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**AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES**

**MS-763: Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman Collection, 1930-2004.**

Series H: United Jewish Appeal, 1945-1995.

Subseries 1: Sermons, Speeches and Writings, 1949-1982.

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"On Philanthropy." 1959.

For more information on this collection, please see the finding aid on the  
American Jewish Archives website.

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HAF  
1957

By HERBERT A. FRIEDMAN

Executive Vice-Chairman  
United Jewish Appeal

In the range and multiplicity of causes it bespeaks; in the legions it recruits to its sparkling banners; in the tons of literature it creates and distributes; in the acres of office space it inhabits; in the benumbing number of public events it generates; in the exalted contagion of righteousness with which it evokes mass responsiveness; in the lofty motivation with which it enriches the minds, hearts, and souls of its adherents, and in the super-magnitude of the sums of money it annually wrests from people's purses, philanthropy is indigenous to the United States. The world has never known anything like the scope, intensity, and influence, the social and economic commitment of the philanthropic enterprise that flourishes in this country. It is both a glory of the American character and a characteristic of American bigness - in this case bigness of heart.

The very size of the philanthropic activity raises key questions. Does the tremendous effort it entails tend to overshadow, and perhaps distort, the objectives of philanthropy? Can fund-raising remain the means and not engulf the ends? Has the changing nature of charitable application -- from the Lady Bountiful vogue to the social-science approach -- blurred the individuality of the recipient?

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The answers are, in large view, good ones.

In 1958, by voluntary response, Americans contributed the sum total of seven billion dollars for the aggregate of private philanthropic causes -- sectarian and non-sectarian, private and public, regional and national -- functioning in behalf of health, welfare, cultural, educational, and social needs being met in organized, experienced, and profoundly committed fashion.