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# Assembly Papers

## FEDERATION-SYNAGOGUE RELATIONSHIPS

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FEDERATION - SYNAGOGUE RELATIONSHIPS

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"Nothing has ever been said for the first time," declared Hobbes, undoubtedly paraphrasing Ecclesiastes: "Everything has been said before by someone else, who did not discover it."

This rather melancholy observation must inevitably confront anyone who considers the question of "Federation-Synagogue Relationships". Virtually an entire Torah, both she-bikhtav and she-b'al peh, a written and oral law, has grown up about this issue. And like the Torah, kulo bo, everything is in it. There is hardly an aspect of Federation-Synagogue relationships that has not been treated already in almost every possible dimension. Psychologically, sociologically, ideologically, "everything has been said before by someone else."

Philip Bernstein, while associate director of the CJFWE, pretty much said everything that deserves to be said on the general relationships between community organizations and Synagogues, when he spoke on "Jewish Unity in America," at the national convention of the Rabbinical Assembly of America, June 24, 1952, in Cleveland. He then went on to say most of what is worth saying about Jewish education in relation to the community and the Synagogue, in an article in the Spring, 1959 issue of Jewish Education.

ISSUE HAS PRODUCED "APOCRYPHA"  
AS WELL AS "TORAH"

The CJFWE papers of 1954 by Rabbi Albert Gordon of Newton Center and Saul Cherniack of Winnipeg; the 1955 papers of Samuel Rubiner of Detroit and Rabbi Ralph Simon of Chicago; Benjamin Rosenberg's statement on "The Role of the Synagogue

in Community Organization and Planning" presented in 1956 before the National Conference of Jewish Communal Service; the incisive statement by Maurice Bernstein on "The Role of the Center, the Synagogue, Jewish Education - Are They Building a Concept of Community, or Are they Creating Separate Loyalties?" presented in June, 1958, at the West Central Region of the CJFWF; and Morris Garvett's comprehensive memoranda to the Committee on Community Organization - not only a Torah, my friends, but an Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha as well.

And this of course does not take into account the "post-Biblical" literature published by the National Jewish Welfare Board in its two volumes of selected articles on "Jewish Community Center Relationships With Synagogues", these publications fairly well preclude any significant additions to the discussion of leisure-time activities as they relate to Synagogue-Centers and Jewish Community Centers. Who can improve on the clarity and comprehensiveness of the trenchant statements by Rabbi Morris Adler on "Center and Synagogues: Roles in Serving American Jewry," and by Sanford Solender on "The Place of the Jewish Community Center in Jewish Life"? Conservative Judaism, the Reconstructionist, Commentary, the Jewish Spectator, the CCAR Journal, Synagogue Council Highlights - all have written, commented, annotated, footnoted in the best tradition of Rashi, the Tosaphists, and the Responsa literature.

All of this has posed a critical-ethical problem for me: How could I in good conscience justify my traveling cross-continent to talk about a subject that, in my own judgment, was thoroughly talked out.

But, as in most instances of such moral crises, our tradition has a redeeming role to play, and it helped resolve, or at least alleviate, my crisis by insisting that, "Although your ancestors have left you a Torah, you are nonetheless obligated to write your own." Roughly translated into the contemporary idiom, our tradition feels, like the farmer, that running the milk through the cow a second time is bound to make it come out richer.

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I have had the benefit of seeing in advance an outline of Benjamin Rosenberg's presentation. From that I have the impression that he will telescope for us the major features of the subject of Community Federation-Synagogue Relationships: the primary problems that exist and suggestions for possible resolutions.

Under these circumstances, it was my feeling that I could be of greatest usefulness by not trying to duplicate his approach, nor by reiterating what already has been said by others who have appeared here.

The position of executive director of the Synagogue Council of America which is, as you know, the coordinating body for the national rabbinic and congregational organizations of the three movements of Judaism -- Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform -- does offer a unique vantage point from which to view the Jewish scene, and it is from six years of looking through this particular bay window that I would share with you some observations which, hopefully, will be relevant to our discussion.

#### PREDICTS INTEGRATED COMMUNITY STRUCTURE

My first observation is that American Jewry is slowly but inexorably moving toward the creation of an integrated community structure that, in time, may well become one of the most effectively organized and spiritually vigorous communities in Jewish history. Despite both theoretical and practical problems which hinder the growth of intra-communal cooperation in a number of local Jewish communities, the signs point unmistakably to the emergence of a Jewish communal structure that is increasingly characterized by mutual aid and coordinated activity made possible largely through the growing understanding, acceptance, and reconciliation of the Jewish community federation and the Jewish communal worker, on the one hand, and the Synagogue, the Rabbi, and the Synagogue leaders, on the other.

#### SEES YOUNGER LEADERS REJECTING STEREOTYPES

A major portent, as well as a major factor, accounting for this new pattern of cooperation is that a significant percentage of the younger leaders in both the federations and Rabbinic groups have grown increasingly impatient with the stereotypes which have put psychological distance between them. Nurtured on the spirit of realism and forthrightness which is a distinctive American trait, they have in their own minds discredited the artificial distinctions, the outworn images and cliches of the past.

In the America of the 1920s and 1930s, the heyday of Ralph Ingersoll and the village atheists, an atmosphere of sharp antagonism, mutual hostility and suspicion prevailed between the rabbi and the social worker, separating them into virtual enemy camps.



The Rabbi regarded the social worker and, by extension, his employer, the community federation as irredeemably secularist and dedicated to undermining the moral authority of religion. The social worker -- and this was a generic term for all practitioners of the social science disciplines -- viewed the Rabbi as either a "theocrat", bent on subduing the community to his ecclesiastical will, or as a bumbling, unenlightened and inept practitioner of an archaic profession that was hardly useful or relevant to the pressing social and economic needs of that period. On either account, the social worker held the Rabbi and the Synagogue in low esteem.

In the last two decades, these stereotypes have been largely discredited and the sources of psychological distrust which have kept apart the major religious and social welfare forces in Jewish life have been increasingly removed.

#### CALLS SYNAGOGUE AND FEDERATION "INDISPENSABLE PARTNERS"

The collapse of the ideologies of the 19th and early 20th centuries, the emergence of a secure and economically self-sufficient Jewish middle class, the active leadership of many Rabbis in the affairs of the federations and the participation of social workers and federation professionals in Synagogue life - these developments have helped create a new atmosphere of mutual regard and trust which increasingly prevails in Jewish life today.

By and large, both the Rabbi and the social worker, the Synagogue and the community federation, believe each other to be indispensable partners in a cooperative enterprise conducted by Jews for the welfare of Jews.

The Rabbi and the Synagogue not only value the special skills, talents, and facilities provided for their congregants and the community at large by the social worker and the social welfare agencies sponsored by the federations; they believe as well that these services -- marriage and family counseling, care of the aged, vocational guidance for the young, Jewish education, and hospitals -- are fundamentally religious in inspiration and motivation and therefore are deserving of the highest regard and status in the communal scale of values.

A leading Jewish theologian recently expressed this conviction in these words: "How much of self-sacrifice, of love for the people, of sanctification of the Holy Name, are to be found in the modern Jews, in their will to suffer in order to help! The zeal of the pious Jews was transferred to their emancipated sons and grandsons."

### RABBI STRESSES VITAL ROLE OF SOCIAL WORKER

I take pride in the fact that the Synagogue Council of America has played some modest role in helping to create this kind of understanding of the respective roles of the Synagogue and the federations in Jewish life. Three years ago, the then president of the Synagogue Council, Rabbi Abraham J. Feldman of Hartford, Conn., a Reform rabbi, delivered a speech before the Conservative Rabbinical Assembly of America. He stated quite emphatically:

"I recognize no secularism in Jewish community life. As a son of the synagogue and its servant, I recognize that in the specialization of the functions of life which now is the mode of life which we know and which we cannot change if we would, we have specialists in every area of Jewish life. And I suggest to you gentlemen that because one is a specialist in Center work and another is a specialist in Family work, Family Welfare or Casework, and yet another is a specialist in administration of the Home for the Aged, or the hospital, or the foster home program, he is not by reason of working in these organizations, he is not outside the scope, the influence, the periphery of the Synagogue.

He, too, is doing the Lord's work. He is doing the Synagogue's work. And I turn to him again and again. I turn to him as an expert in an area of life in which I cannot have expertness, and refer to him the tasks in which he has greater competency than I have. He is not my hateful competitor! He is my welcome co-worker in the life of the Jewish community."

### MAP GUIDES TO COOPERATION

In this spirit, the Synagogue Council established a Joint Consultative Committee with the National Jewish Welfare Board to explore ways of helping resolve local problems between Synagogue and Jewish Community Centers. At the January 1957 meeting of that joint committee, I proposed that both SCA and JWB formulate guidelines for local Synagogues and Centers that would incorporate roughly these four elements:

1. We view Jewish communities throughout the country as instruments created voluntarily to meet the total religious, social and cultural needs of their individual members as Jews and as citizens.

2. We support and encourage every institution in the Jewish community which answers these needs. We urge cooperation among all these institutions which are dedicated to the advancement of these purposes.

3. Among these institutions of Jewish community life, we believe that the Synagogue, as the historic repository of Jewish spiritual values and tradition, and the Jewish Community Center, as the agency for fostering creative Jewish association, have primary contributions to make to the enrichment of collective Jewish life.

4. We believe that these contributions to the enrichment of Jewish life and Jewish creativity can be immeasurably enlarged through the enlightened cooperation between the rabbinic and lay leadership of the Synagogue and the professional and lay leadership of the Center.

This desire for cooperation is not confined to broad generalizations and verbal statements; it finds significant expression in joint programs on local as well as on national levels.

#### NOTES MUTUAL USE OF SERVICES AND FACILITIES

A recent survey on the relationships between Jewish Community Centers and Synagogues, which is undoubtedly known to you, revealed that "close to three quarters of the 102 Community Centers reporting have either formal or informal representation of Synagogues on their boards. Over a third of the Centers conduct activities in Synagogues and a half of the Centers provide program consultation or other services to congregations. Over forty per cent of the Centers reported use of their facilities by Synagogues and a quarter indicated they receive active assistance from the Synagogues in the conduct of Community Center programs. Over a third of the Centers stated they conducted activities jointly with congregations."

Impressive as are these facts, the relationships between Centers and Synagogues are not without their problems and tensions. Yet, a discerning critic like Sanford Solender, in commenting on the above survey, pointed out that these joint efforts can "help the Synagogue enhance its religious and educational work and can enable the Center to broaden its effectiveness in enriching Jewish group life."



Cooperation between Synagogues and Bureaus of Jewish Education, both on an individual congregational and inter-congregational basis, is growing. The experience of the United Hebrew Schools in Detroit is an instance of the reasonable possibilities of "communal responsibilities for Jewish education." And one can only hope that what occurred here, at the Oneg Shabat session on Jewish education yesterday, will give added impetus to such joint planning and programming for deepening and strengthening Jewish education.

#### CITES JOINT ACTION OF COMMUNITY AND RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

I need not go into detail about the impressive growth in cooperation in the field of community relations between the NCRAC and the Synagogue Council on the national scene and, on the local level, between the CRCs and the social action commissions of the Synagogues and Temples. The Reform movement, which pioneered in social action programs in their Temples, is now being closely followed by the Conservative and Orthodox congregational bodies, and the prospects for a strengthened community relations program grows daily.

Even the social welfare field, in which the Synagogues have had less practical involvement, is emerging as an area for cooperative activity. Secretary Fleming, of the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, has invited representatives from the three-faith communities to meet with him and his staff on November 23rd, to explore informally social welfare issues, such as the role of government in meeting the health needs of older people and public assistance. He invited the National Catholic Welfare Conference, the National Council of Churches, and the Synagogue Council of America.

While Synagogues have both moral and practical concerns for our senior citizens, the Synagogue Council recognized it had not technical competence in this area and, consequently, it invited the CJFWF to join as official members of the Jewish delegation. Thus, in addition to representatives from the Conservative, Orthodox, and Reform Movements, our delegation will happily include Philip Bernstein, Morris Zelditch, and Roland Baxt of the Jewish Occupational Council.

### ORGANIZE LOCAL SYNAGOGUE GROUPS

In his paper on "Jewish Unity in America", before the Rabbinical Assembly in 1952, Philip Bernstein asserted: "When we come to religion we haven't progressed nearly as far toward unity as in other respects.... In most cities there is no provision for joint thinking, cooperative planning and unified action on a continuing basis by our rabbis and Synagogues as a group."

Seven years have passed since that comment was made, and it will interest you to know that there are today forty-two local Rabbinic Associations and local Synagogue Councils. Virtually all of these have come into being without outside stimulation. In fact, last night I received a long-distance telephone call from a West Coast community that is eager to establish such a Council.

The performance and usefulness of these groups is uneven. Some are effective in helping create a religious consensus in the local community; others exist in name only, floundering about, organizations in search of a cause. There are some people in the non-Synagogical agencies who are worried about these local religious groups. They fear them as threats, if not immediate then eventual, to the local CRC's.

My strong personal belief is that such anxieties are unwarranted. Unwarranted with one condition: These groups must be given guidance and a specific program that is appropriate to their character. Where they have not been given such guidance, they do tend to get into the hair of the local CRC's and community councils, and vice-versa. In a limited way, imposed by the limitations of staff and budget, the Synagogue Council has been trying to meet this need.

It deserves to be stressed that there has taken place equally significant growth in cooperation among the rabbinic and congregational bodies on the national level, both through the Joint Advisory Committee of the NCRAC and the Synagogue Council and within the Synagogue Council itself. Only when the national religious bodies scrap among themselves from time to time do the newspapers pay them attention; sensationalism has always made the front pages. But the quiet day-to-day cooperation that takes place in dozens of meaningful ways is confined, like good news, to the obituary pages, if it is published at all.

### SYNAGOGUE COUNCIL HELPS ALLAY DISPUTE

Let me give you one illustration: All of you know about the unhappy episode when Jewish organizations were jockeying into position for the phantasmized meeting with Khrushchev. If you read the statement issued by the 23 organizations in connection with that fiasco, you would have noticed that a delegation of five persons was to be named for the Kabolas ponim of the Soviet Premier. One of the five was to be a rabbi. Before the Synagogue Council became involved in this matter, the names of 27 different rabbis were submitted from a variety of sources.

Philip Klutznick begged our President, Rabbi Max Davidson, to help him out. After a series of meetings, and through the precedents and formula of arriving at decisions that are acceptable to our six agencies, the Synagogue Council was able to name a single candidate who was to represent the Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform groups. In itself, this may appear unimportant; but I can assure you that had not the Synagogue Council been in existence, this situation, like many others, would have become a national disgrace, a hilul hashem.

Clearly, as Salo Baron has pointed out, in these varieties of ways the American Jewish community, like Jewish communities that preceded it throughout history, is manifesting demonstrably "the mystic urge for Jewish unity".

### UNITY POSES DANGERS, TOO

The foregoing is the asset side of the ledger. Obviously, there are liabilities. Despite all the movement toward cooperation and coordination, there is not one of us who is unaware of rabbis who resist becoming part of this community process, of Synagogues that prefer to go it alone. And we ask, why?

There are evidently a number of reasons, but one assuredly deserves our serious consideration, and this is that sometimes we can pay too high a price for unity. The price of Jewish unity might be a regimentation of practices. It might be a formal conformity, without essential conviction. The price might also be, and I have seen it happen, an ultimate indifference to Jewish life, a type of cynicism, which says: Let the hierarchy -- that is, the philanthropic balabotim and the professional executives, who all too frequently operate on the principle that ver es hot di meah zogt di deah -- let these handle the affairs of the Jewish community. They will have their own way anyhow. The price of so-called unity might also be the wiping away of all honest differences in the interpretation of the substance of the Jewish heritage. Instead of having the wholesome aliveness of eluv'elu, they would establish an authoritarian dogmatic elu only.



### HOLDS "INTELLECTUAL SECTARIANISM" IS VITAL AND CREATIVE

Rather severe criticism has been made during this assembly of "sectarianism" among the branches of Judaism. The implication is that sectarianism is ipso facto destructive; and that religious rivalries are the primary hindrances to effective community co-operation. Here, too, we ought to be careful not to be carried away by oversimplification.

Last year, the Synagogue Council sponsored a study by a young rabbi-sociologist, Jacob Sodden, on "The Impact of Suburbanization on the Synagogue". Sodden surveyed in depth the leadership and membership of some 83 synagogues, Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform, in Nassau County, New York, as to their religious attitudes, practices, and behavior. He discovered among other things that, despite the differences in labels, there are hardly any differences in religious patterns. A leveling out process has taken place in Suburbia, with religious distinctiveness being reduced to the lowest common denominator. Clearly this is not the healthiest state of religious affairs.

We ought not confuse ideological sectarianism with institutional sectarianism. Maintaining sectarian differences for institutional purposes, for building quantitative strength through numerical accretion of members is subject to deserved criticism; but a sectarianism that derives from honestly-held ideological differences, from differing theological approaches and commitments, is not only desirable, it is essential for Jewish spiritual creativity.

This is what the Rabbis meant when they enjoined KINAS SOFRIM MARBEH HOKHMA: the competition of the scribes increases wisdom. Thus federations and community organizations need to guard against bringing to bear community pressures against religious groups on issues of principle for the sake of having them conform to some vague and specious notion of an American Judaism.

### SURVEY REVEALS RABBIS PLACE COMMUNITY TRAINING LAST

I referred above to the resistance of some rabbis to cooperation with community organizations. In 1954, the Synagogue Council sponsored a study on "The Training Needs and Functions of the American Rabbi." Conducted by Gerard Engel, another young rabbi-sociologist, the survey interviewed 431 community rabbis, Conservative, Orthodox, and Reform, in order to determine their attitudes about the various functions they are called upon to perform in the active rabbinate, and also to ascertain how they would have their rabbinic seminaries modify their curricula to help students prepare more adequately for the present-day rabbinate.

According to his findings, the overwhelming majority of the rabbis felt that their seminaries should emphasize training in religious activities, such as sermons and theological studies; formal education for teaching of children and adults; and pastoral counseling which they termed "extremely important". (In another study by Rabbi Jeshia Schnitzer on "Rabbis and Pastoral Counseling," he found that 85 per cent of the rabbis in the three branches also regarded training in pastoral counseling as essential to their ministry). According to Engel's survey, "the rabbis express least concern for training seminary students for community service".

Engel offers no analysis for this latter finding. Can it be, one is tempted to speculate, that the rabbi's other onerous duties - as administrator, performer of rites, autonomous community leader, social worker, ambassador to the non-Jewish community, and the rest - leave him no time? Does he believe it sufficient for others to run the community's affairs, without his participation? Or does he regard his own Synagogue as the community entire unto itself?

There is no use jumping to unwarranted conclusions. If it is true that the community is moving at an accelerated speed towards greater cooperation and involvement of the various elements of the Jewish group life, and the rabbis in the exact opposite direction, then we are faced with a serious problem.

As I observed in my article on "Religion", in the 1959 American Jewish Yearbook, there is a movement afoot in the rabbinic seminaries to emphasize theoretical scholarship at the expense of practical rabbinics, and this would tend only to confirm the direction that rabbis lean toward as reported by Engel.

### CONCLUSION

My concluding observations are several:

While the successful creation of integrated programs serving the total Jewish community will depend on the wisdom, resourcefulness, and willingness of the grass roots leadership, the national agencies, such as the CJFWE and the Synagogue Council and its constituent organizations, have an equally great responsibility, as well as opportunity, to provide national leadership and initiative which can help make possible more intensive and widespread cooperative activity among all elements of the local Jewish communities.



The CJFWF and the SCA, as the respective coordinating agencies of the federations and Synagogues of America, can help create a national pattern of cooperation between rabbis and lay professionals. They might begin by making available the results of studies of Jewish communal structures of the past, such as the Vaad Arba Harotzot (the Council of Four Lands), the Gemeindes, the Consistories, the Kehillot, in which rabbis and Parnassin laymen conducted in splendid cooperation and effectiveness all the affairs of the community, giving visible demonstration to the concept of K'lal Yisroel, the unity of the Jewish people.

They can help interpret, within the context of a total Jewish community framework, the concept and the inner significance of the social service agencies and the Synagogue for the individual Jew and the Jew collectively.

They can help open heretofore unopened channels of communication between their constituencies. The rabbi still needs to be shown that, through cooperation with the community organizations, he can be helped to carry out more effectively his authentic functions as rabbi, teacher, and preacher, and that his people can best be served, without undermining their loyalty, through cooperative activity with other Jewish agencies.

They can help make available a knowledge of the skills and resources possessed in abundance by both groups: staff personnel, publications, research, and surveys, as well as community programs which have not funneled down in any meaningful way to their respective constituencies.

They can help jointly in giving more effective training to community and Synagogal leadership by improving standards of leadership, and establishing a community-wide climate that would insist on a respectable Jewish education and some commitment to Jewish practices as criteria for public position.

They can help interpret fund-raising and charity within the historic tradition of Tzedakah, and thus establish motivations for giving on the highest planes, rather than on the all-too-prevalent practice of vulgar social pressures.

These are but partial examples of the kind of communal health and strength that would and can be brought to Jewish life if the national leadership of the federations and synagogues, in concert with their local affiliates, enlarge their present cooperative efforts, and nudge into life the still slumbering giant whose seven-league boots are yet to be tried.

FEDERATION - SYNAGOGUE RELATIONSHIPS

Directions and Prospects

BENJAMIN B. ROSENBERG, Boston

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Much has been said and written in the past ten years about the "back to the synagogue" movement and what it means for community organization patterns and directions. There is no question that this phenomenon, which gained in strength in the momentous post-World War II years and came into full flowering during this decade, will have far-reaching effects on the directions of Jewish community life.

I would like to consider briefly some aspects of this subject, review recent developments in the relationship of synagogues and our community organizations, and attempt to point up directions for constructive partnership relations.

All of us, I am sure, will agree that the back to the synagogue movement is a phase of the general revival of religion so characteristic of our country since World War II years.

"Wie es christelt sich, so judelt's sich" is as true today as when Heine said it first, more than one hundred years ago.

SECULAR ASPECTS OF RELIGIOUS REVIVAL

Students of the current scene agree furthermore that an important characteristic of the religious revival is that often it appears to be a "religiousness without religion - rather a way of sociability or belonging."

As Oscar Handlin succinctly puts it:

"The return to the synagogue is almost entirely socially oriented. People do not become members out of the pursuit of God but out of a need to associate themselves with their neighbors in a meaningful way."

The strong, social, secularistic elements in the synagogue are recognized by rabbinic and congregational groups, and many of them are greatly concerned with the problem of instilling more religion into our religious awakening.

This is not the time nor the place to consider further this phase of the problem. Suffice it to say that all elements recognize the pervading social factors in the current synagogue or "religious" revival.

#### FEDERATION - SYNAGOGUE GROWTH STEMS FROM SAME ROOTS

It is furthermore recognized that the same social forces which generated the new religious interest, have also been at work in strengthening our communal organizations, bringing renewed interest, activity and manpower to the various causes and services which make up the totality of the organized Jewish community. This is naturally so, since we are talking about the same people. It isn't we in the synagogue and they in the communal agencies - or vice-versa.

How we, whether in the synagogue or in our other communal activities, exploit, in the best sense of the term, these social forces, will in a large measure determine the future vitality and direction of the causes or services in which we are interested. And again, today, we are talking from the perspective of our central community organizations.

#### SEE COMPATIBLE GOALS AND PERSPECTIVES

Basically, the unique goals and perspectives of Federation are compatible with those of the synagogue. Both have the same broad objectives in view - the well-being of the total community; an appreciation and acceptance of social responsibility; respect for human dignity; elimination of suffering; the attainment of a full life within a democratic framework; fulfillment of social needs through a sense of belonging.

The specific purposes of Federation - and these establish its perspective - are centered around:

1. Financing and planning for services
2. Development of a high standard of service and a recognition of the need of professional discipline and skills in the rendering of services
3. Involvement of all segments of the community in leadership; participation and use of the services
4. Respect for diversity of ideological approaches
5. Development of new leadership
6. Recognition of the inter-relationship of services and development of constructive relationships among agencies
7. Concern with economical and efficient administration

Let us now consider from the perspective of Federation some of the many communal activities in which our central organizations and the synagogues are involved.

CULTURAL SERVICES ARE INDEX  
OF BOTH PROGRESS AND PROBLEMS

Jewish Education and the field of Leisure-Time and Cultural Services illustrate the inevitable relationship between the synagogue and communal agencies, as well as the distance which we have yet to travel, to bring together these major communal forces in a more cooperative and constructive working partnership.

The recent National Study of the American Association for Jewish Education, points to the steady growth of congregational schools. In 1948 some 82.7 per cent of all Jewish pupils in the United States were in congregational schools. In 1958 this proportion grew further to 88.5 per cent.

### CITES GAPS IN JEWISH EDUCATION

The national study confirms the general opinion that much progress has been made, during the past decade, in some facets of Jewish education toward interesting parents and community leaders in the problems of Jewish education; toward increasing enrollment in the Jewish school; and toward promoting in the children a sense of Jewish identification and of satisfying fellowship. At the same time the study makes clear that little, indeed, has been accomplished toward teaching our children the literary and historic culture of their people.

The study points up several serious gaps:

The inadequacy of time devoted to Jewish schooling;

The lack of personnel, qualitatively as well as quantitatively;

The multiplicity of synagogal schools in the face of shortage of teachers;

The splintering off of the available supply of teaching resources;

The lack of integrated and coordinated effort in the field of Jewish education;

The lack of community effort for joint enrollment, community interpretation, standardization of service, teacher training.

These pose a most serious problem for the future direction of Jewish education. Whatever a community's structure may be for community-wide planning and services in Jewish education, we accept our community's stake in the enhancement and strengthening of Jewish educational services in our community. Thus, we share with religious and educational bodies their deep concern for the many problems in the Jewish educational field.

### NOTES EXPANDING SERVICES OF SYNAGOGUE

The expanding role of the synagogue in the area of Leisure-Time programs presents an increasing challenge to orderly community planning in which the synagogues and Jewish centers can relate themselves to each other as complementary institutions in the community, rather than institutions in conflict.



Synagogues, like Jewish centers, are family-centered agencies. More and more they lay claim to the time and loyalties of their membership from cradle to golden age. The synagogues have reached into the nursery-pre-school-day camp programs; they have popularized the young adults and young couples groups; and they are very much involved in golden age programs.

BELIEVES CONFLICTS ARE  
BASED ON MISUNDERSTANDING

Since the early years of the synagogue-center movement, the synagogue-center has presented a challenge to the Jewish community center movement, and there have been serious questions raised about the rationale of Jewish centers and their place in contemporary Jewish life. Differences and conflicts resulted basically from misunderstandings of the respective functions of center and synagogue; and the lack of recognition that centers and synagogue were essentially complementary institutions in the community, each having something unique to offer.

Sanford Solender, in his paper on "The Place of the Jewish Community Center in Jewish Life" pointed out that "the place of the synagogue in this field of work vis-a-vis that of the Jewish community center, can be understood best by clarity about the functions of the synagogue and the Jewish community center in American Jewish life."

Both the National Jewish Welfare Board and the National Synagogue bodies have attempted to arrive at mutual clarifications of these respective functions. The trend seems to be towards a sharper delineation of the respective roles of the center and of the synagogue in the community. As Mr. Solender again states, "Each of the community's resources, the synagogue, the federation, the family agency and others, is committed to meeting some aspect of the needs of Jewish persons or groups. From its distinctive role, each gains its concept of service, personnel and facilities."

The Jewish Center field is clearly one in which much remains to be done to bring our synagogue and centers to an appreciation of the respective roles they are to play on the Jewish communal scene.

### SYNAGOGUE PLAYS IMPORTANT ROLE IN COMMUNITY RELATIONS

The temper of our times is such that often the most effective action in community relations can be, and is, carried on through synagogal bodies and especially through the rabbinate, locally or nationally. The synagogue can, and very often is, the outpost for courageous action on issues that divide our community. In this connection, it is noteworthy that on the issues which have divided the south, the rabbinic bodies gave significant leadership to the progressive point of view. This was true in the field of civil liberties, problems of integration, problems of separation of church and state in our public schools. The national religious agencies are members of the National Community Relations Advisory Council, and effective joint programs in this area between synagogues and federations may develop in the future.

### OBSERVES SYNAGOGUE'S INCREASING INTEREST IN OTHER FIELDS

Another field in which synagogues are becoming increasingly active is that of counseling. Pastoral counseling has been a traditional rabbinic responsibility. The "shaloth", traditionally brought to the rabbi, have extended beyond questions of ritual to the most intimate and pressing problems of family life.

With the development of specialized skills and fields of service in the area of guidance and counseling, this function of the rabbinate became attenuated. Today, however, many synagogues, especially in the larger cities, are establishing counseling departments, or at least referral services to the communal Jewish Family and Vocational Guidance services. Here, too, further explorations are in order to examine increased opportunities for constructive inter-relationships between synagogues and communal services.

There is yet another field, in which the interests and ultimate goals of synagogues and other communal organizations are inter-related. This is the broad field of Jewish culture, Jewish scholarship, research creative work in Jewish letters, the training of personnel for transmitting these cultural values to future generations. It is not fortuitous that it was the Council of Jewish Federations & Welfare Funds which sponsored the recently concluded study on National Jewish Cultural Services in America. For our community organizations have been concerned now for some time with the continuity of Jewish cultural values.

Again, the very forces which shape the character of the American Jewish community are leading us to the inevitable historic conclusion that now American Jewry must rely on its own energies and resources to strengthen its cultural foundations and develop its own scholarship and leadership in this field.

Other services which reflect the common interest of synagogues and the central community organization include:

1. Community organization for kashruth
2. Chaplaincy Services
3. Internal Jewish community problems
  - a. Arbitration Boards
  - b. Codes of fair practices of quasi-religious functionaries - mohalim; funeral directors

#### SYNAGOGUES HELP IN CAMPAIGNING

Beyond the specific services which were just reviewed, our synagogues are being involved in our community campaigns, and can become assets in one of the most vital jobs of the central organization.

Some of the specific ways in which synagogues have become active participants in the campaign include:

- A. Utilization of Rabbis as speakers at educational and campaign meetings
- B. Utilization of the synagogues as a nucleus for the organization of the campaigns in the outlying areas
- C. Organization of man-power for the campaign through congregational committee
- D. Inter-congregational councils for mass solicitation

The Bonds for Israel organization has made most effective use of synagogues in the promotion of bonds sales. Representing established community structures, which could be used as an effective channel for the promotion of bonds sales, the synagogues have indeed become, in most communities, the nucleus for an increasingly successful sales program.

### SEES LACK OF COORDINATION IN BUILDING FUND CAMPAIGNS

A mostly uncharted area in the field of campaigning is that of building fund campaigns. There is no question that the capital fund drives for health and welfare agencies, as well as synagogues, have resulted in great drains upon the community's resources. This area, which involves the largest expenditure of funds, has probably the least degree of coordination. Communities have generally accepted the principle of timing to avoid conflicts in major campaigns. But very little planning has been evident beyond timing. Certainly in the field of synagogue building and the related building programs for Jewish education little, if anything, has been accomplished to coordinate and relate the building programs to the needs of the total community, and to the possibilities of utilizing existing buildings.

### RELIGIOUS VALUES VITAL IN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Leadership Development is one of the most constant and vexing problems of our communities, and one with which we have concerned ourselves formally and informally for a long time. While a number of interesting and productive experiments have been conducted in various communities in leadership training, there is common agreement that genuine leadership has to grow out of interest, out of understanding, and out of a sense of loyalty to Jewish values. Obviously, such values cannot be nurtured in a vacuum, and the home, the school, our agencies and the synagogue all play their vital roles. No long-range program for the development of Jewish communal leadership can succeed without full utilization of the resources of the synagogue and of the potential for cooperative relationship with synagogal leadership.

### IMPACT OF SUBURBIA AFFECTS ALL AREAS OF SERVICE

The impact of the synagogues in the areas we just described, and the relationships which those of us concerned with community planning have to these areas, have been sharpened by what is perhaps the most dramatic development not only in Jewish community life, but in the national life of our country, namely, the movement to the suburbs. Suburbia has emerged as a key factor in community planning and social welfare for the entire country.

As the report of our Committee on Community Organization pointed out in 1957, "virtually every field of communal service is affected, agencies in the old as well as in the new areas, funds for operating needs and capital purposes - changed relationships among agencies and people."

#### CALLS SYNAGOGUE "FIRST EXPRESSION" OF ORGANIZED COMMUNITY

In many of the rapidly growing suburban areas, the synagogue is the first expression of an organized community. Education, leisure-time activity, community relations, even campaign organization and other organizational activities center in the synagogue; and while synagogue membership may represent only a small proportion of the Jewish population in a given suburban community, it is the core, the organized core, with which the agencies of the central community can establish lines of communication.

It is the unique role of the central Jewish community organization to take the initiative and exert leadership in involving the synagogues in a constructive planning process with other communal forces and agencies. There are, of course, road blocks which hinder effective community planning, especially when the perspectives of different forces may vary.

#### URGES FRANK RECOGNITION OF PROBLEMS

We have to be realists and recognize the problems which confront us.

The back-to-the-synagogue movement is not back to "one synagogue." Although we are an increasingly homogenous group, we recognize and respect the differences in ideological identification. The multiplicity of synagogues, however, often with concurrent inter-synagogical conflicts, or at best with different levels of interest and appreciation of community problems, make it difficult to reach a common ground for discussion, consultation, and possible agreement and planning.

It need not be over-emphasized that some of the difficulties stem from personal vested interests and, sometimes, "prima-donna" complexes. These individual problems can thwart sound community planning, whether the prima donna is a lay-leader, a community organization executive or a rabbi.



We often lack a common language and we see a gap between the standards and skills which our community services have forged during the past two decades, and their understanding and acceptance by the rabbinic group. In this connection, it should be noted that the synagogue groups, especially their rabbinic leadership, may be just as impatient with the community workers who are illiterate in Jewish cultural and religious values, as we in community work may be of a synagogue leader who is an "am ha'aretz" in the appreciation of professional social work concepts and practices.

It is pertinent to observe that one of the problems we meet so often is a confusion in terms when we try to consider synagogue relations. What do we mean by synagogue? To some, synagogues mean the rabbis - and when they speak of progress or problems, they think of the acts of a rabbi or group of rabbis. And when they speak of synagogue involvement, they mean the involvement of rabbis.

It is important that this point be clarified.

#### SYNAGOGUE AND COMMUNITY LEADERS OFTEN THE SAME

The synagogue movement involves the membership and leadership of the synagogue who, as stated before, are the very people most deeply concerned and intimately associated with other communal services and agencies. The movement involves the rabbis who also, as individual members of the community, are very often involved as members, leaders or beneficiaries of one or more of the community's services. In other words, the synagogue and its leadership cannot be distilled and separated from the rest of the community's stream of associations, interests and causes. It is rather a plus component which can bring greater depth and added significance to the endeavors of the organized community in behalf of the welfare of the total community.

Vested interests reflected in established structures, programs, and personnel pose difficulties in any attempt at shaping new directions. Sometimes limited personal and agency horizons can also obstruct our efforts to reach new plateaus of service. Here we must re-emphasize that this problem is equally applicable to established community agencies, as it is to the synagogues. (Sometimes the nature of a community's program will depend on who got there "fastest with the mostest.")

PROBLEM POSED BY DISPARITY  
IN PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES

Another obstacle is the lag between professional practices prevailing in our health, welfare and group work agencies, and their understanding by the general community. Many people, for example, just don't understand what we mean by social group work.

The incursion of the synagogues in many areas of service may be at the expense of standards which the professional fields have developed, especially in Jewish education, in group work, in counseling. But often this is possible only because the agencies themselves, in particular communities, have permitted, or have been forced to accept, a lower level of professional service, or because the leadership in these communities has never really appreciated the nature of professionally directed programs and services.

PRIORITIES CREATE MAJOR ISSUE

The problem of priorities can pose serious obstacles. We are pressed hard from many areas. We operate in a dynamic community setting in which practically all fields of service make constant demands on our community planning, resources and personnel, whether it is in the field of the aged, health, leisure-time activities, family problems. Our communities lack the resources to do adequate planning, and only too often the job of maintaining constant communication with the synagogue receives a low priority rating.

Secondly, our communities lack the financial resources to be able to undertake demonstration programs and pilot services, involving synagogues and agencies in an effort to test possibilities of coordinated services under community auspices. Such efforts would involve heavy investment of manpower and of finances, and there is always the problem of diverting funds from sorely needed services to new experiments.

### SOME GUIDELINES FOR FEDERATIONS

Basic to any effective role that federations can play in relationship to synagogues is the recognition and acceptance of federations' expanding role in planning for increasingly broader areas of community service.

1) Federations must, accordingly, take an increasingly active role in those areas of co-ordination and planning which involve synagogues and other agencies, such as synagogues and centers, synagogues and Bureau of Jewish Education, community relations agencies etc. This can no longer be exclusively a bi-lateral process between a specific local agency and the synagogue, for the problems with which they deal have broad community implications transcending specific agency responsibilities.

2) Federations should assume and maintain the initiative in strengthening the channels of communication among agencies and synagogues in constructive efforts. This involves meetings, face-to-face relationships, patience in seeking out areas of co-operation, in developing actual opportunities for programs in which all groups can participate in a climate of mutual respect.

3) We should explore opportunities for increased communication among the staffs of agencies and those of the synagogues. It is interesting to note that, at the last two conferences of Jewish communal service, our professional workers dealt with the question of Jewish values in social work and discussed the need for continuing meetings throughout the year under the sponsorship of the central organization in order to gain a better understanding of Jewish values and further lines of communications among the various agencies rendering community service. The professional workers suggested increased involvement of rabbis as individuals and as groups in the work of the National Conference of Jewish Communal Service.

### EMPHASIZES INVOLVEMENT OF SYNAGOGUE LEADERS IN FEDERATION PLANNING

4) We should seek greater involvement of the synagogue leaders who determine the nature of congregational programs in the Federation's community planning and financing activities, particularly in dealing with specific projects which could lead to wasteful duplication or conflict.

It has been pointed out that too often Federation-Synagogue relationships have been characterized not by conflicting issues, but rather by a neglect of opportunities which would arise if there were a mutual concern to raise the level of cooperation.

#### URGES "BALANCED REPRESENTATION" ON BOARDS

5) Related to the need for maintaining channels of communication is the need for balanced representation on boards and committees of Federation.

The principle of securing balanced representation on committees provides assurance that the various religious viewpoints will be included indirectly but effectively in all areas of federation activity. This form of indirect representation is, of course, not clearcut. Many community leaders are prominent in congregational affairs. And, similarly, congregational leaders are frequently drawn from the ranks of community leaders. The more the line of demarcation between synagogue leadership and community leadership is clouded, the more effective the cooperative efforts between Federation and Synagogues. This goes far beyond the gesture of securing formal representation from synagogues on Federation bodies. Without sincere mutual effort at involvement, formal representation is only too often "paper" representation.

#### CITES GROWING RECORD OF SYNAGOGUE-FEDERATION COOPERATION

6) There is a growing record of experience on effective and constructive synagogue-community agency cooperation. The Jewish Welfare Board published two volumes on Jewish Community Center relationships with synagogues. These are devoted, to a large extent, to direct case records of effective community cooperation with synagogues in the field of leisure-time activities. This, of course, is only a beginning. It is important that we continue to develop a body of knowledge based on these experiences, to help us in each of our local situations with the specific problems with which we may have to cope, community by community.

a) The Detroit experience is perhaps the outstanding example among the large cities of community-synagogue cooperation in the field of Jewish education.

b) The New York Federation has a religious affairs department under the direction of a staff member who is a rabbi. The purpose of the department is to establish more effective communication between Federation, its several departments and the organized religious groups in New York, and thus to bring about greater involvement of these groups in the campaign and program of Federation.

c) There are a number of other examples of synagogue involvement in the affairs of communal agencies.

In at least one city, the Federation is conducting a leadership institute for synagogue members.

In many communities an effort is made to mobilize the manpower of the congregations for year-round education purposes as well as for fund-raising.

There are examples of co-operation between case work agencies and synagogues in marriage counseling, and efforts at developing referral service between the synagogue and the counseling service.

One community reports a program sponsored by the Jewish Vocational Service and the Synagogue, offering group and personal vocational counseling and college selection counseling for teen-age students.

We must recognize realistically that the instances of close co-operation toward objectives of joint planning of services and programs, leaves much, as yet, undone. Here the Jewish federations have a direct opportunity and responsibility for initiating and guiding such collaboration.

This can be done without infringement upon the distinctive aspirations, beliefs and practices of the agencies and the synagogues.



PROPOSES NATIONAL AGENCIES  
SPUR LOCAL COOPERATION

7) Synagogues are local expressions of national movements. The national parent bodies can play a positive role in nurturing attitudes of co-operation between member congregations and federations. It may be helpful to continue exploration on the national level of the problems which we experience day-to-day in our communities. A better understanding by the national leadership of the problems of local communities may lead to increasingly constructive relationships between synagogues and local agencies. CJFWE can have an important role in bringing together national leadership for this purpose.

8) The seminaries and graduate training schools for teachers and communal workers are important aspects of this problem. The field of Jewish communal service has long recognized the importance of Jewish cultural values as components in training for the field of Jewish community service. It is equally important that education for the rabbinate and for Jewish education include a knowledge and training in Jewish communal services. This can be achieved only on the basis of mutual understanding and acceptance of each field's significant role in the total pattern of Jewish life.

CONCLUSION

After all is said and done, the course of Federation-Synagogue relationships will be played out on the local scenes in each community where Federations and Synagogues exist. The nature of any positive relationship or of conflict of dynamic partnership or apathy and lethargy will be determined in each instance not by theories, not by national directives or national trends, but by and through the living together, the struggling together, the working together of people. In each community, the future will be determined by the history and the interest of the leadership; by the nature of the leadership in the Federations and the Synagogues; by the competence of the Federation executive and the rabbis.

If there is conviction about the role of Federation, if there is mutual regard and respect, the community will move forward toward strengthening its Jewish cultural foundations and the improvement of its services.