] An Alliance meeting on May 17, 1903

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[24] "The Year," The American Jewish Year Book - 5664 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1903) vol. 5: 39.

[25] "The Year," Year Book, 39.

[26] The American Hebrew 73:1 (22 May 1903): 9.

[27] "Need of Organization," The American Hebrew 73:7 (3 July 1903): 210.

in Baltimore called for a united Jewish community: "The Jews in United States, and indeed, of the whole world, must be banded together for the purpose of preventing similar cruelties, and all other questions."[28] B'nai B'rith utilized its established machinery to ease the unfortunate situation and to prevent similar occurrences in the future.[29] The diplomatic efforts of this organization received very positive results. Yet even B'nai B'rith's leaders had to acknowledge that their previous efforts represented only short-term remedies, merely applying band-aids to the wounds which world Jewry had received. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the Jewish community needed more of a long-term treatment. Sensing the looming challenge, The American Hebrew cried out for action: "The Kishinev outrage requires some organization which shall at once meet the situation with systematic consideration. There is work to be done - work of great delicacy and calling for great energy."[30]

From the earliest journalistic requests for relief to the later analyses of the American Jewish response to Kishinev, almost all observers recognized the impetus towards unification provided by the outrage. One of the first Jewish press reports following the massacre declared, "it is high time for them [Jews] to unite and take counsel, so that by a union of forces means may be devised to bring this unholy condition to an end."[31] Another early article made a similar plea:

> [i]t is the duty of every Jew in the free countries to advocate this matter earnestly, to bring it before the powers, and to work faithfully until the deliverance of his brethren is accomplished . . . The plans suggested here, ... with earnest and united effort can be carried out.[32]

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[28] Cyrus Adler, ed. The Voice of America on Kishineff (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1904) 19.

[29] "Need of Organization," The American Hebrew 73:7 (3 July 1903): 210.

[30] "A Zionist Opportunity," The American Hebrew 73:3 (5 June 1903): 78.

[31] "The Bessarabian Massacre," The American Hebrew 72:24. (1 May 1903): 4.

[32] "Solutions," The American Hebrew 72: 2 (29 May 1903): 47.

The Jewish Exponent pleaded for the different elements within American Jewry to unite in order maximize their efforts on behalf of the Kishinev sufferers and to avoid future calamities. The periodical stated, "let us combine our efforts, every one of us - Russian, German, English, French, American Jews. Let there be no division of forces."[33] Interestingly, this plea did not mention other divisions which existed among American Jews, such as Reform versus traditional, or the different organizations to which individuals already belonged. Rather, the article focused on ethnic allegiances indicating that the Russian and German elements posed the most severe conflict. The Jewish Exponent suggested that all had to work together in order to conquer such crises. One month later, the same publication observed that as a result of Kishinev and the manner in which the American Jewish community responded, some degree of unity in fact had been achieved:

> One feature to which the Kishineff agitation has contributed even if it has not actually produced it, has been the greater solidarity of the Jewish community, accessions to it coming from quarters that had hitherto kept aloof.[34]

Although in previous instances the German Jewish community had "kept aloof," in this instance many of them contributed generously to help the sufferers and had taken important actions on behalf of their Russian brethren.

Certain organizations used the unifying suggestion as a temporary means to achieve their own goals. The Zionists hoped simply for the creation of a Jewish state. They believed that similar atrocities could be prevented through Jewish autonomy, preferably in Palestine. They did acknowledge, however, that only a minority of Jews adhered to their opinions. Recognizing that "not one organization we know of is in a position to deal with our difficulties," the

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[33] "Holy Russia," The Jewish Exponent 37:6 (29 May 1903): 2.

[34] "Kishineff Aids Jewish Solidarity," The Jewish Exponent 37:10 (26 May 1903): 8.

Zionists saw how they could help the Jews in Kishinev and at the same time spread their own philosophy by uniting with other organizations.[35] The American Hebrew gave them much credit for their willingness to work in concert with others:

> The opportunity is opened for the Zionist organization to enter into co-operation with other organizations in matters dealing directly with the Jewish problem. . . For its treatment of the Kishinev needs, it has shown wisdom in uniting its contributions with those of other Jewish organizations.[36]

Similarly, Joseph Barondess, an American Socialist leader, declared that he too, saw the benefit in joining hands with his fellow Jews in effecting immediate relief, while not giving up his own ideals.[37]

The unifying work begun by others established a motivating precedent for the Zionists. While the Zionists appreciated the Central Conference of American Rabbis' unifying suggestion, they apparently felt threatened by the Conference's actions. The leaders of the Reform movement also understood the need for organization and openly advocated the creation of some sort of central body. Underlying their genuine altruistic motives, the Reform rabbis did not hide their desire to be recognized as the leaders of American Judaism. In the immediate fall out of the Kishinev massacre, Rabbi Silverman, declared that the lack of organization existing in the American Jewish community had only been exacerbated by the most recent violence. He pleaded for a change through unity:

> We do not question the right of any Jewish society to exert all its power or influence in behalf of justice in general, and of Jewish interests in particular, but we regret that, owing to the existence of so many associations pursuing independently similar objects, much effort, much influence and money are often dissipated, and concerted action which might lead to quicker and better results is prevented. We

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[35] "A Zionist Opportunity," The American Hebrew 73:3 (5 June 1903): 78.
[36] "A Zionist Opportunity," The American Hebrew 73:3 (5 June 1903): 78.
[37] "Kishineff Aids Jewish Solidarity," The Jewish Exponent 37:10 (26 June 1903): 8.

> often present the sad spectacle of a house divided against itself.
>
> It must, therefore, be patent to all that our greatest need is organization, a united Israel - a central authoritative body that in crises and emergencies shall have the indisputable right to speak and act for all Israel.[38]

As a result of his directive, the CCAR assembled a committee to look into the feasibility of a central organization.

The impetus towards unified organization and action was a significant development in American Jewry. Previously, when Jews wanted to help their co-religionists throughout the world, their ability to help was restricted without a central organization. Rather than only reacting, responding with action after learning of an anti-semitic incident, some groups began to see the necessity of proactive measures. They wanted to create structures which would be able to assist instantly at critical moments. With Rabbi Silverman's innovation and leadership, the Reform rabbis established an action committee to investigate the possibility of such proactive endeavors:

> Said commission is to examine specifically:
> 1st. Into the feasibility of uniting existing fraternal orders and national educational societies.
> 2nd. Into the merits of the several orders and societies with a view to determining which, if any, could, by being strengthened, assume the position of a thoroughly representative body.
> 3rd. Into the necessity and feasibility of forming a new organization to which all existing national societies might be subordinate.
> 4th. Into the possibility and benefit of forming a Central Board, consisting of the Executive Committees of the various orders and national organizations, said Board to have full authority to act for all constituent societies in matters of general interest to all Israel.[39]

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[38] "Message," CCAR Year Book vol. 13: 25.
[39] "Message," CCAR Year Book vol. 13: 26.

Months after the violence and the ensuing flood of coverage had ended, Kishinev still remained salient because of the force and impetus it had created for unified organization. In January 1904 The American Hebrew held up the response to Kishinev as the ideal towards which the Jewish community should strive:

> We have merely quoted the Kishineff affair as an illustration of the urgent necessity for harmonious work. Many other incidents might be cited to prove conclusively that in all cases where public action is required it is of the utmost importance that there shall be unity of purpose.[40]

Throughout the rest of the article the editor stressed the importance of presenting a unified front.

The vast concern shown by so many Jews and non-Jews, most specifically through the B'nai B'rith petition, but also through the mass protest meetings, exemplified a hopeful spirit of humanitarianism. Time and again, calls for funds and support in response to Kishinev appealed not to religious, ethnic or cultural needs but to the ethical and moral responsibility to which humanity ideally adhered. For the most optimistic, America had become synonymous with humanitarian behavior. Former President Grover Cleveland emphasized this point at the Carnegie Hall protest meeting in New York:

> Every American humane sentiment has been shocked by a late attack on the Jews in Russia . . . As members of the family of mankind, and as citizens of a free nation, we are here to give voice to the feeling that should stir every true man, and every American worthy of the name. There is something intensely horrible in the wholesale murder of unoffending, defenseless men, women and children, who have been tacitly, if not expressly, assured of safety under the protection of a professedly civilized government.[41]

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[40] The American Hebrew 74:8 (8 January 1904): 262.

[41] Grover Cleveland, "The Kishinev Massacre: Proceedings of a Meeting of Citizens of New York," (New York: The American Hebrew, 1903) 11-12.

To many after the massacre, Kishinev represented a paradigm of injustice and cruelty. Such despicable action had to be combated with humanitarian gestures, as the former President implored. The power of this humanitarian rallying cry continued to serve the Jewish community well as they encountered many more atrocities in the following years. Behind the increasing desire for a central organization rested the desire to fulfill the humanitarian needs of Jewish brethren throughout the world. This humanitarian reference served as the focus around which the American Jewish Committee organized and took action in 1906.

A Shift of Power

Prior to the Kishinev massacre, when a crisis arose affecting Jews throughout the globe, the incentive for action usually came from Europe. This had been the case with the pogroms of the 1880's. Although American Jews worked to assist the sufferers of these pogroms, initial organizing began in Europe. This seemed logical because of the proximity of these countries throughout Europe and because of Jewry's deeper roots there. Although historically Jews may have experienced troubles, they still had lived in areas of England, Germany, Austria, and France for hundreds of years. Through the generations, Jews had established philanthropic organizations in order to provide for their European brethren. These organizations helped greatly in response to the pogroms of 1881. The French demonstrated their potential through the Alliance Israelite Universelle as did the British with the Mansion House Meeting. Although the Alliance responded effectively to Kishinev, for the first time much significant action originated in America. In the 1880's, the American Jewish press castigated American Jews for their lack of contributions to assist Russian Jews. Along with these accusations, the papers always

mentioned the enormous generosity witnessed across the ocean by the Jews of Europe. With Kishinev, the tables turned as the American Jews demonstrated their initiative and leadership. In response to Kishinev, the Alliance raised funds in both Europe and in America. But the actions of American organizations, such as B'nai B'rith, had a much greater impact. Funds raised by them, and newly formed groups responding to Kishinev, equaled the rest of the world's contributions. The American organizations also initiated significant diplomatic action to help the Jews in Russia. Organizations, not merely individuals such as Jacob Schiff and Cyrus Adler, presented a unified front which the United States administration saw as representing the American Jewish community. As a result, the B'nai B'rith petition was circulated and signed by many United States' citizens. The Government accepted it and attempted to have it delivered. This action thus demonstrated a significant transfer of initiative and diplomatic action on behalf of the world's Jews from European to American Jewry.[42] In a review of the events of 1903 The American Jewish Year Book offered an extremely astute understanding of the impact of Kishinev:

> It gave to American Jewry the hegemony of the world's Judaism by proving that American Jews have the courage and the public spirit openly to espouse the cause of their brothers, as they stand ready to make the sacrifice involved in keeping open to the Jewish refugees this last asylum of the oppressed; they not only showed themselves possessed of the statesmanship which is equal to a great emergency, but they demonstrated that they have a Government back of them for which the resentment of the greatest of autocracies has no terrors, that they are equally sure of the active sympathy of their best fellow-citizens whenever they turn to them in a humanitarian cause.[43]

Unfortunately, the anti-Jewish events of the following years diminished the hope which the responses to Kishinev had produced. Still, the impetus for unifying

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[42] Schoenberg, 282.

[43] The American Jewish Year Book-5664, 1903, vol.5: 38-39.

and the development of organizations within American Jewry were direct results of the massacre and its response. This unifying as well as the action taken after Kishinev in the United States led to another significant accomplishment for American Jewry, the acquisition of hegemony for the Jewish community. Beginning with the events of Kishinev in 1903, the American Jewish community actively moved the center of world Jewry to this country through their initiative. This represented an extremely important development for the future of Judaism. For this reason, one historian writing a history of the American Jewish Committee suggested that after the spring of 1903, "the Kishinev Massacre was over; but the sound of its reverberations had only begun."[44]

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[44] Nathan Schachner, The Price of Liberty: A History of the American Jewish Committee (New York: The American Jewish Committee, 1948) 2.

Chapter 5
"A Detailed Turn in American Jewry"
The Next Ten Years

Kishinev had become a symbol, a reference. In the first years following the massacre, Kishinev continued to receive a great amount of attention. Details of the pogrom still concerned American Jews. When those charged with responsibility for the pogrom went on trial, both the Jewish and non-Jewish press contained articles with these details. Yet the influence of Kishinev, the reason Jews repeatedly mentioned it, pertained to its ability to serve as a reference. The name itself provided images of a certain degree of horror, of atrocity. In the period from the massacre through 1906, during which the Russian Jewish population endured hundreds of pogroms, American Jewry continually used Kishinev as a symbol. This did not end in 1906. Rather, because of all that Kishinev represented, it became a motivator for a generation of American Jews. This generation witnessed organizational development and the restructuring of their community, much of which began with Kishinev.

Kishinev as a Reference

In August of 1903, a few months after Kishinev, another massacre struck the town of Gomel. The American Hebrew titled their first article detailing these new anti-Jewish riots, "Another Kishinev."[1] One week later, another article titled "Gomel and Kishinev" compared the two pogroms stating, "[o]ne of the important facts in dispute in Kishinev was whether the authorities knew of the

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[1] "Another Kishinev," The American Hebrew 73:19 (25 September 1903): 609.

riots and neglected to enforce order . . . But in Gomel there is no one who will deny that the authorities were hand in glove with the rioters."[2] In a review of the events of 1904, the American Jewish Year Book added, "[n]o startling tragedy marked the year 5664. . . [but] . . . entirely bloodless no Jewish year can be. A reminder of Kishineff was given in the Gomel riots at the end of August, 1903."[3] Over a year later, when The American Hebrew reported on the trial of the instigators and victims of the Gomel pogrom, they still included an immediate comparison to Kishinev by adding, "the victims of the Gomel Massacre, which in ferocity rivaled the holocaust at Kishineff, were actually being made the defendants in the trial."[4] This observation raises the question of why the suffering at Gomel failed to garner the same notoriety as the events of Kishinev. The Russian Jewish historian Simon Dubnow suggested that the Gomel pogrom did not as painfully affect the moral consciousness of the Jews. At Gomel the Jews did not allow themselves to be beaten and slaughtered like helpless animals. They prepared and valiantly fought in self-defense.[5] Gomel, however, never became a byword of Jewish resistance. Rather the suffering there was ultimately subsumed into the type of Jewish suffering denoted by the word Kishinev.

When a new wave of pogroms began in Russia two years later, the comparisons to Kishinev continued. In calling for donations to help the sufferers of a massacre in Zhitomir, the press attempted to parallel the recent outbreak with the earlier travesty, hoping the reference would motivate the public: "The outbreak in that city was, if anything, as severe as that of Kishineff."[6] The

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[2] "Gomel and Kishinev," The American Hebrew 73:20 (2 October 1903): 630.

[3] "The Year," The American Jewish Year Book - 5665 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1904) vol. 6: 19.

[4] The American Hebrew 75:25 (4 November 1904): 657.

[5] Simon Dubnow, History of the Jews in Russian and Poland, Translated by I. Friedlaender (USA: Ktav Publishing House, Inc., 1975) 3: 90.

[6] The American Hebrew 77:1 (2 June 1905): 10.

comparison informed the reader that the Zhitomir violence demanded a significant response. The 1903 massacre came to stand not only for the persecution of the Jews, but also for their passivity. Thus, when Jews did take up arms and defend themselves, their actions were juxtaposed to what had occurred previously:

> For once in the history of the Jews in Russia, we are able to take comfort from a report of an outbreak against them. The riots in Lodz and Warsaw need not impress us with the same feeling of helplessness which seized the Jewish people when they heard of Kishineff. The Jews are upon the streets fighting for liberty; that is the hopefulness of the situation today.[7]

The watchword "Kishinev" ultimately came to represent much more than the actual massacre of April 1903. The name alone brought to mind images of persecution experienced by Jews. The Jewish community used Kishinev to encompass pogroms which had occurred in the Pale of Settlement from 1903-1906. The name, itself, invoked a powerful effect. When Russia, strapped financially due to their war against Japan, asked the United States for an international loan in 1905, an editorial in The American Hebrew protested, "[y]ou use the money that you borrow to buy bullets to shoot women and children at Kishineff and at the other places where the Russians, fighting unarmed people, have made a better showing than against Japan."[8] Louis Marshall also used Kishinev to symbolize all the Russian pogroms in a speech in which he attempted to offer some hope:

> [T]hough human agencies may prove powerless, the God who has ever watched over Israel, who sleeps and slumbers not, who softened the hard heart of Pharaoh, and stood by our forefathers during the Assyrian, the Greek and the Roman conquests in the black night of the Dark Ages, in

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[7] "Russia will yet be Free," The American Hebrew 77:5 (30 June 1905): 121.
[8] The American Hebrew 77:12 (18 August 1905): 321.

> every hour of peril, and who led us and our ancestors, dry shod, through a thousand Red Seas of persecution, the God who has ever pronounced upon the Kischineff's of History...will give ear unto our supplication.[9]

As pogroms continued, the numbers - of those killed and injured, and of property damaged or destroyed - dwarfed what had occurred in Kishinev. Most histories written to describe this time, however, referred specifically to Kishinev, using it to encompass all the anti-Jewish activity throughout the period of pogroms. After massive attacks in places such as Odessa and Kiev, Kishinev often would be mentioned together with these other cities. Thus commentators were able with a few broad strokes to paint a picture of the Russian Jewish experience from 1903-1906. This technique was used in a 1906 publication called Justice for the Russian Jew: An Appeal to the Justice of the World for the Cessation of an Unprecedented International Crime. In one instance it stated, "[t]he massacres of Lodz and Odessa and Kishineff cry out to high heaven."[10] The appeal continued with a similar symbolic mentioning:

> If Russia has a future in God's providence, the day will come when she will be prostrated in the dust with shame for the atrocities of Kishineff and Odessa. The day will come when no sacrifice will be too great to have these pages destroyed from her history.[11]

Even after three years filled with travesties of greater magnitude than Kishinev, the initial massacre still served as a reference point to Jews in America. Even when violence was directed at Jews outside of the Pale, or outside of Russia altogether, Kishinev still helped create a powerful image. For instance, in 1912

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[9] Louis Marshall, "The Martyrdom of Israel," The Jewish Exponent 42:10 (22 December 1905): 7.

[10] Justice for the Russian Jew: An Appeal to the Justice of the World for the Cessation of an Unprecedented International Crime (New York: J.S. Ogilvie Publishing Company, 1906) 25.

[11] Justice for the Russian Jew, 62.

when Jews in Greece faced attacks, prominent individuals used Kishinev as a point of reference, as an event which could provide details where none existed:

> The American Jewish Committee has received numerous letters sent to friends and relatives in this city from Saloniki. The letters in all their simplicity reveal a tale of horror that transcends all belief. The outrages committed by Greek troops upon the Jewish population seem to have been patterned along the lines of the Kishineff massacre.[12]

From this brief overview, it is easy to see Kishinev's power as a reference point for the American Jewish community. Kishinev's influence, however, extended beyond this symbolic value. American Jewry's response to the pogroms of 1905 and 1906 further demonstrates the massacre's lasting effect.

The Pogroms of 1905-1906 and the Initial Response

By May 1905, the first reports of possible violence in Russia appeared in the Jewish press, followed shortly by similar stories in the non-Jewish press. These reports practically mimicked those first seen on the pages of the papers in 1881 and 1903:

> A rumor is current in St. Petersburg that there has been a three days' massacre of Jews in Zhitomir, the capital of Volhynia. . . These rumors have become definite, and they are to the effect that the Easter holidays have not passed without their usual disasters to the Jewish people.[13]

Specific words which flooded the papers during the reporting of the Kishinev massacre reappeared in 1905 and 1906. Descriptions of the rioters as "beastly," "inhumane" and "full of fury and barbarity" once again grabbed the attention of the readers.[14] By the Fall of 1905, anti-Jewish violence had become so intense in

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[12] Memorandum to Secretary Friedenwald from Louis Marshall, 10 December 1912, Louis Marshall Papers, Chronological File: 1911-1915, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.

[13] The American Hebrew 76:24 (12 May 1905): 753.

[14] See The Jewish Exponent 42 (20 October 1905 through 13 April 1906), with many references in November and December.

Russia that it once again dominated the American Jewish press, from late October to late November. The persecution which so many had hoped would be an isolated occurrence two years earlier in Kishinev, proved to be a recurring theme for Russian-Jewish relations. Many Jews had hoped, despite the events at Kishinev, that a new liberal spirit might still sweep through Russia. Unfortunately, 1905 proved that, "[o]nce more the Jews have become the pawns in the machinations of selfish, cruel Russian politicians."[15] In the fall of 1905, The American Hebrew, devoted full pages to coverage of the Russian travesties. Articles called "The Russia Situation" and "Continued Outrages Against the Jews - Government Powerless" filled the columns. From towns such as Odessa, Moldaganha, Solbodka, Bugaiovka, Warsaw, Krenenchug, Kutais, Berdicheff, and Minsk, accounts repeatedly described "atrocities" and conditions which were full of "horror."[16]

Gradually this extensive coverage faded and by late February few stories dealt with the riots in Russia. Articles still discussed relief organizations and their efforts and even updated the conditions in those Russian towns that had seen violence only two months before, but these were mostly smaller stories. When compared to the amount of coverage devoted to Kishinev two years earlier, Kishinev proportionately received a good deal more. Even though, in 1905 the Russians murdered over one thousand Jews and in Kishinev they killed less than fifty, Kishinev received entire supplements in the press while the later pogroms did not.

Only a few months later, extensive coverage dedicated to Russian events reappeared as a result of the Bialystok pogrom. The American Hebrew's editorial page was filled with stories surrounding the violence and the events

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[15] The American Hebrew 77:24 (10 November 1905): 663.
[16] The American Hebrew 77:24 (10 November 1905).

preceding it. Each of the articles suggested that in every succeeding year the Russian Jew experienced worse calamities: "Horror succeeds horror in the Jewish pale. After Kishineff, Gomel; after Gomel, the October Pogromy which one would have thought would have satiated the bloodthirsty appetite for the Russian Bureaucracy."[17] The American Jewish Year Book's summary of the 1906 Bialystok pogrom recounted the pattern seen in numerous anti-Jewish atrocities:

> On June 14, a Corpus Christi procession of about ten thousand persons was moving through the principal streets of Bialystok, a prosperous manufacturing town in the province of Grodno, when suddenly a rumor spread that a number of people, including a priest, had been killed by a bomb thrown by Jews into the procession. It has since been proved that the explosion of the bomb was merely a sign for the hooligans to begin their work of destruction, for, within five minutes, there began plunder and murder of Jews, and it continued for three days. Wherever the Jews showed fight, soldiers came to the rescue of the hooligans, and shot down the Jews. The riot was marked by extreme ferocity; about two hundred Jews were killed, murdered in the most inhuman manner.[18]

Pogroms became such a part of what American Jews expected from news in Russia that The American Jewish Year Book of 1906 published a lead article, "From Kishineff to Bialystok." In these thirty pages, the editors compiled and recorded the events of 254 pogroms in various towns throughout the Russian Empire. In many cases they recorded the numbers killed and injured as well as the extent of damage. Sometimes the only information available could be recorded as, "many Jews killed and wounded." The editors apologized for this explaining that it, "is neither statistics nor history; nevertheless it tells a gruesome story."[19] Demonstrating the fact that the editors perceived Kishinev as

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[17] The American Hebrew 79:3 (22 June 1906): 57.

[18] "The Year," The American Jewish Year Book - 5667 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1906) vol. 8: 247.

[19] "From Kishineff to Bialystok," The American Jewish Year Book - 5667 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1906) vol. 8: 34-89. For an extensive list of all the

the momentous beginning of these three years, their list begins with details of the massacre there. Yet the list of 254 different pogroms solidifies the reality that the first pogrom in Kishinev was not unique; it remained just one of many demonstrations of Russian cruelty against their Jewish population. The details of what incited the riots of Kishinev and how the masses and authorities carried it out, appear very similar to the other pogroms. Kishinev's infamy lies in the fact that it occurred first. Thus the atrocity at Kishinev in 1903 will always be mentioned first in discussions surrounding anti-Jewish travesties of the twentieth century.

The events of April 1903 surprised American Jews to such an extent that afterwards many made keeping themselves informed a central priority. Prior to the Kishinev pogrom, few hints of the impending travesty had appeared in American newspapers. After Kishinev, some hoped that by keeping abreast of constant developments, the potential for future atrocities might be better monitored. Hoping that knowledge is power, American Jews believed that they would be able to help their fellow Jews in Russia if they remained informed of conditions there. Accordingly, the Jewish Publication Society, shortly after Kishinev, adopted the following resolution:

> That the publication committee be requested to prepare from time to time, and the Board of Directors to publish and distribute in such manner and in such quantity as may be most effectual, information bearing upon the condition of the Jews in Russia.[20]

As an immediate result of this resolution, the JPS published Within the Pale and The Voice of America on Kishineff. As an independent journalist, Michael Davitt

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pogroms during this three year period see the full table of pogroms from 1903-1906. According to this table only 47 Jews were killed in Kishinev in 1903. More were killed in approximately 12 different instances during this period, including over 300 in Lodz, over 800 in Kiev, over 1000 in Tomsk and over 200 in Bialystok.

[20] The American Jewish Year Book - 5664 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1903) 393.

had journeyed to Kishinev shortly after the massacre. He created Within the Pale to describe what he had learned about the outrages, the factors which had led up to it and its immediate impact within Russia. Cyrus Adler compiled The Voice of America on Kishineff from the accounts of the initial responses to Kishinev, including the mass meetings, the relief funds as well as the petition. The shock of what had occurred in Russia directed this action and their desire to help. During the next few years, American Jews searched for more day-to-day information concerning the treatment of the Jews in Russia. Sensing this public need, the Jewish press devoted much more reporting to events in Russia. For the most part, a general cautiousness pervaded the stories. In January 1905, the Jewish periodicals committed what may have seemed a disproportionate amount to strikes erupting in Russia. Having seen what Russian unrest could lead to, the American Jewish community followed the disturbances with concern. The American Hebrew justified such scrutiny by observing that in Russia, "to strike is . . . to revolt. . . The strike was the spark that set on fire the smoldering discontent, the passionate patriotism, of the radicals."[21] In the wake of Kishinev, American Jews were increasingly concerned with potentially violent situations. So they looked to their newspapers to provide more extensive Russian coverage. This desire for information continued during the following years as articles titled, "A Massacre Imminent in Odessa," made headlines due to fears that an anti-Jewish outrage might occur.[22] Awareness of Russian conditions increased significantly before the next wave of pogroms, particularly when compared to the period prior to the Kishinev pogrom. As American Jewry became more sensitive to the needs of world Jewry, advances in technology and a general

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[21] The American Hebrew 76:9 (27 January 1905): 300.
[22] The American Hebrew 77:11 (11 August 1905): 297.

American engagement with world events meant greater coverage.[23] Of course the increasingly Russian-Jewish community also demanded international coverage.

With the new wave of pogroms beginning in 1905, actions begun as a response in 1903 gained strength. Once again, significant individuals within the Jewish community organized funds and committees to provide for the sufferers of Russian atrocities. In November of 1905, the National Committee for Relief of Sufferers by Russian Massacres began to coordinate fundraising efforts. With Oscar Straus as chairman, Jacob Schiff as treasurer and Cyrus Sulzberger as secretary, a meeting announcing its inception received over seventy thousand dollars in contributions.[24] In his historical analysis, Peter Wiernik compared the actions of this committee to those that formed in response to Kishinev:

> [A] committee collected considerably . . . from Jews and non-Jews, mainly through the same agencies and by the same methods as the funds for the sufferers from Kishinev were collected. There were again mass-meetings at which prominent non-Jews spoke words of sympathy for the martyrs and their families and condemned the government which permitted such carnage.[25]

This committee solicited and sent out over 1400 telegrams throughout America appealing for funds. They also published pleas for support in the secular press. As a result of all these efforts, they raised over one and a quarter million dollars.[26] Individuals from every region of the United States contributed to the cause. Significant donations came not only from the usual philanthropic millionaires but also from many new Russian immigrants. As it had been after

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[23] The American Jewish Year Book - 5672 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of American, 1912) vol. 14: 305.

[24] The American Hebrew 77:24 (10 November 1905): 670.

[25] Peter Wiernik, History of the Jews in America (New York: The Jewish Press Publishing Company, 1972, 1st ed. 1912) 358.

[26] Nathan Schachner, The Price of Liberty: A History of the American Jewish Committee (New York: The American Jewish Committee, 1948) 8.

Kishinev, the American Jewish community was proud of its efforts to help their co-religionists in Russia and saw their work as surpassing anything previously accomplished:

> The extent of the calamity is unfortunately without precedent; but equally without precedent is the volume of philanthropic effort with which the American Jews and their Christian friends . . . have striven to meet the sad emergency created by that calamity.[27]

This outpouring of support, in conjunction with the sense that the concerns of Jewish leaders had been heard by various civilized nations, produced a sense of hope during this bleak time for Russian Jews. The American Jewish Year Book, acknowledging the continuing threat and misfortunes, still concluded, "the Jew... blessed with inexhaustible optimism, looks further, and beholds in the more remote future a period of peace and happiness, brought about by the spread of the principles of justice and liberty over all the earth."[28] With this hope, the Jews in 1906 furthered their efforts of relief on behalf of Russian Jews.

Many mass meetings were organized to heighten awareness of the conditions for Jews in Russia and to solicit contributions. During this period, nothing rivaled the protest march coordinated by Rabbi Judah Magnes on December 4, 1905. Magnes together with labor leader Joseph Barondess, organized the first massive Jewish protest march in the world. As nearly 100,000 Jewish mourners marched down the streets of New York, the bells of several Christian churches tolled in sympathy.[29] In other meetings, politicians spoke describing the atrocities in phrases which could have been lifted from the speeches many had offered after the Kishinev massacre. Congressman William Sulzer proclaimed, "[w]hat a spectacle Russia presents at the dawn of the

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[27] The American Jewish Year Book - 5666, 1906, vol. 8: 242.

[28] The American Jewish Year Book - 5666, 1906, vol. 8: 275.

[29] Ismar Elbogen, A Century of Jewish Life (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1944) 433.

twentieth century. Nothing like it ever occurred before in all the annals of time... a gigantic crime against a common humanity and Russia must be forced to stop it."[30] The protest meeting at the Belasco theater on January 21, 1906 was repeated in many other places, just as it replicated scenes of two years earlier. When the doors opened at seven o'clock the theater quickly filled and the organizers had to turn away thousands: "If the theater had been ten times as large it could not have accommodated the people who deserved to testify by their presence, their sympathy in this great cause."[31] Due to the success of the 1903 petitions, individuals and organizations suggested the need for a new petition as a method of protest. Through the Kishinev petition, important diplomatic work had been accomplished, particularly regarding the involvement of the United States' Government. When one lodge of the B'nai B'rith presented a resolution calling for the condemnation of the Russian government, however, the leader of B'nai B'rith rejected such action:

> [I]t is not necessary to attempt to recreate any sentiment in this country by mass meetings, resolutions or otherwise, condemning murder and outrages such as have been perpetrated against our co-religionists in Russia; that such sentiment exists deeply rooted in the hearts of the American people, has already found expression in the Kishineff petition; repetition would weaken instead of strengthen our position.[32]

Similarly, the Central Conference of American Rabbis warned its constituency that loud protests did not always accomplish the intended ends. Their president said, "be careful of your words . . . that a single indiscretion may do injury to millions of sufferers longingly turning their eyes to America for a home and a refuge."[33] Initially with this new wave of pogroms, the American Jewish leaders

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[30] Justice for the Russian Jew, 24-25.

[31] Justice for the Russian Jew, 11.

[32] The American Hebrew 77:9 (28 July 1905): 237.

[33] Joseph Stolz, "Address by the President at the Opening of the Conference," Year Book

did not want to protest too loudly. They recognized the success their protests had in response to Kishinev, but additional public demands so soon after might test the tolerance of their non-Jewish fellow Americans. Thus, even while many offered noticeable protests, others pursued a less aggressive approach.

Once again, protests modeled on those after Kishinev rang out from the United States Congress, with speeches proposing various resolutions and imploring government action. Representative William Sulzer spoke out most openly and passionately on behalf of this cause. His suggested resolution received much publicity:

> That the House of Representatives of the United States, voicing the humanitarian sentiments of the American people, deplores the terrible crimes, the brutal outrages, and the uncalled for and wanton murders of Jews in Russia, these awful outrages, these shocking assassinations, and these appalling atrocities as great international crimes against a common humanity that must be stopped, and stopped quickly by the Russian government indicted before the judgment bar of the Governments; otherwise Russia, in the opinion of mankind, will and must stand before the world as beyond the pale of its civilization.[34]

Although Sulzer vehemently called upon his colleagues to condemn and denounce the massacres, the actual resolution unanimously passed by both houses and the President during the summer of 1906 was toned down considerably and directed far fewer accusations at the Russian authorities:

> That the people of the United States are horrified by the reports of the massacres of Hebrews in Russia on account of their race and religion, and that those bereaved thereby have the hearty sympathy of the people of this country.[35]

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of the Central Conference of American Rabbis-5666 (Chicago: CCAR, 1906) vol. 16: 26.

[34] Justice for the Russian Jew, 7.

[35] Wiernik, 361.

The government of the United States, like governments throughout the world, could not be induced to oppose the atrocities more forcefully. Within the limits of international law and etiquette, few did more than adopt minor resolutions.[36]

The Growing Desire for Unification

The desire to unify the American Jewish community which began with Kishinev, furthered its growth during this new phase of pogroms. Disparate groups recognized the importance of coming together to offer a united front. Various organizations took the lead in attempting to form some group effort. While these efforts only had temporary success, they did further demonstrate the desire of many divergent groups to join forces. When the pogroms began again in the fall of 1905, Temple Emanu-El in New York City rallied the efforts of the community by bringing many groups together. They succeeded in creating a representative forum:

> All elements of the community were present, crowding the Vestry room of the Temple to the doors. It was an excited, an emotional, a revengeful gathering, and also a sympathetic, generous gathering of men and women. The East Side was well represented. The Socialists were there in a large group; the Zionists were there; almost the entire local rabbinate was present; and there were the heads of our institutions, the local supporters of our institutions, men who had for years given of their time and money to relieve the distress of our brethren.[37]

The broad participation in the event was extremely important. The need for extensive collaboration which Kishinev first made apparent, these later Russian outrages reinforced. Still no nation-wide institution had the ability to speak for all the Jews in this country. The new emergency highlighted the waste of time and energy that went into coordinating any makeshift crisis response. With each

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[36] The American Jewish Year Book - 5666, 1906, vol. 8: 242.
[37] The American Hebrew, 77: 24 (10 November 1905): 667.

catastrophe affecting the Jew, a new machinery, a new organization, had to be erected.[38] Now with an ever increasing Jewish population, mostly from eastern Europe, "the Russian massacres merely served to crystallize the feeling that an organization of the Jews of this country capable of coping with these problems was essential to the proper and beneficial development of the Jewish people of the United States."[39]

Prominent individuals representing Jewish concerns began to adjust their roles as community leaders with their responses to Kishinev and these new massacres. For years, a few significant Jewish individuals had unofficially formed a disproportionately strong American Jewish lobby. Because of their wealth and connections they were able to influence American foreign policy from 1890 to 1914, particularly in regard to eastern Europe.[40] Many of these stewards, such as Jacob Schiff, Oscar Straus and Cyrus Sulzberger, however, recognized the growing need for an organization that would do more than provide philanthropy, that would help defend Jews in foreign lands. The impact of Kishinev, in conjunction with the increasing difficulties which Jews experienced in Russia and other eastern European countries, "brought about serious thought on the part of Schiff and others as to the need of an organization in the United States to meet these requirements."[41] In addition, individuals like Schiff were no longer willing to carry so much of the responsibility and make such personal sacrifices. After disbursing the "Kishineff Fund" and receiving, along with his colleagues, criticism from the Jewish press, Schiff stated emphatically that he would never again take on such tremendous personal

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[38] Elbogen, 432-433.

[39] The American Jewish Year Book - 5676, 1916, vol. 18: 324.

[40] Gary Dean Best, To Free A People: American Jewish Leaders and the Jewish Problem in Eastern Europe, 1890-1914 (Westport, Connecticut: Crestwood Press, 1991: 18).

[41] Cyrus Adler, Jacob H. Schiff: His Life and Letters (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1928) vol II: 160.

responsibility.[42] Still hoping to increase the help potentially available for their co-religionists, the stewards set out to unify their efforts with the efforts of the entire Jewish community. They even sought to incorporate elements in the country previously excluded, specifically the eastern European Jews.

Changes in Existing Organizations and the American Jewish Community

When word reached America of the Kishinev massacre, none of the organizations previously established possessed the resources to help those suffering from the atrocity. Some of the more prominent organizations were able to hastily coordinate their efforts and even appeared to represent the American Jewish community. More than one group made this attempt. In a sense, a "free for all" of organizations existed. When the community needed a particular service, any group could potentially undertake that service and was even encouraged to do so. For example, the Independent Order of B'nai B'rith helped establish chronic disease hospitals and vocational counseling to assist Jews in finding employment, seemingly unusual services for a fraternal body to offer.[43] During the first years of the twentieth century, B'nai B'rith had the advantage in mobilizing voluntary support on a national basis, because they were the largest countrywide organization.[44] Even other groups recognized the vastness of B'nai B'rith and the advantage that magnitude created for them. The Board of Delegates of Civil and Religious Rights demonstrated their understanding of this by stating that since, "the Kishinev matter was one of international character and in as much as the Order of B'nai B'rith had the machinery in kindred organizations in Europe, it was deemed best to let the Order take charge of

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[42] "Report of the American Jewish Committee," The American Jewish Year Book (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1932) vol. 34: 320.

[43] Daniel J. Elazar, Community and Polity: The Organizational Dynamics of American Jewry (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1976) 159.

[44] Elazar, 159.

matters of this character and not come in conflict."[45] In contrast to this, the growing Jewish population produced within other organizations and individuals the desire to lead the American Jewish community and thus created a centrifugal force working against unified organization building.

By 1905, none of the national or international Jewish bodies could presume to speak "with undisputed authority in the name of American Jewry."[46] The Alliance Israelite Universelle, though still attempting to function as the diplomatic representative of world Jewry, received considerable assistance from other national groups, such as the German Hilfsverein and the British Anglo-Jewish Association.[47] Some argued that the Alliance could not effectively represent American Jewry because of its "preponderance of French Jews and French methods."[48] Other international groups were too issue-oriented, like the Jewish Colonization Association and the Israelite Allianz of Vienna, which directed their efforts towards immigration. Another association, the Baron de Hirsch Fund, dedicated its activities to immigration leagues, removal associations, agricultural and technical organizations, educational undertakings and other charitable opportunities.[49]

Many organizations based in America vied for the leadership of this Jewish community and thus worked to facilitate its unification. While taking many positive steps in the United States, the B'nai B'rith also received their fair share of criticism. Initially The American Hebrew supported B'nai B'rith's efforts, recognizing their ability to inspire smaller local institutions. Ideally, the editors suggested that the B'nai B'rith "should initiate work, and leave the rest to

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[45] "Report of Board of Delegates of Civil and Religious Rights," Proceedings of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (Cincinnati: May & Kreidler, Printers, 1904) vol. 30: 5026.

[46] Wiernik, 366.

[47] The American Jewish Year Book - 5666, 1906: 269.

[48] Wiernik, 366.

[49] The American Jewish Year Book - 5668 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1907) vol.9: 532.

the Jewish communities," but not become the sole support of these institutions.[50] In 1905, the Board of Delegates of Civil and Religious Rights issued a proposal for a unified congress which showed its change of opinion, a disapproval of B'nai B'rith's actions:

> [I]t cannot be denied at this juncture, neither one of the other organizations can assume responsibility or become sponsor for the work that confronts the Jews not only of the United States, but of the world. The time has come unquestionably, when a united Jewry must be created representing all shades of public opinion, to the sole end of providing ways and means for our unfortunate co-religionists, to prevent inimical legislation against the incoming immigration, and last and chiefest of all, to provide for an intelligent distribution of them, into all parts of the United States.[51]

One year later, at the Union of American Hebrew Congregation's annual meeting, that organization, like B'nai B'rith, announced a plan to assume national leadership built on the strength of its existing constituency. The UAHC leaders believed that their member congregations, stretching across the country, could help them "easily assume national leadership, and lend [their] service to building up the representative assembly of American Israel."[52]

By 1906, the Central Conference of American Rabbis relinquished their desire to establish a synod to unify the community, claiming "while we are in favor of union of action in American Israel on occasions of emergency, we declare the formation of any organization through this Conference impractical and inadvisable."[53] Thus, the Reform movement's leadership recognized the need for unification, while it also understood the significance of a broader base.

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[50] The American Hebrew 76:20 (14 April 1905): 638.

[51] "Report of Board of Delegates of Civil and Religious Rights," Proceedings of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (Cincinnati: May & Kreidler, Printers, 1906) vol. 32: 5514.

[52] Proceedings of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (Cincinnati: May & Kriedler, Printers, 1907) vol. 33: 5701.

[53] Year Book of the Central Conference of American Rabbis (Baltimore: The Lord Baltimore Press, 1906) vol. 16: 201.

The UAHC and the CCAR had not sought to "Reform" but only to bring all Jews together.[54] Yet much of American Jewry believed that as liberal religious organizations, these Reform Jewish institutions could not effectively represent the diversity of American Jewry.

As American Jews began to look to their existing organizations to take the lead in bringing them together, it seemed clear according to The American Hebrew that the groups currently serving the community all had their flaws:

> The Union of American Hebrew Congregations has its Board of Civil and Religious Rights, but everywhere there is a feeling that that organization is not comprehensive enough. The Independent Order of B'nai B'rith which once, under the leadership of Leo N. Levi, aspired to become just such an organization as we have in mind, has not proved itself equal to emergencies. The Federation of American Zionists is too partisan - or, at least, does not command the support of all Jews who would be willing to work in harmony in any one given matter. The Conference of Rabbis-orthodox or reform- are not strong enough, and the various fraternal orders are, as far as we can see, utterly indifferent or ignorant of the demands of the situation.[55]

Although these organizations all advanced Jewish interests, they all failed, in the face of the task at hand, because they were not sufficiently representative.

The Need for Unification and the Organizing Actions of American Jewry

The initial impetus towards American Jewish unity revolved around charity. This charity included contributions to international causes, such as helping the sufferers of the Kishinev massacres, as well as donations to support the swelling numbers of new immigrants in America. As efforts increased to unify charitable groups, individuals such as Jacob Schiff, Cyrus Sulzberger and William Guggenheim positively influenced the effort towards solidarity. Acting

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[54] Jacob Rader Marcus, United States Jewry, 1776-1985: The Germanic Period, Part 2 (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1993) vol. III: 709.

[55] The American Hebrew 77:24 (10 November 1905): 664.

on what they had learned from their attempts to cope with the suffering caused at Kishinev, these men helped organize the National Conference of Jewish Charities which first convened in May 1904. Prior to this, such a large and representative assembly of Jews interested in communal work had not come together except in times of immediate crisis. In recognition of the event's impact, the Jewish press dedicated much coverage to the meetings. The American Hebrew praised the initiative of these leaders for overcoming so many differences and for dedicating themselves to such a significant purpose, a purpose this growing community needed to address:

> The Conference of Jewish Charities . . . was an impressive example of the unity underlying Jewish life in this country, despite the many differences engendered by warring theologies and important prejudices. American Judaism thus discovers its best self in that old well-tried solidarity as expressed in an unstinted beneficence which unanimously responds to the call of mutual responsibility.[56]

The need for charity only increased after Kishinev, particularly with the rise in immigration. Therefore, the United Hebrew Charities, a group already collecting and distributing charity in New York, broadened its scope in order to develop nationally. By attempting to collaborate with both German American and Russian American charitable causes, this agency demonstrated "the earnest desire . . . to become the center of all charitable work . . . from their judicious and broad-minded attitude toward Jewish organizations.[57] Rather than usurp the power and authority of existing organizations, the United Hebrew Charities proposed leaving institutions with their own autonomy. At the same time, the leaders set up a unified financial basis hoping to better serve each individual charity involved.

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[56] The American Hebrew 75:5 (17 June 1904): 133.
[57] The American Hebrew 76:16 (17 March 1905): 510.

The ability and will demonstrated by the National Conference of Jewish Charities and the United Hebrew Charities to organize and work harmoniously with other groups, suggested the potential of bringing American Jewry together. Not until the ensuing massacres in Russia in 1905 aroused American Jews did they began to feel, "the necessity of an organization to cope with the situation and with similar situations in the future."[58] With the repetition of violence in eastern Europe, the desire to prevent continuing tragedies brought Jews together behind a common cause. Once again, initial efforts at national unity centered around charity. The National Committee for Relief of Sufferers by Russian Massacres, organized in order to disperse funds, collected donations for the victims of overseas persecution. The initiators hoped that as groups in cities throughout America received donations, they would pass them on to this committee, also referred to as the General Committee for Russian Relief, to distribute to the sufferers.[59] Although this initial action was modeled on the relief committees set up after the Kishinev massacre, an underlying desire for permanent unity had become much more apparent. With renewed persecution in Russia and the emerging realization that Kishinev was not an isolated incident, many understood the need to establish a greater permanent organization to protect Jewish concerns.

The American Hebrew's immediate coverage of reactions to renewed anti-Jewish violence in Russia, succinctly expressed the community's concern and frustration. At meetings throughout the country, prominent individuals were asking, "[h]ow shall we work together? Where is the organization . . . through whom may we be able to voice the protest that is in every heart."[60] The editors focused on this point:

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[58] Wiernik, 306.
[59] "Appeal for Funds," The American Hebrew 77:25 (17 November 1905): 698.
[60] The American Hebrew 77:24 (10 November 1905): 664.

> See how we Jews of America must grope about before we can do something together in a case of common interest. . . In the moment of emergency, we are at a loss; we have no organization that speaks for us, for Kol Israel, when the entire people would desire to be of service to our brethren in distress. There will be funds collected everywhere; a desire to be of service, but valuable time will be lost while organization is being effected. We believe that now is the time for a decided movement toward the formation of a competent body to represent the American Jewish people in all matters that effect their interest in brethren in distress in foreign countries.[61]

This frustration had first emerged with the Kishinev massacre. But when another emergency demanded American assistance and little had changed many individuals spoke out suggesting potential improvements for the organization of American Jewry. No one identified a definitive cure for the persecution experienced by the Russian Jews, yet more and more significant individuals and organizations believed that the initial step towards its discovery lay in coordinating and bringing together all of America's Jewish organizations. The desire to unify had definitely grown as "[n]early every Jewish newspaper . . . advocated editorially the paramount necessity for the formation of some kind of an organization that would secure union of forces and unity of action."[62] Cyrus Adler and Louis Marshall both openly spoke out supporting the need for a unifying organization. Adler wrote letters to many prominent newspapers saying, "my whole thought is that only one voice should speak in behalf of the Jews in America on matters of national and international importance and that this voice should be the product of the combined wisdom of all the Jews of America."[63] Even the rabbis of the Reform and Orthodox movements

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[61] The American Hebrew 77:24 (10 November 1905): 664.

[62] Joseph Stolz, "Address of the President," Year Book of the Central Conference of American Rabbis (Baltimore: The Lord Baltimore Press, 1906) vol. 16: 224.

[63] The American Hebrew 78:6 (5 January 1906): 234.

independently recognized the need for concerted action. The Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations called for relief funds and the formation of a committee which would "command loyalty of all the sections of the Jewish community in order to represent it in any such emergency as the present."[64] In 1906, the President of the Central Conference of American Rabbis gave a much more passionate plea on behalf of unification, as he looked back on the events of 1905 recognizing their positive ramifications:

> The massacres created in the heart of Israel a longing for union. Wherever the sons of Jacob dwelt, they mourned together, wept together, prayed together, sent their generous money-offerings into one common treasury. National and theological differences were ignored. It mattered not where their cradles had stood; no one cared aught for the distinctions of reform or orthodoxy, for family traditions or old-time prejudices. Jewry was one.[65]

As a result of these diverse calls for unity, the process began which led to the American Jewish Committee's creation in 1906. Although many shared the desire to come together, not all agreed upon the most effective way to achieve this. Thus, the projected Committee developed amidst much controversy. Even with its creation, other organizations which brought the American Jewish community together continued to build during the next years.

The Creation of the American Jewish Committee

The creation of the American Jewish Committee paralleled the development of other Jewish rights agencies nearly fifty years earlier. In 1858 an Italian military detachment appeared at the house of six-year-old Edgar Mortara in Bologna, Italy, took the young Jewish boy from his parents and delivered him

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[64] Letter to Louis Marshall from the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations, 6 December 1905, Louis Marshall Papers: box 1618, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.

[65] "Address of President," Year Book, 1906, vol. 16: 223.

to church authorities. When Mortara had contracted a serious illness as an infant, his parents had hired a Catholic servant to care for him. During that period, the servant secretly baptized the boy. Upon hearing of this action, the church declared that the baptism had made him a Catholic and thus necessitated his proper upbringing in a Catholic home. Adhering to church authority, the papal policemen took him by force from his protesting parents.[66] As word of this travesty spread, Jews throughout the Western world raised their voices in protest against the Roman Catholic Church. Even prominent Catholics, such as the monarchs, Emperor Francis Joseph and Napoleon III, intervened personally with the Pope and pleaded that he reunite the boy with his parents so as not to invite such negative public opinion upon the church.[67]

Upon learning of the kidnapping, Jews throughout the world responded promptly. From Great Britain, Moses Montefiore, the President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews journeyed to Rome to plead personally with the Pope. When the Pope refused to offer him an audience, Montefiore alerted the American Jewish community and asked for their collaboration. The response to his request was overwhelmingly positive. The community organized protest meetings, drafted resolutions and created petitions. Many Christians supported Jewish efforts in condemning the actions of the Church. Some Jewish leaders even attempted to involve the American government so that official action or at least an expression of sympathy could be offered.[68] While only coming from a Jewish population of less than one hundred thousand, this response appears similar to that encountered immediately after the Kishinev massacre. Although the United States government ignored the pleas made by the American Jewish

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[66] Schachner, 6.

[67] Elbogen, 30.

[68] Naomi Cohen, Encounter with Emancipation: The German Jews in the United States (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1984) 216.

community on Mortara's behalf, the attempt to bring attention to the issue by emphasizing the humanitarian quotient, showed some similarity to the response after Kishinev. Yet the parallel does not end there for the "Mortara affair in Italy had pointed up the need for some closely knit, substantive group whose tongue could speak with the voice of combined Jewry," a need sensed after Kishinev as well.[69]

In the years following the Mortara kidnapping, two such organizations appeared on the world scene ready to offer that Jewish voice. In 1859 events surrounding the Mortara Affair frightened and then catalyzed the American Jewish community. Representatives of twenty-five congregations, although divided by country-of-origin and level of commitment to Jewish traditions, met in New York to form an organization which would take on domestic and international challenges.[70] This meeting, which established the Board of Delegates of American Israelites, marked the first serious attempt in America to establish a defense agency focused on Jewish civil rights. Although the Mortara travesty increased the desire for such a national Jewish agency, the Board of Delegates did not convene until a year later. Across the Atlantic Ocean an organization's development followed a similar pattern. The Alliance Israelite Universelle, which came together in 1860, also traced its creation to the impact of the Mortara Affair.[71] Believing that the emancipated Jews of France had attained full civil and political rights, the Alliance directed its energies toward the protecting and "civilizing" of Jews throughout the world.[72] Just as the leading Jews of Paris took two years to create the Alliance in response to the need accentuated by Mortara, so too in the United States, Jewish leaders established

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[69] Schachner, 6.

[70] Elazar, 154.

[71] Schachner, 7.

[72] Evyatar Friesel, "The Evolution of Jewish Civil-Rights Organizations in Europe and America," (Jerusalem: Annual Lecture at the American Jewish Archives, 1992) 8-9.

the American Jewish Committee just over two years after the Kishinev Massacre. An idea might very well begin with a shocking event, such as Mortara or Kishinev, but to bring together various elements of a community, to put organization where none exists, takes time. Years often pass in which the idea ferments and then becomes a realistic possibility. In America influential Jews called for a unified organization which could speak for the Jewish community, representing American Jewry to non-Jewish leaders. The need for such an organization did not seem urgent to most American Jews. They were not ready for this option until they had learned of the Kishinev massacre and the pogroms of 1905. Although the American Jewish Committee developed out of this shock, a number of other significant factors also contributed to its development in the period from 1903 to 1906.

Most have tied the inception of the American Jewish Committee to the Russian government's resumed persecution of the Jews in the twentieth century. In the Committee's Fourth Annual Report in 1910, its leaders acknowledged that the Russian atrocities motivated the creation of their organization, stating that "the ghastly massacres of Kishineff and Odessa . . . led to the organization of our Committee. These stunning calamities shocked the entire world and incited our whole people to spontaneous and unified action."[73] By mentioning Kishinev, this report testified to the impact of that first massacre. At the time of the 1905 outrages, hundreds of Jewish associations already existed, each with a specific purpose; religious, educational, fraternal and charitable. Yet no single organization coordinated all the other groups' efforts and no one group was in a position to appeal to them for material help in times of crisis. In addition, no organization monitored international events in order to keep the Jewish

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[73] "Fourth Annual Report of the American Jewish Committee," The American Jewish Year Book-5672 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1911) vol. 13: 309.

community informed of the injustices and persecutions Jews experienced throughout the world. When news of the pogroms reached America, individuals such as Jacob Schiff, Cyrus Sulzberger and Oscar Straus marshaled the community's efforts to gather funds and help deal with the emergency. Yet these philanthropic leaders could not be expected to assume such tremendous personal responsibility every time a crisis arose. This, along with the continuing anti-Jewish agitation in Russian and a growing population, made clear the urgency for a permanent national organization ready to deal with each crisis the Jews encountered.

The experience in 1905 of the National Committee for Relief for Sufferers of the Russian massacres offered proof of what coordinated efforts could accomplish. Looking back at the formation of the American Jewish Committee, a 1912 annual report attributed the impressive efficiency in dealing with the pogroms to the National Committee for Relief:

> The Committee [AJC], you will remember, took its rise out of the necessities of our unfortunate coreligionists in Russia and Roumania and the requirement that an efficient organization be instituted to undertake a coordination of the means available in this country for meeting the ever-continuing emergency in Jewry. The Committee may be regarded therefore as having developed out of the pogroms of 1905, though by the time the Committee was organized, the immediate problems arising therefrom had been met with unusual efficiency.[74]

In reality, 1905 marked the mid-point in this decisive period of Jewish history which began with Kishinev. Louis Marshall, in recounting the events which preceded the organization's formation, stated that while the pogroms called for concerted action by this community, "the creation of the American Jewish Committee was not the result of a deliberate purpose. . . It is a development

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[74] "Fifth Annual Report of the American Jewish Committee," The American Jewish Year Book-5673 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1912) vol. 14: 293.

growing out of the unique conditions of Jewry throughout the world. It is merely a phase in the evolution of Jewish consciousness and Jewish solidarity."[75] This phase which truly culminated with the early actions initiated by the Committee, began with the shock of Kishinev. In analyzing the American reaction to the Kishinev massacre, historian Philip Schoenberg credited the outrage with greatly affecting the existing Jewish communal and organizational structure. He observed "[p]erhaps the outstanding example of this change was the establishment of the American Jewish Committee."[76] The transmission of the 1903 petition in response to the Kishinev events, through and by the United States' government, demonstrated what serious lobbying could achieve. This success, along with the mass meetings and newly established funds, indicated "the growing initiative of the American Jews."[77]

Two and a half years after the Kishinev pogrom and immediately following the outrages in 1905, a group of Jewish leaders saw unification and organization as imminent. One of these individuals, Louis Marshall, simply stated, "organization was in the air."[78] Yet he strongly believed that any successful initiative would have to come from a select group of established leaders. The work of more radical individuals, often of eastern European descent, concerned Marshall and his elite friends. They sensed the necessity to step in and take control. If they did not do this, they would potentially lose their leadership and control of American Jewry. Prior to this period, most of these leaders had avoided involvement in what they perceived as popular organizations. They believed that "popular organizations . . . would

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[75] "The American Jewish Committee," The American Hebrew 84:12 (22 January 1909): 303.

[76] Philip Ernest Schoenberg, "The American Reaction to the Kishinev Pogrom of 1903," American Jewish Historical Quarterly Vol. LXIII, no. 3, 1974: 283.

[77] Naomi Cohen, Not Free To Desist: The American Jewish Committee, 1906-1966 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1972) 5.

[78] Cohen, Not Free, 8

unquestionably hinder, if not nullify, the efforts of individual intercessors employing the tried methods of backstairs diplomacy."[79] Now in 1905 Adler, Marshall, Wolf, and Schiff along with others, were willing to abet the methods of community action by creating a national organization. Cyrus Adler followed Marshall's lead and provided The American Hebrew with a letter to the editor which not only supported the idea of a central Jewish organization but also supplied specific ideas for how it could be created.[80] As a distinguished American Jewish leader, Adler's belief in the urgency of unification received much support. During this same period many American Jewish leaders publicly shared desires for a committee, while others expressed their concerns with such an organization. Trying in 1905 to convince Mayer Sulzberger of the need for unification, Marshall wrote, "a national conference should be called to form a permanent Anglo-Jewish Relief Association for all America. . . The conditions in Russia are so bad and so obviously hopeless that only blind optimism can expect reasonable re-adjustment short of ten years."[81]

The initial group of men who came together on February 3, 1906 in New York to discuss the proposed agency represented an interesting slice of American Jewry. They were relatively young men; over half were under the age of fifty. More than one-third had been born in this country, although the vast majority had been educated in the United States. Most of those who had immigrated to America had come from Western European countries. Only three individuals made up the eastern European delegation. Consistent with these other identifying features, allegiance to the Reform movement dominated those who

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[79] Cohen, Not Free, 8.

[80] "A Plan For An American-Jewish Assembly," The American Hebrew 78:6 (5 January 1906): 233-234.

[81] Letter from Louis Marshall to Mayer Sulzberger, Louis Marshall Papers, 29 December 1905: box 1619, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.

attended that first meeting.[82] In short, the group which came together was actually made of the same established German Jews who had previously helped the Jewish community with their philanthropy and their leadership.

The pressure of the ever-worsening situation in Russia brought these prominent men together. Through their actions these leaders fostered a period of unification among the various groups within American Jewry, a period which stemmed from Kishinev. At the February meeting, Jacob Schiff pointed to the success of the National Relief Committee, formed to help those suffering in Russia, as an example of what was needed and what could be achieved. He said, "if a central committee had existed, that body would have been able to act at once. . . The Relief Committee merely acted as an executive committee for hundreds of local committees raised throughout the country."[83] In that preliminary meeting, practically every individual who spoke mentioned the outrages in Russia as the pressing need pushing the creation of a central organization. Abraham Schomer, the son of a Yiddish playwright, provided the input of the East Side Jews and claimed that they, too, favored organization. He went on to comment that the proposed committee's main objective should be to prevent emergencies.[84] As these leaders debated the potential functions and structures of their central organization, they did agree upon its general purpose in February 1906:

> Resolved, that it is the sense of this meeting that there be formed a general organization of the Jews of the United States, for the purpose of dealing with such problems as affect them as a religious body, and their brethren who suffer from persecution throughout the world.[85]

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[82] Cohen, Not Free, 9-10.

[83] Executive Committee Minutes of the American Jewish Committee, 3 February 1906: 6, Archives of the American Jewish Committee, New York.

[84] Executive Committee Minutes, 4 February 1906: 15.

[85] Executive Committee Minutes, 3 February 1906: 3.

In observing the earliest actions of the Committee, we can see evidence of both the direct impact and the symbolic influence of Kishinev. Adopting their constitution on November 11, 1906, the new organization found its raison d'être in the repeated persecutions experienced in Russia. This sentiment appeared forcefully in its constitution. The Committee's stated purpose centered on preventing the infringement of civil and religious rights, particularly experienced in the forms of blatant persecution. The initial leaders stated that this agency would investigate any such occurrences and only provide aid when the community affected requested it.[86] Although the constitution did not specifically mention Kishinev, the fact that the founding individuals of this organization had been directly involved in providing relief after the massacre, indelibly left its mark on these leaders. They had worked to create emergency funds and spread the truth concerning the outrage. One history of the Committee summed up the group's early achievements:

> Wherever Jewish rights were invaded, wherever Jews required a helping hand in their hour of need, there the American Jewish Committee was prompt to appear. From Russia, the Balkans, Morocco, Turkey, Persia, Palestine, and Abyssinia, Jewish distress found a ready ear and an open hand. Not a year passed that funds, raised through the instrumentality of the Committee, did not flow out to the four corners of the earth.[87]

Although a bit aggrandized and even flowery in its degree of praise, this synopsis demonstrates the impact the Committee wanted to have, as well as the needs they addressed.

Only months after the organization's inception, the American Jewish Committee began its efforts to end the persecutions of Russian Jews. Some of the

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[86] "Report of the American Jewish Committee," The American Jewish Year Book-5669 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1908) vol. 10: 239.

[87] Schachner, 37.

first discussions after Kishinev had centered on the importance of being informed, of gathering information quickly and accurately. After the shock of Kishinev, the availability of such information became regarded as critical. Therefore, the Committee passed a resolution focusing on information gathering and dissemination:

> Resolved, that it is the sense of this committee that, for the prevention of massacres of Jews in Russia, no means can be considered so effective as the enlightenment of the people of the western world concerning information systematically concealed or distorted by the power of the Russian Government; that to this end a Press Bureau should be established to gather and disseminate correct news of affairs in Russia.[88]

The press office proved effective in achieving what the Committee had desired. The leaders wanted to create publicity around the events in Russia, particularly when the Russian authorities tried to silence such news. Using various trustworthy sources, the press bureau released information and communications, which would not have previously reached the American public through ordinary channels.[89]

Another extremely significant connection linking Kishinev and the American Jewish Committee was a fund which had been established to offer assistance to Russian Jews. In 1903, in the immediate aftermath of the Kishinev massacre many charities were established to help the sufferers of that atrocity. Due to the generosity of various contributors, the "Kishineff Fund" outlived its initial purpose, after providing relief to the survivors. The remaining income was held in a separate account after this time. A couple of years later, some of this money was used to help the victims of the 1905 and 1906 pogroms. Thus, although initially established to assist the Jews of Kishinev, the "Kishineff Fund"

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[88] Executive Committee Minutes, 27 January 1907: 131.

[89] The American Jewish Year Book-5672, 1911, vol. 13: 309.

fulfilled many purposes over the years, helping Jews in various areas who faced persecution. It was only in 1912 when the American Jewish Committee officially took over the "Kishineff Fund," that its new name, the "Russian Relief Fund" began to reflect the actual purpose it had served for the previous seven years:

> The said fund and the income therefrom shall be devoted to the alleviation of the consequences of persecutions of Jews in any part of the world, and to rendering them all lawful assistance in the event of the threatened or actual invasion or restriction of their rights, and to afford relief from calamities affecting Jews wherever they may occur.[90]

Because the American Jewish community used this fund in order to provide assistance for all those Russian Jews in need, the name "Kishineff," to a degree, became officially linked to the later Russian pogroms. Prior to the American Jewish Committee's taking official responsibility for the fund, Louis Marshall called it both the "Kishineff Fund" and the "Russian Massacres' Fund" in various correspondence.[91] His actions demonstrate how the Jewish community adopted the practice of interchanging the name Kishinev with the later pogroms. Because of these actions, the name Kishinev became further imprinted on the psyche of the American Jewish community.

In their first years of existence, the Committee concentrated on their help abroad, particularly with Russian Jews. Its representative leaders worked earnestly to maintain the open immigration policy of the United States, so that persecuted eastern European Jews would have the opportunity to emigrate. In addition, they effectively pressured the United States' government to terminate their commercial trade treaty with Russia, sending Russia a message of Jewish solidarity as well as demonstrating non-Jewish support Jews received. In the

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[90] "Rules with Respect to the Fund Awarded to the American Jewish Committee," prepared by Louis Marshall, in "Russian Relief Fund," General Correspondence Files, 20 December 1912, American Jewish Committee Archives, New York.

[91] "Rules with Respect to the Fund," 20 December 1912.

process of achieving these major goals, the American Jewish Committee presented the American public with an important image of a unified Jewish community working to help Jews throughout the world.

Growth in the American Jewish Community

After 1906 the American Jewish community developed and grew even larger, furthering the urgency for philanthropy as well. While the waves of full-scale, government-sponsored pogroms ended in 1906, Russia's general persecution of the Jews within the Empire persisted. During the next decade, time after time, anti-Jewish events within Russia filled the pages of America's Jewish periodicals. In 1907, the American Jewish Year Book stated that the repeated Russian disasters pushed the world's Jews towards an "awakening of the Jewish consciousness."[92] Russia continued to command abundant coverage within the Jewish press. After Kishinev and the pogroms of 1905, periodicals supplied whatever information they could obtain at any hint of a potential massacre, sometimes basing stories merely on a rumor. In 1908-1909, when few anti-Jewish incidents occurred publicly in Russia, The American Jewish Year Book's review of the year's events noted that "Russia still gives tone and character to contemporaneous Jewish history."[93] Every action influencing Russia's Jews, whether the actions led to increased suffering or emigration, inevitably had an impact on the Jews of the United States as well.

The American Jews not only united around and contributed funds to help their brethren in Russia, but also worked to assist Jews facing oppression in other eastern European countries. The outpouring of support for foreign persecuted Jews first seen after the Kishinev massacre continued during the next decade.

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[92] The American Jewish Year Book - 5668 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1907) vol.9: 537.

[93] The American Jewish Year Book - 5669, 1908, vol.10: 190.

When the Jews of Rumania experienced outbreaks of violence, a call for assistance arose in America. By 1907, some of the funds remaining from the National Relief Committee, established to help Russian sufferers, were transferred to help the Rumanian Jews.[94] In 1913, when the war in the Balkans jeopardized the lives of innocent Jews, once again the Committee for the Relief of Sufferers by Russian Massacres appeared and sent $5000 to be distributed in that region.[95]

In addition to the blatant anti-Jewish outrages committed prior to World War I, Russia forced American Jewry to deal with two other major issues. First, in response to anti-Jewish sentiment and agitation, eastern Europeans constantly attempted to migrate to the United States. In the decade after Kishinev, over one million Jews immigrated to this nation. The other battle entered into by American Jews pertained to the acceptance of all United States' passports by the Russian government, including those belonging to American Jewish citizens. These issues created by Russia's actions further demanded the attention and energy of organized American Jewry.

The American Jewish community had first encountered increasing immigration twenty-five years earlier. In 1880, The American Jewish Year Book listed the number of Jewish citizens in the United States as just over 230,000. When almost 75,000 new immigrants arrived within the next three years, the established community responded in a frightened and protective manner. The acculturated Jews, mostly of German descent, recognized that the waves of eastern European immigrants would alter the dynamics of the community they had established. Many of these acculturated Jews worried that "stereotypical" Jews would change the American citizen's perception of the Jew. In 1897, just

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[94] "Meeting of Relief Committee," The American Hebrew 80:21 (29 March 1907): 546.

[95] The American Jewish Year Book - 5674 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1913) vol. 15: 246.

under one million Jews lived in this country. The population over the next years increased dramatically: In 1905, just over 1.5 million, in 1907, 1.77 million, and in 1910, just over 2 million Jews lived in the United States.[96] Add to this these staggering immigration figures and we can understand the strain new Jewish Americans placed on the community.

1881-1900 -	599,315
1903 -	76,203
1904 -	106,236
1905 -	129,110
1906 -	153,746
1907 -	149,182
1908 -	103,387
1909 -	57,551
1910 -	84,260
1911 -	91,223
1912 -	80,595
1913 -	101,330[97]

By 1906, with Russia's continuous persecution, transportation tickets to the United States represented the most desired form of assistance requested by Russian Jews. While the native Jews responded in a more positive manner than they had in the 1880's, American Jewish organizations still wanted to stem this tide of migration. Therefore, American Jewish organizations worked to ameliorate conditions in those countries where persecution continued. But assistance did not end there. Recognizing the needs of the new immigrants, organizations attempted to better their conditions upon arrival and to help acclimate them to this new world. By demonstrating an openness to emigrating Jews, the Jewish community tacitly acknowledged their understanding that Russia would not change its oppressive behavior. The American Hebrew reported after the Bialystok pogrom, that "[t]here seems to be only one remedy and refuge for the Jews of Russia . . . Flight to America seems to be their only

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[96] The American Jewish Year Book - 5674, vol. 15: 425.
[97] The American Jewish Year Book - 5674, vol. 15: 429.

recourse. It cannot be believed that the American people will put any further barriers in their way."[98] Before Kishinev American Jewry had not been prepared to embrace this opinion. Yet the pogroms which began in Kishinev and concluded in Bialystok forced the Jewish community to recognize the necessity of immigration.

During the American Jewish Committee's first decade opposition to immigration grew stronger from the United States' population. Yet the Committee continually fought to keep it unrestricted. The government's immigration commission, concerned that the population increase resulting from new immigrants strained the economy of this nation, suggested a reading and writing test as the "most feasible, single method for restricting immigration."[99] In response the American Jewish Committee stressed the need to help individuals fleeing their oppressive homelands as well as the contributions these new citizens could offer this country:

> [W]e, as American citizens, actuated by a desire to preserve the best traditions of this country as an asylum for the able-bodied citizens of other countries who suffer from oppression and persecution, and sincerely believing that the addition to our population of intelligent, industrious and moral persons, will greatly increase our national productiveness and general prosperity, emphatically oppose amendments to the law.[100]

Every year when Congress renewed discussions on restrictive measures, the American Jewish Committee, along with others who opposed these efforts, worked diligently to keep the doors to the United States open. Not until 1921 did Congress pass the first immigration act which finally began to restrict the numbers of eastern European Jews allowed into America.

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[98] The American Hebrew 79: 3 (22 June 1906): 57.
[99] The American Jewish Year Book - 5674, 1913, vol. 15: 443.
[100] The American Jewish Year Book - 5672, 1911, vol. 13: 333.

The other major Jewish issue directly linked to Russia focused on the privileges of Jewish individuals as American citizens. The passport conflict actually preceded the Kishinev massacre, but it received much more attention near the end of the decade. Although Russia permitted the travel of United States' citizens throughout the Empire, particularly those who pursued business purposes, American Jews encountered difficulty when they attempted to do the same. Because of their religion, many Jews not only faced restricted travel, but often ran into blatant persecution. In 1908, the American government yielded to Russia and refused to issue passports for Russia to Jewish citizens. Although couched in an effort to protect the Jews, these actions angered the Jewish community. When a circular from the American State Department told Jews to take heed, warning that an American passport could not protect them in Russia, the communication received much attention because of language characterized as "obnoxious to American Jewish citizens."[101] Emulating the diplomatic procedures perfected with Kishinev, the American Jewish Committee took immediate action. Just as American Jewish leaders had gone to the Secretary of State and the President with the 1903 petition so too Louis Marshall and Edward Lauterbach, representing the Committee, addressed Secretary of State Elihu Root. They demonstrated to him that the law of this country guaranteed, in extremely clear terms, equal protection to all American citizens abroad. Therefore, the United States' government needed to protect American Jewish citizens who faced restricted travel and persecution in Russia. Recognizing the legitimacy of this viewpoint, the Secretary issued a new circular, clearly supporting the rights of American Jews.[102]

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[101] The American Jewish Year Book - 5669, 1908, vol. 10: 199.
[102] The American Jewish Year Book - 5669, 1908, vol. 10: 199.

Unfortunately Russia's treatment of American Jewish citizens did not improve in the following years. As a new administration entered the White House, American Jews continued to dedicate energy to this issue. America had an extremely important bargaining chip in the Commercial Treaty existing between these two countries. The treaty was nearing its conclusion and needed renewal. Many believed that the United States could pressure Russia to end their policy of discrimination against Jewish Americans by threatening to terminate the treaty. Since groups such as the Central Conference of American Rabbis and the American Jewish Committee had separately passed resolutions to influence the government, the organizations pursued a further union to increase their impact. The Central Conference created a standing committee to cooperate with the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the American Jewish Committee and B'nai B'rith in order to safeguard "the civil and religious rights of our brothers here and abroad."[103] As the Jewish population in America increased and various smaller organizations developed in many cities, the leaders of the American Jewish community recognized the benefit in joining forces and presenting a united front when international events affected Jews. In regard to the passport question, their actions proved effective. As they had come to realize with their attempt to respond to the Kishinev atrocity, Jewish organizations increased their potential influence together. In this instance, the community stressed that discrimination against American citizens abroad was not a Jewish problem but an American one. Their actions paralleled the endeavors of the American Jewish community in 1903. They publicized the issue by supplying relevant data in newspapers and sponsoring open meetings with prominent speakers throughout the country. After a series of congressional hearings, a resolution which immediately terminated the Commercial Treaty

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[103] Year Book of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1911, vol. 21: 134.

overwhelmingly passed both branches of the Congress.[104] Although such diplomatic intercession only proved partially successful in terms of its ultimate results, the United States' government did recognize the legitimate concerns being expressed and acted accordingly. In the years following Kishinev, American Jews expected more and more from their government, believing that the government would respond positively to a united Jewish voice.

The Development of National and Local Organizations, 1903-1913

Looking through The American Jewish Year Books[105] of these ten years, we see a general increase in the number of national organizations which focused on charity. Although other organizations which did exist during this period were not included in The American Jewish Year Book, the Year Book's lists and analyses still provide relevant data for understanding community dynamics and developments. In 1903 seven such organizations existed in America; fourteen appear on the list by 1913. Those seven, Alliance Israelite Universelle, Baron de Hirsch Fund, Jewish Agricultural and Industrial Aid Society, Jewish Agriculturists' Aid Society of America, National Conference of Jewish Charities in the United States and Board of Delegates on Civil and Religious Rights, all continued in 1913. The majority of new organizations, such as the National Jewish Immigration Council and the National Union of Jewish Sheltering Societies, directed their energies to helping new immigrants in America. Although groups such as these had national aspirations, and wanted to assist immigrants throughout the country, much of their work remained in the New York area because so many immigrants had settled there. Some organizations focused their efforts on relocating immigrants in areas of the country where they

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[104] Gerald Sorin, A Time for Building: The Third Migration (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992) 205.

[105] The American Jewish Year Books, volumes 5-15, 1903-1913.

claimed able individuals were very much needed. Of course the desire to lessen the massive congestion in the major cities served as their main motivation. For example, B'nai B'rith actively attempted to settle Jews in the interior of the country. The National Council of Jewish Women worked specifically to help immigrant Jewish girls and in 1907 erected a permanent station on Ellis Island for immigrant aid. The Baron de Hirsch Fund expanded during this time, focusing entirely on immigrant aid and creating projects for removal work and agricultural training.[106]

Overall, an enormous increase in every type of community organization occurred during this period, with the largest growth prior to 1907. Many issues which became a priority for American Jewry have their roots in 1903. They witnessed a need for Jewish self defense abroad. They saw the growing numbers of immigrants. They recognized the power of coordinated action. Thus, American Jews formed organizations during the next decade to remedy these challenges. The Jewish Self-Defense Association, organized in 1905 in New York, helped Jews defend themselves during anti-Jewish disturbances through their distribution of collected funds.[107] Another new group, the International Jewish League, established in 1906, dealt with "the question of the disabilities of the Jews in all countries."[108] The Year Book produced as extensive a list as possible of all the Jewish organizations in America in 1907, called the "Directory of Jewish Organizations in the United States" and the "Directory of Jewish Local Organizations in the United States."[109] These directories provided basic information concerning each group, sometimes adding a brief description of their actions. A year earlier in the Year Book, the section dedicated to national

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[106] Cohen, Encounter with Emancipation, 307.
[107] The American Jewish Year Book-5667, 1906, vol.8: 115.
[108] The American Jewish Year Book-5667, 1906, vol.8: 115.
[109] The American Jewish Year Book-5668, 1907, vol. 9: 21-430.

organizations only included 23 pages of listings as opposed to the following year's 100 pages for the national directory and 308 for the local one. Although some of these groups were established in that period, all of them did not suddenly appear within one year. The creation of the directories demonstrated the increasing interest in organizing within America as well as the constant effort to bring existing organizations to their highest efficiency.[110] With the increase in American Jewish population, the need for more organizations definitely existed. Yet, the fact that the Year Book researched and created the directory shows not only the increase in need with American Jews but also their desire to affiliate and organize. With a significantly larger Jewish population and the desire to help co-religionists, American Jewry existed in a context of organization-building during the decade after Kishinev.

These years for the American Jewish community represented a great period of change and development. As the German Jews fought for unrestricted immigration and generously created charities to help the new immigrants, they simultaneously chipped away at their own foundation of power:

> Already outnumbered by the immigrants, the Germans were facing the fate that they had earlier meted out to their predecessors, the Sephardim. It was only a matter of time before numerical superiority would triumph and control of the community pass, this time from Germans to the east Europeans.[111]

Simultaneously the rise in Jewish citizens in the United States supported the claim of American Jewish hegemony. Although some argue that this transition to America did not take place until World War I, the American Jewish community during this entire decade constantly proved their leadership and

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[110] The American Jewish Year Book-5668, 1907, vol. 9: 537.
[111] Cohen, Encounter with Emancipation, 300.

intiative in influencing the Jews of the world. Shortly after the Kishinev massacre, reports indicated that the transition had begun to occur:

> The United Hebrew Charities has received a letter from several Russo-Jewish soldiers who are prisoners of war in Stimedi, Japan, asking for a Sepher Torah, prayer books and all the requisite for the holding of service during the Holy-days. . . . This communication throws an interesting light upon the manner in which our charities are regarded and is another indication of the fact that the centre of Judaism is being transferred from Europe to this country.[112]

Although a seemingly simple matter, the fact that the press devoted coverage to this and perceived the request as significant, demonstrates its importance as an early sign of the transition. American Jewry's charitable actions, which achieved a new level with Kishinev and escalated in response to the massacres of 1905 and 1906, sent a similar message:

> Above all, the common action taken by international Jewry to alleviate the horrors of the Russian massacres has had a marked effect upon the world's attitude toward the Jews, and the prominent, even predominant position taken by American Jewry in collecting the relief fund, has brought home in a manner not to be mistaken, the leading position now taken by Jews of the United States among their brethren throughout the world.[113]

Their successes pushed the leaders of the American Jewish community towards further organization. If their philanthropic actions had achieved so much without a unifying body coordinating their efforts, then how much more could be accomplished with organizational unity. The establishment of the American Jewish Committee in 1906 helped center the halo of power of world Jewry over the United States. This organization along with all the others developing since 1903 did so within a context of coordinated community action. While some began as an immediate response to the Kishinev massacre others merely reacted

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[112] The American Hebrew 75:22 (14 October 1904): 571.
[113] The American Hebrew 79:16 (21 September 1906): 380.

to the increase in immigration which Kishinev and other Russian pogroms had encouraged. Kishinev highlighted the need for organizations in 1903, but that context increased and persisted throughout the next decade.

Chapter 6 - Conclusion
Lessons from Kishinev

Upon learning of the pogroms of 1881, the American Jewish community responded by collecting funds and organizing protest meetings. Yet when these pogroms ended in 1882, so did most of their action concerning Russia. In the ensuing years, the impact of those earlier Russian outrages faded away. The Jewish press did not report on Russian tragedies or even Russian events for a number of years. With the dawning of a new century, American Jews looked to the world with optimism for the future. Thus when reports of the Kishinev massacre reached the shores of the United States, the news stunned the Jewish community. The population did not understand how such barbarity could occur in the enlightened twentieth century, replicating medieval practices they believed were dead. The shock of Kishinev made such a significant impact on the American Jewish community that its effect is still felt today.

Kishinev came to represent much more than the events of April 1903. The name became a watchword for American Jewry, symbolizing a level of brutality enacted upon defenseless Jews. With the advent of even worse pogroms in 1905 and 1906 the name Kishinev was repeatedly used to incorporate these events into general discussions. When the press or historians listed a few cities in order to summarize the atrocious events of this period, the lists almost always began with Kishinev and then continued with the other later massacres. In A Century of Jewish Life, Ismar Elbogen referred to Kishinev in order to paint an image for the reader, an image which encompassed many anti-Jewish incidents. For Elbogen, the name Kishinev evoked images of the terrible conditions Jews experienced in later years because "[t]he horrors of Kishinev revealed such bestiality as was not

thought possible in the twentieth century in a society which called itself Christian."[1] In addition, the name Kishinev became even more symbolic and representative of the continuing Russian tragedies when the Jewish community extended the use of the "Kishineff Fund" after 1903 to help sufferers of many eastern European outrages. Essentially, for both Jewish leaders and the public, Kishinev became synonymous with the pogroms as well as with calls for help.

The shock of Kishinev alerted the American Jewish community to the continued prevalence of anti-semitism throughout the world. The growing numbers of eastern European Jews living in America, acted spontaneously and generously on behalf of their persecuted brethren. But they did not act alone. The established German Jews worked to organize meetings and funds to help the Kishinev survivors. While some German Jews might not have wanted to immediately assist their Russian co-religionists, having survived separately after centuries of Diaspora living, the world around them did not let them forget their connection to fellow Jews throughout the world.[2] As these disparate ethnic groups joined together and rallied around the needs of world Jewry, the resulting unity changed the American Jewish community forever. This connection led to another important development for the community, a heightened sense of Jewish consciousness. Kishinev helped make world Jewry a little smaller. The massacre reminded American Jews of their brethren across the globe, Jews for whom they were responsible. With the response to Kishinev, American Jews spoke out on behalf of Jewish concerns, making their needs public. Twenty years earlier with the pogroms of the 1880's, American Jews preferred isolation, not eager or ready to extend their helping arms. This earlier

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[1]Ismar Elbogen, A Century of Jewish Life (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1944) 381.

[2] Daniel J. Elazar, Community and Polity: The Organizational Dynamics of American Jewry (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1976) 31.

community believed that their position in American society remained precarious. Although Jews at the inception of the twentieth century were concerned about their own public image and recognized the anti-semitism which still existed in America, they also understood the necessity of working on behalf of Jews throughout the world. A helpful comparison can be seen with the Six-Day War in 1967 and the response it generated from many American Jews, particularly those previously uninvolved in the community. Sensing an apparent threat to Israel's survival, these Jews strengthened their own identification.[3] Likewise, after Kishinev, American Jews became more aware of their position in American society as well as the experiences Jews faced throughout the world. They felt a great need to be involved, to help and to identify. This developing awareness was already recognized by 1907 when in referring to Kishinev and the later pogroms, The American Jewish Year Book stated, "[t]he quickening of the Jewish consciousness is the one bright spot in a long panorama as black as the Black Hundreds."[4] By 1903, the shock of Kishinev led American Jews to help Jews in Russia, and in this country it united factions of German Jews and eastern European Jews. This cooperation in 1903 marked a critical point in Jewish history. After the massacre, Jews increasingly felt the impact of actions their brethren experienced throughout the world.

This increasing self-consciousness on the part of American Jewry not only led to the immediate need to act but furthered the desire of the community to unify and organize. In response to Kishinev divergent groups came together in order to most effectively offer assistance to the survivors of the massacre. The

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[3] Steven Heneson Moskowitz "1967 and Beyond: The Impact of the Six-Day War on American Reform Judaism, May 1967-October 1973," Rabbinic Thesis, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1991.

[4] The American Jewish Year Book (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1907) vol. 9: 519.

1905 pogroms helped many leaders in the community recognize the need for a central organization. They witnessed the recreation of relief organizations similar to those which had been established in response to Kishinev two years earlier. As a result, these leaders perceived the advantage to the community of a standing agency which could be proactive regarding anti-Jewish challenges. In 1905, no organization could be regarded as the preeminent representative of the whole community, although many groups, such as the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, B'nai B'rith and the Alliance Israelite Universelle had attempted, ineffectively, to establish their leadership. At the same time, prominent individuals in the community, including Louis Marshall, Cyrus Adler and Jacob Schiff attempted to coordinate their efforts to best represent this polity. By 1906, their actions, supported by an increasing desire for cooperation and efficiency within the community, resulted in the formation of the American Jewish Committee. The Committee's initial goals focused on enhancing Jewish consciousness and on protecting the rights of Jews in America and abroad.

Prior to Kishinev, the American Jewish community knew very little about events in Russia. Although they learned of anti-Jewish sentiments during the pogroms of the 1880's, their interest in these foreign events dissipated over the next few years. After Kishinev, however, American Jewry immediately responded by spreading details of what had occurred and what had led up to the massacre. In the ensuing years, the Jewish press was filled with articles about general events in Russia, maintaining a close watch on incidents which had the potential to develop into problems for the Jewish community. The American Jewish Committee concentrated on disseminating information by establishing an office with this specific purpose in the nation's capital. They attempted to monitor news and share information which might not reach the community through normal channels. With growing numbers of eastern Europeans in

America, and the technological advances which facilitated the spread of information, American Jewry made staying informed a priority. Thirty years later in 1933 when the Nazis gained power in Germany, Jewish periodicals flooded their pages with reports of the conditions in Germany, what Jews had begun to experience, appeals to the American public to protest against Nazism as well as reports on actual massive protests in this country.[5] Although these abundant reports kept American Jewry informed, no one could fathom the impending horror which would soon shatter the international Jewish community.

To a degree, the Kishinev massacre also had a theological impact upon the Jewish community, initiating a new stage in religious thinking. Prior to this outrage, pious Jews often argued about God's retributive force. Yet few blamed the massacre on the sins of Jewish residents of Kishinev or suggested that the Russian peasants and soldiers acted as God's retributive agents.[6] Rather, in response Russian Jews attempted, more than they had done before, to affect their own fate. They took action by forming defense leagues. They turned to Zionism or even joined revolutionary movements. American Jews also took action, forming emergency committees to coordinate relief efforts, collecting funds to support the sufferers and petitioning the United States' Government in order to demonstrate Jewish concern on the diplomatic level. Although some Jews began to question where God was during this atrocity, most did not wait for an answer to this theological query of theodicy. Instead American Jews acted. They responded in ways to best help their fellow Jews in need. This attitude, which

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[5] See The American Hebrew volume 132. (18 November 1932 - 12 May 1933 Already by November 1932, articles and editorials were printed which explained Nazi ideology and the concerns these raised within the Jewish community, in Germany and abroad.

[6] Eugene B. Borowitz, Renewing the Covenant: A Theology for the Postmodern Jew (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1991) 35.

became so prevalent with Kishinev, further developed and directed the community during the twentieth century.

Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus pointed to the Kishinev massacre in his 1989 Centennial address to the Central Conference of American Rabbis when he discussed the American Jew's changing perspective in the twentieth century:

> I grew up believing in the Messiah. When I cupped my ear I could almost hear the clop-clop of the hooves of his white steed as it galloped into the sunlight. I knew exactly what he would look like. He would be six feet four inches tall; he would have a long thin white beard, he would wear a stovepipe hat, his cutaway and trousers would be red, white, and blue. Poor Uncle Sam! In 1903 when he passed through Kishineff, the Russians clubbed him to his knees. . .[7]

The Kishinev massacre marked a change in American Jewry's perspective of the world. The shock of this outrage forced them into an era of Jewish self-consciousness, a time when they recognized the necessity of staying informed of world events, a time when they realized that Jewish security could be challenged anywhere. Therefore, American Jewry acted. Not only did the community immediately respond to the pogrom, but it provided the impetus for further organization throughout the next ten years. They recognized the necessity of coming together as Jews and creating a united force. No longer could a few representative spokesmen secure their rights or even their safety. In 1903 American Jewry saw the potential of speaking with a unified voice, a powerful voice which commanded the respect of the United States' Government. These leaders were proud Jews, willing to embrace their identity and declare their rights. By acting so effectively in 1903, American Jewry began to pave the way for their leadership. With rising anti-semitism in Europe, the American Jewish voice increasingly began to direct and affect the actions of the Jewish world.

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[7]Jacob Rader Marcus, Testament: A Personal Statement (Cincinnati: American Jewish Archives, 1989) 3.

Thus, the decisions made in response to Kishinev and the actions taken by American Jewry marked the inception of American Jewish hegemony. With Kishinev, American Jewry took the initiative and the lead. During the next ten years, this power further developed and helped lay the foundation for the force this Jewry represents today.

Today Kishinev does not receive the attention it once had in American Jewish history. Yet this replacing of seminal incidents with others that occurred later has a history in our tradition. We turn to the Talmud for an example:

> A parable: A man was traveling on the road when he encountered a wolf and escaped from it, and he went along relating the affair of the wolf. He then encountered a lion and escaped from it, and went along relating the affair of the lion. He then encountered a snake and escaped from it, whereupon he forgot the two previous incidents and went along relating the affair of the snake. So with Israel. The latter troubles make them forget the earlier ones.
>
> Berachot 13a, Babylonian Talmud[8]

After the Holocaust, the most vicious, poisonous snake of our historical experience, few look back to the days of 1903 and the Kishinev massacre for lessons. The Holocaust redefined the lessons we thought we had learned. This unprecedented atrocity of unimaginable proportions rewrote how we look at history. It convinced Jews of the possibility, of the plausibility of the extreme. The Jewish consciousness which began with Kishinev became even more significant after the horrors of the Holocaust. Many of the organizations which had their inception in the response to the Kishinev massacre grew even more with this tragedy forty years later. Today they represent American Jewry. To survive as a community we cannot forget the critical lessons of Kishinev, even after the Holocaust. We demonstrate our Jewish consciousness through

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[8]As found in "Ch. 2 - The Middle Ages" in Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory (New York: Schocken Books, 1989) 29.

allegiance to our community. We put this consciousness into action by joining and developing organizations, organizations which through their vision continually work to protect Jewish civil rights. These elements, which came into prominence in 1903, must distinguish us as Jews. These elements, and our commitment to them, will determine the future of American Jewry.

Appendix

TEXT OF THE PETITION OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE TO THE CZAR OF RUSSIA

To His Imperial Majesty, the Czar:

The cruel outrages perpetrated at Kishinef during Easter of 1903 have excited horror and reprobation throughout the world. Until your Majesty gave special and personal directions, the local authorities failed to maintain order or to suppress the rioting.

The victims were Jews, and the assault was the result of race and religious prejudice. The rioters violated the laws of Russia. The local officers were derelict in the performance of their duty. The Jews were the victims of indefensible lawlessness.

These facts are made plain by the official reports of and by the official acts following the riot.

Under ordinary conditions, the awful calamity would be deplored without undue fear of a recurrence. But such is not the case in the present instance. Your petitioners are advised that millions of Jews - Russian subjects - dwelling in southwestern Russia are in constant superstition, and bigotry, as exemplified by the rioters, are ever ready to persecute them; that the local officials, unless thereunto specially admonished, can not be relied on as strenuous protectors of their peace and security; that a public sentiment of hostility has been engendered against them, and hangs over them as a continuing menace.

Even if it be conceded that these fears are to some extent exaggerated, it is unquestionably true that they exist, that they are not groundless, and that they produce effects of great importance.

The westward migration of Russian Jews, which has proceeded for over twenty years, is being stimulated by those fears, and already that movement has become so great as to overshadow in magnitude the expulsion of the Jews from Spain, and to rank with the exodus from Egypt.

No estimate is possible of the misery suffered by the helpless Jews who feel driven to forsake their native land, to sever the most sacred ties, and to wander forth to strange countries.

Neither is it possible to estimate the misery suffered by those who are unwilling or unable to leave the land of their birth; who must part from friends and relatives who emigrate; who remain in never-ending terror.

Religious persecution is more sinful and more fatuous even than war. War is sometimes necessary, honorable, and just; religious persecution is never defensible.

The sinfulness and folly which give impulse to unnecessary war received their greatest check when your Majesty's initiative resulted in an international court of peace.

With such an example before it, the civilized world cherished the hope that upon the same initiative there shall be fixed in the early days of the twentieth century the enduring principle of religious liberty; that by a gracious and convincing expression your Majesty will proclaim, not only for the direction of your own subjects, but also for the guidance of all civilized men, that none shall suffer in person, property, liberty, honor, or life because of his religious belief; that the humblest subject or citizen may worship according to the dictates of his own conscience, and that the government, whatever its form or agencies, must safeguard these rights and immunities by the exercise of all its powers.

Far removed from your Majesty's dominions, living under different conditions, and owing allegiance to another government, your petitioners yet venture in the name of civilization to plead for religious liberty and tolerance; to plead that he who led his own people and all others to the shrine of peace will add new luster to his reign and fame by leading a new movement that shall commit the whole world in opposition to religious persecution.[1]

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[1] Isidore Singer, Russia at the Bar of the American People: A Memorial of Kishinef (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1904) 121-123.

AN AMERICAN KISHINEFF DIARY

April 29 - Dispatch inquiring into the rumors of massacres sent by the Department of State to Ambassador McCormick at St. Petersburg.

May 2 - Meeting in New York City.

May 3 - Meetings at Milwaukee, Wis.; New York City; Philadelphia, Pa.- Editorial article in The Commercial Gazette, Pittsburg, Pa.

May 8 - Meeting in New York City.

May 9 - Dispatch denying the existence of want or suffering among Jews in Southwestern Russia from Ambassador McCormick at St. Petersburg to the Department of State. - Editorial articles in The American, and The News, Baltimore, Md.

May 10 - Meetings at Brooklyn, N. Y.; Cleveland, Ohio; Milwaukee, Wis.; and (3) Philadelphia, Pa.

May 11 - Meetings at Atlantic City, N. J.; Newark, N. J.; and New York City.- Resolutions adopted by the Hebrew Veterans of the War with Spain, New York City.

May 12 - Editorial articles in The American and Journal, New York City, and The Public Ledger and Philadelphia Times.

May 13 - Meeting at Texarkana, Tex. - Editorial articles in The American and Journal, and The Evening Journal, New York City.

May 14 - Editorial articles in The American, Baltimore, Md., and The News, Milwaukee, Wis.

May 15 - Editorials in The News, Baltimore, Md.; The Age-Herald, Birmingham, Ala.; The Evening Post, Chicago, Ill.; The American and Journal, and The Evening Journal, New York City.

May 16 - Editorials in The Sun, Baltimore, Md.; The Evening Post, and The Record-Herald, Chicago, Ill.; The Times-Democrat, New Orleans, La.; The Sun, New York City; and The Times, Washington, D. C.

May 17 - Meetings at Baltimore, Md.; Boston, Mass.; (2) Chicago, Ill.; Dallas, Tex.; Hartford, Conn.; and (2) Philadelphia, Pa. - Editorial articles in The Sun, Baltimore, Md.; The Chronicle, Chicago, Ill.; and The Times, New York City.

May 18 - The Associate Press publishes a statement by Count Cassini, the Russian Ambassador. - Meetings at Buffalo, N. Y.; Chicago, Ill.; and Cincinnati, Ohio. - Resolutions adopted by the City council of Chicago, Ill. - Editorial articles in The News, Baltimore, Md.; The Evening Post, Chicago, Ill.; The State, Columbia, S. C.; The Times, and The Tribune, New York City; The World-Herald, Omaha, Neb.; The Chronicle Telegraph, Pittsburg, Pa.; and The Globe-Democrat, St. Louis, Mo.

May 19 - Meetings at San Francisco, Cal., and Yonkers, N. Y. - Resolutions adopted by the Boards of Alderman of Jersey City, N. J., and New York City. - Editorial articles in The Courier, Buffalo, N. Y.; The Chronicle, and the Inter Ocean, Chicago, Ill.; The Evening Journal, Minneapolis, Minn.; The American and Journal, New York City; and The Eagle, Wichita, Kan.

May 20 - Editorial articles in The Citizen, Asheville, N. C.; The News, Baltimore, Md.; The Commercial, Buffalo, N. Y.; The News, Chattanooga, Tenn.; The Plain Dealer, Cleveland, Ohio; The Rocky Mountain News, Denver, Colo.; The Evening News, Lincoln, Neb.; The Times, New York City; The Press, Philadelphia, Pa.; and The Public Ledger and Philadelphia Times.

May 21 - Meetings at Fort Smith, Ark., and Sioux City, Ia. - Resolutions adopted by the Seventeenth Triennial Council of the Reformed Episcopal Church, Chicago, Ill. - Editorial articles in the Evening Transcript, Boston, Mass.; The Leader, La Crosse, Wis.; The Independent, The Press, The Sun, and The Times, New York City.

May 22 - Meeting at San Francisco, Cal. - Editorial articles in The News, Birmingham, Ala.; The Evening Post, and Hearst's Chicago American, Chicago, Ill.; The Plain Dealer, Cleveland, O.; The Evening Journal, New York City; The Commercial Gazette, Pittsburg, Pa.; and the Record-Union, Sacramento, Cal.

May 23 - Action taken by the American Baptist Missionary Union, Buffalo, N. Y., and the City Council of Detroit, Mich. - Editorial articles in The Journal, Atlanta, Ga.; The Examiner, Chicago, Ill.; The Outlook, The Sun, and The Times, New York City.

May 24 - Meetings at Denver, Colo.; Des Moines, Ia.; Elmira, N. Y.; Jersey City, N. J.; La Crosse, Wis.; New York City; St. Louis, Mo.; and Wheeling, W. Va. - Sermons preached (2) at Denver, Colo.; (2) New York City; Omaha, Neb.; and Philadelphia, Pa. - Action taken by Congregation Emanu-el, Birmingham, Ala.; Calvary Baptist Church, Omaha, Neb.; and The Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, Pa. - Editorial articles in The Record-Herald, Chicago, Ill.; The World-Herald, Omaha, Neb.; The News, Wheeling. W.Va.

May 25 - Meetings at Buffalo, N. Y. and Newport, R. I. - Editorial articles in The American Baltimore, Md.; The Idaho Statesman, Boise, Idaho; The Evening News, Lincoln, Neb.; The Journal of Commerce and Commercial Bulletin, New York City.

May 26 - Meetings at New York City and Norfolk, Va. - Editorial articles in The Tribune, N. Y.; The Virginian-Pilot, Norfolk, Va.; The Globe-Democrat, St. Louis, Mo.; and The Gazette, Terre Haute, Ind.

May 27 - Meetings at Bayonne, N. J. , and New York City. - Editorial articles in The Evening Sun, New York City, and The Herald, Topeka, Kan.

May 28 - Resolutions adopted by Temple Israel, Terre Haute, Inc. - Editorial articles in The Globe, Boston, Mass.; The News, Des Moines, Ia.; The American and Journal, The Evening Sun, The Sun, and The Times, New York City.

May 29 - Meetings at Chicago, Ill.; Jersey City, N. J.; and La Crosse, Wis. - Editorial articles in The Evening Post, and The Record-Herald, Chicago, Ill,; The Gazette, Janesville, Wis.; The American and Journal, New York City; and The Evening Telegram, West Superior, Wis.

May 30 - Meeting at Salt Lake City, Utah. - Editorial articles in The American, Baltimore, Md.; The News and Courier, Charleston, S. C.; and The Outlook, New York City.

May 31 - Meetings at Boston, Mass., and Richmond, Va. - An address at Minneapolis, Minn. - Sermons (2) at Boston, Mass., and (1) at Philadelphia, Pa. - Resolutions adopted by the Chambers-Wylie Memorial Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, Pa. - Editorial articles in The Item, New Orleans, La., and The Bee, Omaha, Neb.

June 1 - Meetings at Birmingham, Ala.; Syracuse, N. Y.; and Wilmington, Del. - An address at New York City. - Resolutions adopted by the Jefferson Club, New York Editorial articles in The Times, Altoon, Pa.; The Ledger, Birmingham, Ala.; and The Plain Dealer, Cleveland, Ohio.

June 2 - Meeting at Trenton, N. J. - Resolutions adopted by the Negro Members of the Louisville, Ky., bar, and by the Common Council of Trenton, N. J. - Editorial articles in The Advertiser, Newark, N. J. and The American and Journal, New York City.

June 3 - Meetings at Philadelphia, Pa., and Worcester, Mass. - An editorial article in The Evening Star, Peoria, Ill.

June 4 - Meeting at Atlanta, Ga. - Resolutions adopted by the Seneca Club, New York City. - Editorial articles in Leslie's Illustrated Weekly, New York City; The Evening Telegraph, Philadelphia, Pa.; and The Capital, Topeka, Kan.

June 5 - Meeting at Washington D. C. - Editorial articles in The American and Journal, New York City; The Inquirer, and The North American, Philadelphia, Pa.; and The Ledger, Tacoma, Wash.

June 6 - Editorial articles in The American, and The Morning Herald, Baltimore, Md.; The Evening Sun and The Times, New York City.

June 7 - Meetings at Baltimore, Md.; (3) New York City; and Pittsburg, Pa. - Addresses at Wilmington, Del. - Sermons at Albany, N. Y.; (2) Baltimore, Md.; and New York City. - Editorial articles in The Sun, and The Times, New York City; and The Times, Toledo, Ohio.

June 8 - Resolutions adopted by the City Council of Columbus, Ohio. - An editorial article in The American and Journal, New York City.

June 10 - Editorial articles in The Sun, Baltimore, Md.; The American and Journal, and The Times, New York City.

June 12 - Editorial articles in The American, Baltimore, Md.; The Times, New York City; and The Call, San Francisco, Cal.

June 13 - Meeting at New Orleans, La. - Editorial articles in The Picayune, New Orleans, La., and The Times, New York City.

June 14 - Meeting at Petersburg, Va. - Sermon in New York City.

June 15 - The Executive Committee of the Independent Order of B'nai B'rith waits upon the President of the United States, and presents a memorandum and the draft of a petition addressed to the Emperor of Russia.

June 16 - An editorial article in The Evening Journal, Minneapolis, Minn.

June 17 - An editorial article in The Press, New York City.

June 18 - Resolutions adopted by the National Anti-Mob and Lynch Law Association, Springfield, O. - An editorial article in The American, Baltimore, Md.

June 22 - Sermons (2) at Kansas City, Mo. - An editorial article in The News, New York City.

June 25 - An editorial article in The Mail and Express, New York City.

June 26 - Editorial articles in The Commercial Advertiser, and The Tribune, New York City.

June 27 Editorial articles in The Times, and The Tribune, New York City, and The Bee, Omaha, Neb.

June 28 - An editorial article in The Times, New York City.

July 1 - An editorial article in The Times, New York City.

July 4 - An editorial article in The Times, New York City.

July 5 - An editorial article in The Press, Philadelphia, Pa.

July 7 - An editorial article in The Globe, Boston, Mass.

July 11 - Address before the Chautauqua Assembly.

July 12 - Meeting at Atlantic City.

July 14 - The petition to the Emperor of Russia, framed by the Independent Order of B'nai B'rith transmitted, in obedience to the instructions of the President of the United States, to the American Charge d'Affaires at St. Petersburg, withdirections to present a communication embodying the petition to the

Minister of Foreign Affairs and inquire whether the petition would be received by him to be submitted to the Emperor of Russia. Not received.

July 15 - An editorial article in The Times, New York City.

July 17 - Editorial articles in The American and Journal, New York City, and The Evening Star, Washington, D. C.

July 18 - An editorial article in The Times, New York City.

July 21 - An editorial article in The Evening Post, Louisville, Ky.

Oct. 31 - The petition of the Independent Order of B'nai B'rith, with 12,544 signatures appended, placed in the archives of the United States.[2]

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[2] Cyrus Adler, The Voice of America on Kishineff (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1904) XVIII-XXIV. This Diary of events has been reprinted replicating the exact manner it first appeared in Adler's book, including all abbreviations, punctuation and spelling.

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