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SERVING REFORM JUDAISM IN NORTH AMERICA

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NORTHEAST COUNCIL

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November 25, 1992
29 Cheshvan 5753

AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

MEMORANDUM

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To: Members of the Strategic Planning Task Force for
Jewish Continuity and Survival

From: David Belin and Rabbi Paul Menitoff

Enclosed are the minutes from our previous meeting,
background readings and the agenda for our December
meeting.

The meeting will be held on December 10, 1992 at the
Ritz-Carlton (Plaza One room), West Palm Beach, Florida.

We look forward to seeing you.

:pjd

STRATEGIC PLANNING TASK FORCE FOR JEWISH CONTINUITY AND SURVIVAL
UAHC, 838 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY
Tuesday, September 15, 1992

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by the Chairperson, David Belin.

I. D'var Torah

A brief D'var Torah was given by Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman, Temple Israel, Dallas, TX and Vice President of the Central Conference of American Rabbis.

II. Introductions

David Belin started the introductions. Each of the members of the Task Force introduced themselves and briefly described their involvement with the UAHC and the general Jewish community.

III. Remarks

A. Mel Merians (Chair, Union of American Hebrew Congregations):

Mel indicated that David Belin is a very special individual and was selected for this position, because he is a man who gets things done. He further indicated that he views this Task Force as one of the most important ever established in the history of the UAHC. He said, "We need to make the Jewish Community understand that massive efforts are needed, if the Jewish People are to survive in this Garden of Eden". The Task Force has a significant task and a tight time schedule. Mel wants a report to the UAHC Board at its spring meeting.

B. Rabbi Paul Menitoff:

Rabbi Menitoff noted that the creation of this Task Force occurred in the same year we marked the five hundredth anniversary of the end of the Spanish experience and the Expulsion from Spain. Although it ended in expulsion, the Spanish period produced Jewish poets, philosophers and statesmen. It was viewed as one of our golden ages during which we experienced much freedom.

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In America, we are experiencing a completely open society. Our children are only limited by their own abilities. The doors have been opened and we have been accepted. We are confronted with the question of how can we be serious Jews and serious citizens of the modern world. In some ways we are being killed with kindness. We are confronting the challenging question, will our grandchildren be Jewish? There are not two more appropriate groups to answer this challenge than the two major forces on the American Jewish scene: the federation community and the synagogue community. We must join forces in addressing this challenge. The work of this Task Force is to confront this problem in a coherent, logical, and forceful way. We need to examine what we are doing, what we should be doing, what resources we have and how we can generate new resources and focus those resources together with the Federation community and foundations, in order to cope with this problem and to insure that our grandchildren will be Jewish.

C. David Belin:

The Strategic Planning Task Force for Jewish Continuity and Survival is of tremendous importance for the future of the American Jewish community. We must find ways to ensure, for both the Jewish community as well as the entire North American community and, in addition, for Israel, that a vibrant Jewish community be assured in the centuries ahead.

IV. Demographic Overview

Dr. Egon Mayer presented statistical information that impacts on Jewish continuity. His remarks are in the appendix of these minutes.

Questions and comments followed Dr. Mayer's presentation:

1. Where no conversion occurred, what percentage of children grew up to be Jewish contrasted to the children of intermarriages where there is a subsequent conversion? Twenty percent of the children were raised as another religion. The remaining responded either other (Jewish-Catholic, Jewish-Baptist etc.) or nothing. Twenty five percent still have Chanukah or have a Jewish education.

2. Is there any information on the development of inter-marrieds dependent upon circumstances at the time of their marriage? Were they married by a Rabbi? Were they members of a synagogue at the time of their marriage? Can we project that these factors impact the survival of the Jewish family? The short answer is no. The

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demographic survey is not a survey of Jews. It is a survey of the Jewish population. Only three or four questions attempt to decipher what people are thinking. There were no questions on how they married and what factors influenced them. Only two questions in the JCF study focused on how they were raised.

3. People's choices regarding intermarriage seems to have had nothing to do with what they were exposed to in their teens and early twenties, but things that they were exposed to in their teen years or early twenties may have influenced how they practice Judaism later on. Mate selection is extremely complicated. The ability to predict who married whom based on demographic information is bordering on the absurd.

4. If a Jew goes through Jewish camping experience, Israel experience etc., might we not expect that, even if an individual marries a non Jew, that those persons homes will be more Jewish? Mate selection is a very private thing. It is a physiological, sexual, and economic decision. People are intermarrying who never thought that they would. We cannot intervene at some point in life and put someone on a trajectory for ever. "Of those raised Conservative, ages late forties to early fifties, fifty eight percent still consider themselves Conservative. Twelve percent raised Orthodox, still consider themselves Orthodox. Eighty one percent raised Reform, still consider themselves Reform. The next age bracket, thirty five to forty four, fifty two percent still Conservative, twenty six percent still Orthodox, seventy six percent are still Reform. The next age bracket, twenty five to thirty four, sixty percent still Conservative, forty three percent still Orthodox, eighty two percent still Reform. Orthodox is finally holding on to a larger minority of its children." Let us not assume that we know the answer. We do not know what a user friendly synagogue is.

5. This committee cannot be about intermarriage. This Task Force is about strengthening Jewish life. We cannot tell families what to do, but we can educate them. It is what we do that makes a difference in our kids lives. There is one question that addresses the heart and mind. How important is being Jewish to you? There is a high correlation coefficient. People who say that being Jewish to them is important are more likely to belong... not just as members, but to participate as well. Then it becomes a matter of institutional effort to make it possible for more people to feel better about being Jewish. This means both eliminating hurdles as well as increasing doors of opportunity.

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V. Review of UAHC Programming in Continuity/Survival Areas:

Rabbi Daniel Syme, Senior Vice President of the UAHC presented an overview of UAHC programming in areas relevant to the work of this Task Force.

He first stated that people get interested in what they get good at. Our goal is to get people to get good at Judaism. This will make people invest their time in their children and their grandchildren.

In our grandparents time, synagogue was a very important place, it was the center of their daily lives. The problem today is the synagogue is based upon wishful memories. In order to preserve Judaism, which is the survival issue, we need a model for transformation of the synagogue. The synagogue and the federation strengthening and enforcing one another for the totality of the Jewish people. Each institution must do what they do best.

The UAHC is creating programs. The synagogue and the federation should and can be maximizing their full potentials. Synagogues do not have hopes and dreams and aspirations, only people do. Unless we stop focusing on surveys and start talking about programs for REAL PEOPLE. Humans speak louder than numbers. Rabbi Syme briefly outlined the following five areas of UAHC programming:

1. Youth and Camping
2. Jewish Education
3. Outreach
4. Reaching the Unaffiliated
5. Religious living.

These questions and comments followed Rabbi Syme's overview:

1. If there are seven thousand Jewish kids in camps, twenty-eight thousand kids are not. Is there the willingness of people to have their kids go to Jewish camps? Yes. The UAHC needs, however, a variety of Jewish camps: Jewish sports, computer, performing arts, family camps and special needs camps. The camp movement is one of the most powerful forces of our movement.

2. Are there any statistics on the different ages of Jewish day camps? Rabbi Allen Smith is currently compiling the data on day camps. Day camps are much more profitable than the established camps such as Eisner, even though they are very successful.

(continued)

3. Do you see a single underlying mandate for a mission that gives birth to the programs we have created? All programs are created in response to a biennial resolution.

David Belin gave the third part of his comments as follows:

We must be prepared to in substance "market Judaism" to Jews who are affiliated, Jews who are unaffiliated, and intermarried Jews and their children, most of whom are unaffiliated. The Mormons have shown how it is possible to have a religious movement have substantial growth. We must not be afraid of reaching out, not on a "hard sell" basis, but rather in the biblical tradition of Isaiah as a "light unto the nations." Two thousand to three thousand years ago, we were a missionizing religion. We should not be afraid to reach out to intermarried couples and their families. In a sense, we have to "market" Judaism as a unique religion and peoplehood. Moreover, we also have to communicate that the world is better off and individuals are better off by identifying with a religious affiliation that preaches universalism and has the wonderful unique attributes of Judaism, as contrasted to non-affiliation with any religion.

The current rise of the religious right in a sense offers a door of opportunity for Jews to show how unique Judaism is. As a matter of fact, the very fact that so many Jews identify in a universal way with important issues, ranging from civil rights issues to the issues of women's rights of choice, adds to the opportunity.

4. Comment: We need to change the culture of our movement. Are we willing to go public? Are we willing to change our culture.

5. Comment: We have an opportunity to look at beginnings and what we can do with our values and mission. On the West Coast, year round schooling has gone into place. What were they going to do with the six week gaps, especially with the younger children just starting school. We have a block of time and people are going to go where the day care and nursery programs are. It does not matter WHERE the program is as long (location is not an issue) as there is a program available. They are going to go for what they want in a program.

VI. Federation Perspective

Norbert Fruehauf, Director of Planning and Development of the Council of Jewish Federations, addressed the Task Force. His remarks are attached to these minutes.

The following questions and comments followed Mr. Fruehauf's presentation:

(continued)

1. Is the CJF planning to include this subject at the GA? Yes.
Is the concept of the relationship between congregations going to be included? Yes.

2. Should not be primary role of the federation, in the role of Jewish continuity, be to get people involved in the synagogue?
The basic missions used to be raising money and the other is quality Jewish life. There has not been any success. We have not worked out the issue of building quality Jewish life. This is going to require the involvement of synagogues. We did not need the synagogue movement as much as we need it now, because now we are talking about Jewish life.

VII. UAHC/Synagogue Perspective

Rabbi Alexander Schindler. Rabbi Schindler's remarks are attached to these minutes.

These general comments followed Rabbi Schindler's presentation:

1. David Belin indicated that there is more than one right way. There are different ways to get to different groups. Part of the approach that we take depends on the perspective that we have. Do not just look at us narrowly because if the goal for this group is in twenty years to have the same number of Jews which is approximately five and one half million. We would have one set of perspectives to attain that goal. If our goal should be to have the same percentage of Jews in the population the we had fifty years ago, we would have another set of perspectives. The second set of perspectives may help us to accomplish the first perspective. We need to have a broader scope. There is more than one right way.

2. Rabbi Zimmerman commented that he was optimistic about Jewish continuity. He believes that Jews will survive. We need to take a stand for now, not for the past. His second observation was that we need to come up with a VISION. We need to develop a clear vision. When this is clear, Jews will come. Outreach is not the problem at his temple. How does he make the synagogue a meaningful institution for the people that are flooding the gates? What is it? Why are people joining? We need to put our heads together, we must decide.

3. David Belin agreed with Rabbi Zimmerman's optimism. He pointed out that even though we are bringing people in, we are losing them. The unaffiliated are at least as important.

4. Survival is not the issue, continuity is. Words mean different things to different people. We need to define what we mean by success. What is the horizon.

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5. Our great great grandparents were tied to God. Many modern Jews go in the front door and out the back door of the synagogue. We have not communicated this relationship with God to them. They need a true faith.

6. David Belin referred to "Finding God" that was written by Rabbi Daniel Syme and Rabbi Rifat Sonsino. Our great great grandparents believed in a personal deity. We need to find a way to reach out to people who may not believe in a personal God.

7. Barry Shrage commented that we should not be afraid of taking risks. Is the transformation of values American Jewish families is going to be a sum total of a variety of efforts. Success is transmitting beliefs to congregations and beyond.

8. What is the result of the Federation survey? What is the purpose? How do we speak to the individual soul? We have been very scattered in our approach. Transformation is needed in how we address the real issue - dealing with the Jewish soul. Federation/Synagogue relationships is not the issue. We must focus on the purpose. We need a realignment of how to solve the problem.

9. Elizabeth Linkon addressed the issue of the larger community and the duplication of services.

VII. Conclusion:

There was general agreement by all present that the meeting was very constructive. The next two dates for the Task Force meetings are to be on December 10, 1992 in Palm Beach, Florida, in conjunction with the UAHC Trustees meeting that weekend and on February 9, 1992 in New York.

The meeting was adjourned.

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON JEWISH CONTINUITY

A Paper Based on a Presentation to the Task Force
for Jewish Continuity and Survival of the UAHC
on September 15, 1992

Egon Mayer, Ph.D.

The published findings of the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey triggered a broad range of concerns about the current and future status of American Jewry. Most prominent among these is the emerging concern about "Jewish continuity." Various task forces and committees have been convened or are currently being organized under the aegis of one another of the national organizations to address the question of how to secure and promote "Jewish continuity." The premise behind these laudable efforts is that the evidence of the 1990 NJPS is that "Jewish continuity" is somehow under threat.

Whatever the merits of the efforts now under way, and those that will be undertaken in the near future, they are generally marked by an absence of any baseline measure of the social problem they aim to remedy. In short, there has been no attempt to describe the evidence of Jewish "discontinuity" for which ameliorative efforts would be needed.

In point of fact, the concept of "discontinuity" is not easy to define with any precision. Yet, lacking such a definition ab ovo will make it well nigh impossible to determine whether or not the efforts at enhancing "Jewish continuity" are effective or necessary or beneficial.

This brief paper is intended to give some operational substance to the concept of "Jewish continuity" based on the available evidence of the 1990 NJPS. Additionally, the paper questions whether in light of the evidence one can claim that "Jewish continuity" is in any way endangered more greatly in recent years than it might have been a generation or two ago.

Conceptualizing Continuity

Next to the unity of God perhaps the most important tenet of the Jewish creed is the importance of passing on the teachings of the folk to one's children. In the holiest of prayers, the "Shma," the very first paragraph contains the passage: v'shinantom l'bonecha -- and you shall teach these principles to your children.... Central to the Jewish mission is the concept of intergenerational continuity. Children are to replicate in their lives what they've learned from their parents, and parents are obliged to instruct their children in such a fashion as to make such continuity a high likelihood.

The 1990 NJPS provides very little in the way of retrospective data that would allow one to determine the extent to which Jewish respondents are continuing the traditions of their parents, or not. In fact, there are only two explicit questions that ask the respondent to indicate identical information for himself currently and for himself as he was being raised. The first concerns one's religion per se. The second

asks about one's current Jewish denomination in comparison to the Jewish denomination in which one was raised. Specifically, Q 18 asked all respondents to answer the question: "What is your current religion?," with the choices Jewish, Catholic, Protestant, Other, None, Don't know, and Refusal to answer, and Q 20 asked them to answer the question: "In what religion were your raised?," with the same response alternatives.

Similarly, Q 84 asked all respondents to respond to the following: "Referring to Jewish religious denominations, do you consider yourself to be Conservative, Orthodox, Reform, Reconstructionist or something else?," and Q 85 asked the same exact question with respect to upbringing, as follows: "Referring to Jewish religious denominations, were your raised Conservative, Orthodox, Reform, Reconstructionist or something else?"

It is these two sets of questions, and only these two sets of questions that permit an operational definition of Jewish continuity in the framework of the 1990 NJPS. They permit one to answer with objectivity the simple global question: how different are American Jewish respondents in their adulthood from they way the believe they were raised? Taking questions 20 and 18 together it is possible to determine what percentage of respondents who say they were raised in the Jewish religion still consider their religion Jewish. These two questions permit one to establish a measure of Jewish religious continuity. Similarly, a comparison of the responses to questions 84 and 85 provide a measue of Jewish denominational continuity.

Only once these measures are established is it possible to assess the realtive influence of various social determinants upon Jewish continuity.

Measuring Continuity

Looking, first, at the question of religious continuity the data were analyzed in terms of an over-all continuity of responses between questions 18 ("current religion") and 20 ("religion in which respondent was raised"). Table 1 describes the total 1990 NJPS sample on these two questions. It should be borne in mind that although the respondent sample consisted of 2,441 cases, most respondents also reported on the religious characteristics of other members of the household, such as their spouse and children. The table below encompasses the information for all those cases. The total of 6,457 persons in the sampled households repreents a total population of approximately 8.2 million people living in about 3.2 million households in which at least one person has some Jewish ancestry.

TABLE 1

CURRENT RELIGION REPORTED FOR ALL
1990 NJPS PERSONS BY RELIGION IN WHICH THEY WERE RAISED

<u>Current Religion</u>	<u>Religion Raised</u>				<u>NA</u>
	<u>Jewish</u>	<u>Christian</u>	<u>Other</u>		
Jewish	3,551 94.74	80 6.09	128 10.80	12	3,759
Christian	27 .72	992 75.49	60 18.42	6	1,079
Other	170 4.54	242 18.42	997 84.14	39	1,409
NA	9	15	16	170	210
	3,748	1,314	1,185	227	6,457

As can be seen in the above table, in simple numerical terms there are 3,759 persons whose "current religion" is reported as Jewish, while there are 3,748 persons reported to have been "raised Jewish." Thus, one can conclude that for the aggregate of the population there has been more than mere continuity. There has been a modest increase. However, the fate of the total population doesn't give enough detail about the fate of individuals. Therefore, the data were further examined for the respondents alone. The focus of this subsequent analysis is upon only those who indicated in Q 20 that they were raised in the Jewish religion, and the question is how many of them remain identified with.

TABLE 2

THE INCIDENCE OF JEWISH RELIGIOUS CONTINUITY
 AMONG THOSE WHO SAY THEY WERE RAISED JEWISH
 Total: 1781

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>%</u>
DISCONT	162	9.10
CONTINU	<u>1619</u>	<u>90.90</u>
	1781	100.00

What this table reveals is that of the 1,781 respondents who reported that the religion in which they were raised is Jewish, about 91% reported that their current religion is Jewish. The other 162 out of the total "raised Jewish" had relinquished identifying their "current religion" as Jewish. What this statistic suggests is that there is a 91% rate of Jewish religious continuity among the population represented in the 1990 NJPS.

Whether one regards the 91% rate of Jewish religious continuity as good news or bad news about the long-term prospects of the Jews depends on the consistency of that figure over the life cycle. Therefore Table 3 summarizes the percentage of respondents indicating Jewish religious continuity by age as well as by the Jewish denomination in which they were raised.

TABLE 3

THE INCIDENCE OF JEWISH CONTINUITY AMONG THOSE WHO SAY
THEY WERE RAISED JEWISH BY AGE & DENOMINATION RAISED
(Percent Continuing as Jewish)

<u>Age Category</u>	<u>Denomination in Which Raised</u>			
	<u>Conservative</u>	<u>Orthodox</u>	<u>Reform</u>	<u>Other</u>
Under 25	96	100	90	*
25 - 34	91	97	91	94
35 - 44	91	91	84	93
45 - 54	91	96	88	*
55 - 64	94	94	83	64
65 or +	96	98	85	88

Table 3 indicates a very high degree of consistency both across the age spectrum and across the denominational spectrum. The figures are a bit more unstable among those who reported being raised in something other than the three major Jewish denominations due to the smallness of the sample (in some categories fewer than 10). Indeed, Table 3 suggests that the continuity of Jewish religious identity has gotten more not less robust among the younger cohorts of Reform Jews. In general, the variations are statistically insignificant across all categories, suggesting that there remains a very high degree of constancy in this measure of Jewish continuity.

Besides the issue of religious continuity there is the matter of Jewish denominational continuity: to what extent respondents continue to identify with the particular branch of brand of Judaism that they were raised in. The two tables that follow describe in turn the over-all rate of intergenerational

continuity with respect to denominations and the more specific rates by age and Jewish denomination of origin.

TABLE 4

THE EXTENT OF DENOMINATIONAL CONTINUITY AMONG RESPONDENTS
(Percent Identifying With Denomination of Origin)
Total: 1786 Missing: 655

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>%</u>
DISCONT	720	40.31
CONTINU	<u>1066</u>	<u>59.69</u>
	1786	100.00

Of the total reporting being raised in one or another of the three major Jewish denominations or as "just Jewish," a little under 60% continue to identify with the denomination in which they were raised. To what extent this aspect of continuity is affected by age and denomination of origin is described in the table below.

TABLE 5

Percent Identifying With Jewish Denomination
of Origin by Age and By Denomination in Which Raised

<u>Age Category</u>	<u>Denomination in Which Raised</u>			
	<u>Conservative</u>	<u>Orthodox</u>	<u>Reform</u>	<u>Other</u>
Under 25	77	63	83	60
25 - 34	67	50	82	68
35 - 44	61	29	76	61
45 - 54	63	13	77	56
55 - 64	59	16	65	42
65 or +	73	18	69	60

Table 5 illustrates with abundant clarity that as one looks across the age spectrum denominational continuity is at an all time high in every branch of American Judaism. The table also serves as a useful reminder that the Reform movement has consistently enjoyed a higher degree of identificational continuity among those who were raised in it than either of the other two branches. Orthodoxy has been notably poor in retaining its own up until the recent decade or two. Only among the youngest age cohort does it show signs of catching up with the Conservative and Reform movements in its ability to retain its young. Whether this trend among the Orthodox is more than a transitory phenomenon remains to be seen.

But for those who taut the virtues of Jewish Orthodoxy as a way of securing continuity, it is well to keep in mind that even among those between the ages of 25-34 who were raised Orthodox only half retain that denominational identification. And among the older age cohorts who were raised Orthodox that brand of Judaism proved but of little appeal.

Explaining Continuity

Admittedly the two indicators of Jewish continuity explored above by no means exhaust what one would want to know about the subject. But, due to the paucity of relevant questions in the 1990 NJPS questionnaire these indicators are about all we have to work with at the present. The Jewish surveys currently on hand,

including the 1990 NJPS do not contain the kind of personal and familial historical information that would permit any kind of causal analysis of Jewish continuity. The few questions concerning Jewish education are about the only ones that can be treated as pre-conditions to adult Jewish identity.

TABLE 6

Percentage of Respondents Who Were Both Raised
in the Jewish Religion and Currently Identify With
the Jewish Religion, By Whether they Received Any Jewish
Education and By Age

<u>Age Categories</u>	<u>If Received Any Jewish Education</u>	<u>If Did Not Receive Any Jewish Education</u>
Under 24	93	94
25-34	92	94
35-44	88	92
45-54	88	90
55-64	91	88
65-74	95	93
75 or over	94	94

This table shows quite clearly that having received Jewish education or not bears no relationship whatsoever to whether a respondent who was raised as a Jew remained Jewishly identified. The high degree of Jewish identificational consistency noted earlier in Table 3 remains robust here as well. Thus, there appears to be no evidence to suggest that American Jewry is suffering from massive religious or identificational discontinuity that will undermine the viability of the community anytime soon.

Ensuring Jewish Continuity

In an effort to grapple with the implications of the demographic data for Jewish continuity it is well to remember one of the more cryptic injunctions contained in the Torah concerning Jewish memory. In the weekly portion known as Ki Tetze the concluding section tells the story of the Amalekites, who met and waged war upon the ancient Israelites as they were about to enter the Promised Land. The very last sentence of the story reads as follows: "...Timkhe et Zekher Amalek Mi'tahat Ha'shamayim, Lo Tishkokh" -- erase all remembrances of the Amalekites from under the heavens; do not forget. What is the meaning of this paradoxical injunction: erase all remembrance...do not forget? If all remembrance is erased, how is one not to forget? And, what is one not to forget?

In 1973 the scholar Charles Liebman wrote an insightful book about the evolution of the American Jewish culture entitled, The Ambivalent American Jew (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society). Its central theme is that the religious and institutional formations of American Jewry are driven by mutually contradictory emotional and intellectual forces: the desire to remember and the need to forget, the desire to remain apart as a distinguishable group in the American melting pot and the need to fit in and be accepted as an American. Why American Jews have these contending forces woven into the fabric of their individual and collective consciousness is an interesting question for psycho-historians to contemplate. But the evidence of these

forces is quite incontestable.

Perhaps the answer lies in the saga of Jewish survival itself. From our very beginnings as a people, from slavery in Egypt to wandering in the desert, and the succession of soul searing episodes of oppression and expulsion right up until our emancipation by modernity and rebirth in the State of Israel, each of us has had imprinted in our memories the pain and suffering of Jewishness. It is probably not possible to mature into adulthood with such memories without wanting to "become normal" by obliterating them. Self-pity and self-hatred loom ever near to a psyche steeped in such memories of hurt.

As a life-affirming doctrine, the Torah wisely commands: "Timkhe et Zekher Amalek" -- blot out those memories because they only serve to undermine a healthy sense of self-esteem, virility, security, and all those robust feelings of wholesomeness that mark a mature and well individual.

Applying this interpretation of the Torah text to our own current situation as American Jews, it is possible our focus on such issues as the high rate of intermarriage leads us to an exaggerated fear Jewish discontinuity. Present-day American Jews, as their predecessors, are engaged in an on-going process of cultural and religious forgetting as well as remembering. An overweening concern about what they are forgetting leads us to ignore what it is they are remembering. And the data are quite convincing on one salient point. They are remembering quite well that they remain Jews. Our task today, as always, is

to enable them to improve themselves as Jews and as human beings.



COMMISSION ON JEWISH CONTINUITY AND IDENTITY*

The CJF Planning Initiative

A. A Call to Action

The CJF National Jewish Population Study and a series of other related studies point to the critical issues facing the American Jewish community. They urge the need for communal action to achieve the ultimate goal of making Judaism and a Jewish lifestyle the desired option for religious/civic expression. What clearly emerges from every analysis of the current condition of the American Jewish community and trends into the future is that Jewish identity and affiliation are moving in a negative direction. The critical issue focuses on strategies that the organized Jewish community can develop to stem this tide of assimilation and erosion from Jewish involvement, as well as to create a stronger, more viable Jewish community with high quality of Jewish life comprised of positively identified and affiliated Jews.

This communal concern has developed over a long period of time and as such the solutions and strategies will require a long-term view and sometimes complex resolution. Jewish communal institutional cooperation and in some cases, change will most likely be required. These emerging strategies will call for greater collaboration and involvement of the religious community with the services traditionally supported by Federations and greater involvement of the Federation system with the religious community than ever before. Not only will they require a continental approach underpinned by a sense of collective responsibility, they might well require a realignment of existing resources and the development of new resources beyond which we now have within our grasp. This great effort will necessitate the commitment, strength and involvement of leadership from all segments of Jewish life: lay leaders, religious leaders, communal workers, academics and other experts. All Federations, religious institutions, agencies and Jewish organizations will need to get together to work through complex issues.

While there have always been programs that institutions established to enable individuals, families and communities to practice Judaism and to be able to transmit our heritage to the next generation, it is clear that the Jewish community has lost ground. An analysis of how and why things have changed is needed. We must create new paradigms. The organized Jewish community must initiate efforts that are comprehensive, targeted and substantive. This effort requires a continental as well as a local response.

*Presented to the Task Force on Jewish Continuity of UAHC
by Norbert Fruehauf, Assistant Executive Director, CJF

B. The Goals

There are two key questions relating to what our ultimate goals might be:

1. What do we want the North American Jewish community to look like 15 years from now (i.e. a generation from now)?; and
2. What do we have to do to achieve that vision of the future?

One appropriate goal for the future of Jewish life might be:

To foster a community of Jews, who are self-consciously Jewish, knowledgeable and committed to Jewish values and practice, who participate in synagogues and Jewish communal life and associate Jewish life with Israel, and who manifest their Jewishness in life style, life choices and life commitments.

The objectives are twofold: (1) To enable the largest number of Jews to express their Judaism and to define themselves Jewishly; and (2) to have the organized Jewish community develop the broadest array of programs and opportunities possible so as to enhance peoples' capacity to express their sense of Judaism. The focus must be inclusive and creative, or the objectives will not be achieved.

In reference to the goal and the objectives, a number of issues arise:

- What will encourage people to choose a Jewish life while living in a North American environment?
- What does the organized Jewish community need to make happen in order to foster Jewish identity in the midst of the attractive American culture?
- What are the compelling reasons for affiliation with and commitment to things Jewish?
- How do we and what will facilitate transmission of Jewish values to the next generation?
- What are the criteria upon which we measure the vitality of the North American Jewish community, and what measurements will tell us if we are succeeding?

C. Strategies and Modes of Intervention

So as to be effective, to make a significant impact on peoples' attitudes and behavior patterns, resources and opportunities need to exist to enable people to express their Jewishness and feel a part of the Jewish community. These opportunities need to be comprehensive, interrelated and mutually reinforcing and rewarding.

We must also be mindful of the various ways people express their Judaism, as was evidenced by responses to population and marketing studies, requiring multiple approaches. The Jewish community needs to reach people where they are attitudinally, psychologically, spiritually and culturally and learn how to help them move toward a more fulfilling and encompassing expression of their Jewishness. Especially important is the application of identity formation principles in periods of early childhood through family parenting education and during the child's formative years through adolescence and young adulthood, where peer association and adult role model figures are most significant. We need the creation of an adult community that models the values we seek to transmit.

D. Strategic Issues

A number of issues need to be examined prior to embarking on a comprehensive planning effort. There are complexities to engaging in planning and programming for building Jewish identity and for maintaining and nurturing a creative, viable Jewish community of which the following issues relate:

- Planning and programmatic approaches should be comprehensive in nature, requiring the collaboration of a broad range of agencies, synagogues and organizations. These approaches must be so organized that there is a smooth transition from one institution to another and from one life cycle event and life stage to another. This approach requires developing institutional relationships among many potential partners not accustomed to working together, let alone in partnership.
- New services may need to be provided by our communal institutions accompanied by a reconsideration of roles and responsibilities in a systematic fashion. This will require a retooling of the field through education and training. It may also result in restructuring and redirecting the services of our various communal institutions.
- Jewish communal resources will need to be redirected in order to accomplish this crucial agenda. The effort will require readjustments within the present human service delivery system and among Jewish ideological and identity institutions.

- Bridges of cooperation and mutual help need to be built between the Federation, the synagogues and communal institutions in order for common purposes to be achieved.
- New strategies to finance the system will be needed. This might require total financial resource development incorporating a number of funding streams into a local approach, with great emphasis on the annual Federation/UJA campaign, endowment development and private foundations. The capacity of Federations to engage in both comprehensive planning and financial resource development will be greatly challenged. The Federation system will most likely be geared to meet this challenge through reorganization, retraining and assignment of additional functions for both lay and professional leadership.
- The process will take time and ascertaining success will be difficult. On some issues it will take years to realize success. Monitoring and evaluation efforts must be in place at the outset and implemented in order to determine whether we are making a difference and moving in the right direction. These evaluative measures need to be carefully and realistically selected.

E. Role of CJF

At the April, 1992 CJF Quarterly Board meeting, approval was given to the creation of a Commission on Jewish Identity and Continuity. The following charge for the Commission was subsequently established outlining in broad brush strokes the role the Council will play:

"CJF's basic purpose is to facilitate collaboration among a variety of institutions and organizations; to energize the North American Jewish community to engage in local planning; to suggest various approaches to deal with the complex issues; to provide leadership and guidance; and to foster a climate for support and involvement of top professional and lay leaders from all segments of the North American Jewish communities. This process is not focused on designing programs, but rather to foster involvement and concern.

The planning phase will develop consensus as to the vision for the future, and what programs and infrastructures for collaborative work will have to be established between now and then to accomplish that vision. Strategies will be developed to deal with the critical issues and design action plans for national and local implementation. This will require extensive consultation and involvement of the movements, synagogues and national service organizations.

During the entire process, intensive efforts will be made in collaboration with these national bodies to educate and motivate communities to participate in enrichment programs and to set the climate for the future, to keep constituencies

informed as to the progress and to provide ongoing consultation and assistance to Federations and their local constituent bodies.

Following the development of action plans, the Commission might give consideration to establish model community test-sites to demonstrate efficacy and feasibility of establishing programs, service and networks suggested by the Commission planning work. Such efforts will require comprehensive work with various other national agencies, synagogues and their movements and organizations.

F. Involvement with Synagogues and their Movements

Now that I have given you a general picture of CJF direction or intent, I want to dwell a little on our relationship and working together.

I can only echo Barry Shrage's presentation to the UAHC Board of Governors this past May. It is a powerful, thoughtful presentation, the principles contained therein certainly form the basis upon which we would plan to proceed.

It would be illogical to think that the tremendous challenge confronting all of us can be done without the deep involvement of the congregations and their respective movements! However, I will readily concede that this will not be done easily in many places - it is easier said than done. But I have no question that it will be done.

Over the years, each of us, for a variety of reasons have shied away from constructive partnerships in communal work. We have acted as if there truly was a "separation of church and state" in Jewish life. We are paying the price!

There are several issues with which we do have to deal.

The mission of the Federation is to do community building. That is one of its great strengths - to bring people, groups, institutions and in fact the world wide community together for common Jewish good and to build for our future.

But therein also lies its weakness - to do so requires a strategy of consensus - the avoidance of issues are inherently conflictual, ones that do not allow for consensus. Ideological matters is one of them.

But we have to find mutual - common values that transcend ideology - on goals that build upon our separate missions and allow for pluralistic expression. Jewish identity and Jewish continuity is such an area.

To find common solutions - or a whole gestalt of solutions - wall to wall opportunities - we each have to understand our realities and avoid our fantasies and combat our myths.

Spr/2ed.

UAHC
STRATEGIC PLANNING TASK FORCE
FOR
JEWISH CONTINUITY AND SURVIVAL

David Belin, Chair
Rabbi Paul Menitoff, Director

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES



Synagogue Fed.

July 14, 1992
13 Tammuz 5752

Barry Shrage, President
Combined Jewish Philanthropies
One Lincoln Plaza
Boston, MA 02111

Dear Barry:

Your revised speech awaited me on my return from Israel and Brussels. Thank you for getting copies to us here at the Union.

Reading the speech re-strengthened my appreciation of its excellence, which I felt when you delivered the paper at our Board of Trustees meeting.

I hope you are enjoying a restful and rewarding summer. With all good wishes, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

COMBINED JEWISH PHILANTHROPIES
OF GREATER BOSTON

ALAN R. GOLDSTEIN
Chair, Board of Directors
BARRY SHRAGE
President

July 3, 1992

One Lincoln Plaza
Boston, Massachusetts
02111
(617) 330-9500
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Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler, President
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10021-7064

Dear Rabbi Schindler:

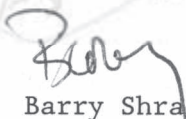
Thanks for your warm note and kind thoughts.

I'm sorry it took so long to revise my speech but it's finally complete and I am sending the final version to you and Mel with the original going to Terry Bobrow. Please feel free to use it anyway you want. Of course, I would be honored if you thought it could be used in Reform Judaism.

Once again, it was great to get to know you better at the Board meeting and I look forward to a much closer working relationship in the future.

Best wishes for a great summer and warm regards.

Sincerely,


Barry Shrage

:jw
enc.

*Acknowledged
with thanks -
I'm sending the speech
revised re-strengthened
my original
appreciation of its
excellence
when I first
heard it.*

The
CJP '92
Campaign

**FROM "SACRED SURVIVAL" TO HOLY COMMUNITY:
TOWARD A NEW FEDERATION-SYNAGOGUE
RELATIONSHIP**

Presented to the
UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

MAY 16, 1992

BY

BARRY SHRAGE, PRESIDENT

COMBINED JEWISH PHILANTHROPIES OF GREATER BOSTON



I want to thank Rabbi Menitoff for the nice introduction and say a few words about the people who helped teach me the "basics" of creating a good interdependent federation/synagogue relationship.

In Cleveland, Rabbi Dan Silver, Zichrono L'vracha, and Leon Plevin were both strong and supportive congregational leaders who helped define a new direction in federation/synagogue relations. In Boston, I'm very lucky to have people like Mike Rukin as the Chair of CJP's Social Planning and Allocations Committee; Irving Belansky, who is the Co-Chair of the Commission on Jewish Continuity; Rabbi Ronne Friedman, who was Chair of our Commission's Task Force on Children and; of course, Rabbi Menitoff, who has been a superb, thoughtful and wise architect of a greatly strengthened federation/synagogue relationship. And, of course, I want to thank Mel, who has become, in a very short time, a very good friend and a superb partner as we work to build a common agenda for the future.

THE CHALLENGE OF THE POPULATION SURVEY: UNDERSTANDING THE RELIGIOUS CORE OF JEWISH LIFE

There has never been a better time or a more compelling reason to build a common agenda for planning and action. We are at a turning point in the life of the American Jewish community. The CJF 1990 National Jewish Population Survey is both a wake-up call and an action guide for all of us as we face the future. It tells us that the spiritual state of our Jewish people has changed radically over the last ten years. It tells us that we must make choices about how we live and about our communal priorities if we are to convince the next generation that Judaism is a serious and meaningful choice. It tells us that we must rethink our most basic goals, attitudes, and structure. At the core of this reappraisal must be a new, strengthened and redefined relationship between our Federations and our congregations and congregational movements. As part of this process, congregations and Federations may both need to change and "reinvent" themselves and these changes will have profound implications for every aspect of our communal and personal lives.

As communities throughout the country develop commissions and task forces to address the critical demographic challenges we face as an American Jewish community, it's going to be essential to have strong, clear advocacy on the part of our congregational community. If you're not willing to speak up; if you're not willing to actively participate; if you're not willing to think very clearly about your educational priorities; if you're not willing to "reinvent" yourselves as congregations; if you're not willing to ask for Federation support for the change process, we may well lose the "window of opportunity" we currently have and with it, the majority of our children and grandchildren.

While I'm going to be talking about a process today -- the process of creating a delivery system to make Judaism a living reality for our people -- it's vital to remind ourselves that our process can never be effective if we're not clear about our values.

When I was in one of the small group discussions this afternoon, Rabbi Schindler said that creating warm, meaningful, supportive Jewish congregations and filling them with social justice and spirituality must be the highest priority of UAHC. These are the values, the content of Judaism -- Reform, Conservative, Orthodox or Reconstructionist.

Federations cannot hope to make an impact on the issues of Jewish education and Jewish continuity without facing the fact that a strong vibrant Jewish community can only exist and transmit its Judaism across the generations in the context of strong Jewish values, beliefs and norms. As the President of a Federation, I cry for the children and families who pass through our communities every year without a strong meaningful confrontation with Jewish values and without an opportunity to experience the joy and meaning that Judaism can bring to our lives.

As leaders of the Reform Movement, I know that you are also passionately concerned for every single Jew who manages to slip through a Reform congregation without being spiritually and ethically transformed. There has been a great deal of talk recently about outreach to mixed married and unaffiliated Jews and the unaffiliated and mixed married are very important targets. But we already have seventy to eighty percent of the American Jewish community affiliated with congregations at one time or another in their lives. You already have fifteen to twenty-five percent of all mixed married households as members of your congregations. The spiritual lives of these Jews must become our passion and our priority.

There must be a way for us to connect with our people on a one-to-one basis and assure their spiritual continuity as part of this Jewish people. And that's what this talk is about. It's about how federations and synagogues can cooperate to accomplish this goal.

I've envisioned this speech for a very long time. In a way, I've dreamed about this for years. There's so much for federation and synagogue leaders to talk about. But we talk so little, and when we talk, we frequently avoid the tough issues, the painful issues. We talk about our common survival agenda. We talk about saving Jews. We talk about defending the Jewish people. We talk about fighting anti-semitism. We talk about Tikun Olam -- repairing the world.

All of these are very important things to talk about. But somehow we don't quite communicate. We imagine we live in separate worlds. Kodesh and Chol. The holy and the secular.

- We remember you on official occasions. We invite your rabbis to bless our events.
- You congratulate us for raising all that money to save Jews.
- Sometimes we reproach you for not giving our fund-raising all the support we think we deserve.
- Sometimes you reproach us for ignoring you except in a crisis.
- We write community reports every ten years about Jewish education and identity, but don't mention the word "synagogue" or the word "religion" or the word "God" or the word "Kodesh."
- You struggle along with inadequate resources against the unimaginably difficult task of transforming the lives and enlivening the souls of a generation that just barely cares enough to affiliate.
- You rarely ask for help. You hardly ever demand the dialogue and resources that could save your future and ours. At times it seems you fail to take yourselves, your own sacred task, the spiritual transformation of the generation that God has put in your care, seriously enough.
- I'm not sure that any of us -- federation or synagogue leadership -- truly believe that we can transform this generation. And yet, we must transform this generation. You must believe that you can do it, and you must demand that it become our highest priority for the future.

Together, we have managed to separate church and state; Kodesh and Chol, synagogue and federation. Perhaps a good idea for America, but a disaster for our holy Jewish people.

So, here we are. Mel described the results of the Population Survey. Fifty-two percent of our children are marrying out of the faith; two-thirds of the households we are creating are mixed married households. But intermarriage is not the problem. It's a symptom of the problem and it's a harbinger of much worse to come.

Even more striking than the intermarriage statistics, the Survey tells us that only about half of all American Jews feel that being Jewish is very important in their lives. We're spending so much time worrying about intermarriage that we're not addressing the real problem -- the fact that most born Jewish families have little understanding or passion

for the thing called "being Jewish." Restoring that passion is our common challenge -- our common responsibility.

The Survey also tells us that less than one-third, less than one-third of American Jews are very attached to Israel. Israel was supposed to be our best bet. It was supposed to be that last hook that we were going to hang this thing called Jewish identity on. And yet, it's clear that it's not the answer. Somehow Israel, without God, without spirituality, without community is not a strong enough hook to support our Jewish future.

We have made Jewish survival our religion, sacred survival is how Jon Woocher has described the phenomenon, and our God has failed. This is the ultimate paradox. By concentrating on survival many of our own children, our own grandchildren will not survive as Jews.

In a sense the Population Survey is our last warning. It marks our ultimate failure as an American Jewish community, and our last hope, because now, finally, our leaders, all our leaders, yours and ours, are beginning to understand that we must be prepared to make the spiritual transformation of our people our highest priority. Now, for the first time, we must face the possibility, even the probability, that the vast majority of our children and grandchildren will live in other faiths or will live with no faith at all.

Some suggest that the 1990 CJF Population Survey reveals a Jewish community that is being "transformed" into some new, more dynamic entity. They are wrong. The American Jewish community is not being transformed. It is being dismantled and it is losing its children at a frightening rate.

Despite these extraordinary challenges, the Survey also reveals great strengths and great opportunities, including continuing high levels of congregational affiliation for mixed married households, which we can use to strengthen our future.

The first step, however, in understanding the implications of the Population Survey and revitalizing our communal lives begins with the recognition that Jewish life and Jewish continuity are impossible unless we reintegrate the secular and religious elements in our personal and communal lives.

Judaism has been a religious national culture for 3000 years, encompassing our commitment to the people of Israel, the land of Israel, the Torah of Israel, including its absolute commitment to social justice as a principle of Jewish law, and indivisibly the living God of Israel. It's not likely to survive without its religious core.

The importance of an integrated, religious, cultural and historical perspective for the continuity of Jewish life is shown in the persistence of religious affiliation as the most wide-

spread form of Jewish connection for American Jews. Congregations are, in fact, our most pervasive gateway to Jewish life serving well over seventy percent of American Jewish families over time.

The need for an integrated approach is strikingly clear in the significant differences in Jewish identification between religiously affiliated and secular Jews. The differences are stark. Only six percent of secular Jews say being Jewish is very important in their lives, as compared to fifty-two percent of religiously affiliated Jews. Only eight percent of secular Jews say they are very attached to Israel, compared to thirty-six percent of religiously affiliated Jews. Most strikingly, secular Jews are far more similar to Jews who have adopted another religion in their minimal attachment to Israel, and Jewishness is actually less important in the lives of secular Jews than in the lives of Jews who have converted to another religion.

The great danger revealed in the CJF 1990 National Jewish Population Survey is the mutually reinforcing relationship between mixed marriage and secularization. The Survey shows that less than thirteen percent of mixed married households have a religious affiliation (though this will probably grow to about twenty-five percent over time) while earlier studies have shown that secular households are twice as likely to have a mixed married child as religiously affiliated households. It's easy to see how growing secularization will increase mixed marriage just as growing mixed marriage will inevitably increase secularization.

Our challenge as a community must be to integrate the secular and religious elements in our communal lives and to create a new synthesis that we can use to reshape the ideological basis, the priorities and the structure of communal life in America. And this is an excellent time for American Jewry to undertake a spiritual "chesbon nefesh" -- self-evaluation. The collapse of communism; the failure of '80's style materialism to make us happy or give meaning to our lives; the obvious limitations of science and technology -- all these have created a spiritual vacuum. This is indeed a special moment in Jewish history -- a good time to consider the special relationship between the God of Israel and the Jewish people.

The dialogue generated by the CJF 1990 National Population Survey must therefore shift from a debate about the number of Jews in the next century toward the creation of national and local strategic plans, aimed at providing every Jewish family and child with the resources to lead a full, rich, Jewish life.

We have no right to challenge our children's choice of marriage partner, if we make their choice easy by failing to provide them with the basic knowledge and experience that makes Jewish life worth living and that might make them stop and ask, "What am I about to lose for me and for the generations that will follow me?"

Assuring a creative, intense, joyful confrontation for every Jewish family and child entering the congregational gateway with the best of what Jewish religious life represents must therefore be the highest priority of our Federations -- a priority that must be implemented through a new relationship and significant new funding for our congregational movements. Strengthening the congregational gateway and its relationship with our Federation agency system is an achievable goal if our efforts are focused and our funding is targeted at proven objectives.

THE RIGHT PROGRAMS IN THE RIGHT CONTEXT FOR FAMILIES, CHILDREN AND TEENS

We must provide the families, children, and teens passing through these gateways all the experiences that we know can inspire and empower them as Jews. These experiences are not a mystery. They are the same experiences that we have been discussing since 1969. What's been missing is the commitment to make them a standard part of every child and family's passage through the Jewish community. Also missing was an understanding of the important role that congregations can play as a delivery system and a framework for these activities.

1) Developing Effective Strategies for "Universal" Family Education

Since the vast majority of Jewish parents affiliate with a congregation during their children's school years, the point in time when parents enroll their children in a Jewish school can provide our best opportunity to reach out to parents to increase their personal commitment and involve them in the Jewish educational process.

The moment of affiliation is a critical moment in Jewish life -- a moment in which congregations have a strategic opportunity to reach out to strengthen the religious character of the Jewish home, deepen the spiritual values of parents, and make them partners in the Jewish education of their children. Congregations, therefore, need to consider developing careful inreach strategies with most resources and efforts focused on incoming families with school-age children. By targeting each incoming class, the task of family education becomes manageable and it also becomes possible to focus enough resources on the families involved to make a real impact.

It's vital that the Jewish community focus on these young, moderately affiliated Jewish households. They are your members. They are the people who walk through your congregations every day, or rather, their children walk through your congregations every day. Our greatest challenge is to bring them in and cement their relationship to the Jewish community and the Jewish people through your congregations.

Making an impact won't be easy. It will be a difficult "one-family-at-a-time" process because these families are barely affiliated. They know much less and feel much less than their parents and grandparents. The transformation of their minds and their souls is the most complicated job facing the American Jewish community. The act of touching and moving tens of thousands of young Jewish households is complicated indeed, but it's not impossible if we think about the problem clearly and strategically.

Most congregations attract between thirty and one hundred new young families each year. The largest, like Fairmount Temple in Cleveland, absorbs perhaps one hundred young families through their school every year. If we could focus the vast majority of our resources on the spiritual transformation of these one hundred incoming families each year, over time we can transform the whole congregation, and in a way, we can transform the whole Jewish world. This cannot be done wholesale. The transformation of an individual Jewish family cannot be done with videotape cassettes. It can't be done by television. It can't be done by computers. It can't be done by osmosis. It's got to be done one family at a time.

Most of you have full-time educators. Most of you have significant staffs in your afternoon schools with trained staff and real resources, and yet somehow, we have failed to make the transformation of the lives of our families an equal priority. Each of your congregations should have trained personnel to reach out to every young family and help them confront the critical issues of Jewish life. The critical issue isn't the intermarriage of their children. The critical issue is whether Jewish life is worth living for them. If there is no joy of Shabbat, if there is no joy of Jewish holidays, if there is no understanding of Tikun Olam, if there's no feeling of connection to the God of Israel, what exactly are they asking their children to remain part of?

Federations should be your partners in this vital task by providing matching funds for full-time parent and family educators for larger congregations in order to provide a personal contact for each incoming family, a required in-depth intake interview, a personalized "contract," and a family education program that fits each family's own needs and lifestyle. In this way the community can help strengthen the critical link between families and congregations and help parents recognize that raising a Jewish child may require an increased commitment to and an understanding of Jewish life, religion and culture.

2) Jewish Youth: Jewish Experience as a Foundation for Jewish Life

After the need to involve young parents, the next most important transitional moment in Jewish life occurs during the teen years. Here again the congregational setting can provide very effective environments for experiencing Jewish life and for cognitive Jewish learning. Retreat programs, intensive Jewish summer camping, youth group activities and trips to Israel are all effective environments that provide the extended time, the role models, the social reinforcement and in Eric Erickson's terms, the "locomotion," the sense of movement and activity that teens need to learn and grow in a positive and joyful way. A key objective of communal policy might therefore be to provide matching grants and training for youth workers and incentive grants for congregations to make these highly effective "beyond the classroom" environments a standard part of every youngster's life experience. Each one of these experiences has proven effective by themselves and I believe that combining two or more for each child in the context of a total congregational/religious experience can have a cumulative impact that may be far more powerful and effective.

3) Policy Objectives

Put simply, I believe Federations and congregations should set a relatively simple and concrete series of policy objectives:

- An intensive intake/parent and family education experience for every Jewish family;
- An educational trip to Israel for every American Jewish teen;
- An intensive Jewish camping/retreat program for every American Jewish child;
- A Jewish youth group experience for every American Jewish teen.

If we make these simple dreams a reality we can make a difference and we can save an important part of our Jewish future. There's no point in federations talking about Jewish continuity if we're not talking directly to our congregations and thinking strategically about how we can pool our resources to make a difference.

None of these ideas are brand new. All of these programs already exist. All of the resources to accomplish these goals lie within our grasp. A trip to Israel for every teenager is a good example. The resources exist through the WZO to provide incentives that could bring far more of our youngsters to Israel for an intensive experience.

The WZO currently pays for five "MASADA" Shlichim and provides hundreds of thousands of dollars in additional support yet few of us have ever heard of MASADA. The UAHC has two-and-one half Shlichim and little direct support for its Israel experiences, yet it takes thousands of Reform Jewish youngsters to Israel each year and serves tens of thousands in congregations throughout the country. And yet you have a hand in governing the WZO. You've got to join the battle. You've got to say to the WZO leadership, "If you care about aliyah, if you really want to increase aliyah, you must change your priorities." If WZO political spending priorities were transformed into incentive grants for congregations and congregational movements, we could triple the number of teens we send to Israel each summer.

The resources to provide incentive grants for trained parent and family educators and youth workers are significant but are also within reach. Strengthening our congregations will require new resources from Federations and congregations, but the cost of not acting will be much higher. Foundations and endowments can provide some of the required funding but we must also change our priorities and raise the level of our commitment to assure our Jewish future.

All of these programs, parent and family education, youth groups, camps, Israel travel require the religious framework that only strong congregations and congregational movements can provide. Sara Lee, one of America's most talented educators and a faculty member at Hebrew Union College, sees congregations as total learning environments encompassing afternoon schools, family education, youth groups, camps and Israel experiences. All of these experiences can and should be an integral coordinated part of every child and family's passage through the congregational gateway. Federations and congregations can and should share the cost of hiring and training the youth workers and family educators and providing the incentives for the camp and Israel experiences.

COOPERATION BETWEEN FEDERATION AGENCIES AND CONGREGATIONS

As important as strengthening the relationship between the Federation and synagogues is, there is also a great deal of potential in a strengthened relationship between congregations and Federation agencies. While there is a long history of close working relationships between synagogues and Bureaus of Jewish Education and Hebrew Colleges/Colleges of Jewish Studies, a variety of other opportunities are also available that could greatly strengthen congregations and their ability to educate families and children. In Boston, we're blessed with creative and energetic agencies that have worked hard to establish warm and stable relationships between themselves, our congregations and our congregational movements.

Jewish Community Centers

Boston's Jewish Community Center, for example, initiated a wonderful "Creative Judaica" Program several years ago that reaches out to synagogues and synagogue schools and brings the cultural arts strength of the Jewish Community Center movement to the process of Jewish education. The JCC has also developed joint pre-school programs with a number of congregations -- a relationship that greatly strengthens both institutions and the entire community.

Outreach to mixed married households is another program that could benefit from joint synagogue-JCC cooperation. Clearly, Reform congregations have a significant share (estimated at between fifteen and twenty-five percent) of mixed married households, but a recent survey shows that there is also a significant concentration of mixed married households in our Jewish Community Centers. The CJF 1990 National Jewish Population Survey revealed that over forty percent of JCC family members with young children are mixed married. There is great potential for joint programming between JCCs and congregations to provide the best opportunity to reach out to this population.

Jewish Family and Children's Services

Outreach to mixed married populations has also been the objective of a joint program between Boston's Jewish Family and Children's Service, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, Northeast Council and the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, New England Region. A task force created by the Jewish Family and Children's Service with the movements has been working actively for over a year and has produced a variety of programs, including a highly successful community forum on mixed marriage. In addition, Jewish Family and Children's Services, in general, can play an important role in helping to train Jewish parent and family educators who can relate to families and to the complex family dynamics that can support or inhibit the growth of Jewish identity and the family's ability to transmit Jewish identity to its children.

FEDERATIONS AND CONGREGATIONS

Federations must strengthen their relationships with congregations as a high priority communal policy and Federations and congregations must both take the role of the congregations in Jewish life more seriously. Congregations are our most broadly based communal institutions involving far more young Jewish families (in-married or mixed married) than any other Jewish organization and probably more than all of our other institutions combined.

What's more, American Jews feel closer to their congregations than to any other institution in Jewish life. According to the American Jewish Committee's 1989 National Survey of American Jews (Content or Continuity by Steven M. Cohen), sixty-one percent of American Jews feel attached to their synagogue. Significantly, thirty-six percent feel

very or extremely attached to their congregation and twenty percent feel very or extremely attached to their child's Jewish school, compared to only ten percent who feel very or extremely attached to a JCC or a Federation.

Most important, congregations and their national movements are uniquely positioned to strengthen and integrate all of the experiences most likely to impact Jewish identity and Jewish living. They are the primary gateways for young Jewish families; their afternoon and weekend schools educate the vast majority of Jewish children; their camps, youth groups, and Israel experiences dominate the market for these services and are generally among the most effective offered; and, of course, most day schools are religiously affiliated.

Since most congregations don't have the resources or manpower for this kind of additional sustained effort, new resources, more and better trained staff, new strategies and redefined missions may all be required. Federations must provide the resources that congregations need to "reinvent" themselves to meet the challenges of the very complex Jewish world revealed in the 1990 Population Survey.

And finally, only our synagogues can restore Kedusha -- holiness to the center of Jewish life -- and, without Kedusha -- holiness -- there will be no Jewish future. We can't tell our children that they need to marry within the faith in order to survive. We have to make Judaism so beautiful that they will struggle to fill their lives with Jewish meaning. This is not about survival. This is about Kedusha; this is about the joy and meaning of Jewish life.

Last week's Parsha, Kedoshim, provides a clear vision ... a blueprint for a holy community, combining social justice and community and spirituality:

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to all the congregations of the children of Israel, and say to them: You shall be holy; for I the Lord your God, am holy.

You shall fear every man his mother and his father, and you shall keep My Sabbath: I am the Lord your God. Do not turn to idols or make yourselves molten Gods: I am the Lord your God . . .

And when you reap the harvest of you our Land, you shall not wholly reap the corner of your field, neither shall you gather the gleaning of your harvest.

And you shall not glean your vineyard, neither shall you gather the fallen fruit of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger: I am the Lord your God . . .

You shall not oppress your neighbor, nor rob him; the wages of a hired servant shall not abide with you all night until the morning.

You shall not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but you shall fear your God: I am the Lord. . .

You shall not take vengeance nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.

Leviticus, Kedoshim, XIX, 1-18

TOWARD A NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

The action that I'm recommending for assuring Jewish continuity and particularly the new congregational agenda will take great national and local commitment and resources at a time when the American Jewish community seems overwhelmed by the overseas challenge and the debilitating effects of the recession. Moreover, our record as an American Jewish community -- as Federations and congregations -- in providing a vision and an action plan, has not been good.

If, God forbid, we follow our pattern as a national community, we will spend a year debating the meaning of these statistics, six months mourning in the ashes of our community, or patting ourselves on the back for our great success, and then we will launch dozens of half-hearted experiments without follow-up or replication before sinking back into our collective torpor. We can then wake again in ten years to count the new bodies littering the landscape of the Jewish future, along with the Menorahs and Christmas trees in the homes of our children and grandchildren.

Of course, we can always do it differently this time. We can follow up on the effort already begun by the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education and create a full scale national process to review these issues and create an aggressive national work plan with real objectives and timetables. Like Jonah, we can wake ourselves from our collective sleep and carry the message of repentance and change. On this score, I too am an optimist. I believe that with the help of God we can and will emerge to shape our future for the sake of our children and grandchildren, for the sake of our communities, for the sake of our holy Jewish people.



RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER • UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS
PRESIDENT 838 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 (212) 249-0100

*Synagogue
Federations*

July 14, 1992
13 Tammuz 5752

Rabbi Brian Lurie
United Jewish Appeal
99 Park Avenue #300
New York, New York 10016

Dear Brian:

The enclosed letter from Barry Shrage to Alvin Schiff is self-explanatory.

Can you help move this along via the UJA-UIA representatives on the International and Regional Boards of the Education authority? That would be helpful.

It's always good to run into you -- in Greenwich or Jerusalem, no matter!

Be well.

Sincerely,

Alexander N. Schindler

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
838 FIFTH AVENUE
NEW YORK, NY 10021-7064



COMBINED JEWISH PHILANTHROPIES

OF GREATER BOSTON

ALAN R. GOLDSTEIN
Chair, Board of Directors
BARRY SHRAGE
President

April 22, 1992

One Lincoln Plaza
Boston, Massachusetts
02111
(617) 330-9500
Telefax
(617) 330-5197

Dr. Alvin I. Schiff
339 Jordan Street
Oceanside, New York 11572

Dear Alvin:

It was good to see you last week at Brandeis and to learn that you're chairing the American Advisory Council of the Joint Authority on Jewish Zionist Education. This is certainly an important task and I had a few thoughts that I wanted to pass along for your use.

Recently, I received a very colorful and obviously expensive travel brochure from MASADA (enclosed). Since, in twenty years of communal work in three cities, I'd never heard of MASADA, I decided to do a little research. I found out that MASADA is the youth movement of the Zionist Organization of America and that it actually has five shlichim assigned to it by the World Zionist Organization! Five shlichim for MASADA is a little strange when you consider that there are just two shlichim for the Reform Movement which has tens of thousands of members in NFTY; two for the United Synagogue which has tens of thousands of members in USY; and two for B'nai Akiva which has 8000 very active members.

I also learned that the allocation to MASADA totals hundreds of thousands of dollars. All of this brings to mind the critical issue of political control over the World Zionist Organization and its possible impact on your work.

Alvin, the one issue that should guide our work going forward in North America is that politics should have no impact whatsoever on the division of resources. I would therefore like to make a rather simple and "modest" and "strategic" proposal to guide the direction of your committee:

Dr. Alvin I. Schiff

2

April 22, 1992

1. Let's start by thinking about how we want to divide our overall resources among our primary targets. For example, we could decide that we want to devote about sixty percent of our energy to high school age youth, thirty percent of our energy to college age youth, and ten percent of our energy to all other pursuits. (Perhaps these proportions are wrong but at least it's a starting point in beginning to think clearly about how we want to divide our energy.)
2. For high school-aged youth, we could create a rather simple formula for the division of resources including funding for Israel travel and for shlichim.

Let's say, for example, that we would like to use sixty percent of the resources allocated for high school students for subsidies to encourage teens to go to Israel; thirty percent for shlichim and ten percent for curricular and other activity. I would then recommend that we create a simple per capita formula for each of the first two categories. For example, we could allocate funding to the movements for travel to Israel and shlichim on the basis of some kind of rated average that includes the total proven number of youngsters in a particular youth movement and a somewhat higher rating for the average number of youngsters that they sent to Israel over the last three years. This would give you a pretty good idea that you are putting funding into the hands of those groups working most effectively to reach the American Jewish community.

You might also want to build in some bonus. For example, a ten or twenty percent increase for any youth movement that was able to increase the number of youngsters that they sent to Israel by some significant proportion in any one year.

3. Similarly funding for shlichim for college age youth should probably be non-ideological, divided among Hillels, and assigned in a way that is proportional to the number of college students on a particular campus or a particular region.

Dr. Alvin I. Schiff

3

April 22, 1992

Most important is the idea that funding should be on some kind of "per capita" basis that rewards performance and encourages growth. In this area of Jewish life I'm most interested in quantity. The quality of most of the congregational trips to Israel is high (according to the Mandel Report) and our challenge therefore is to get more kids to go on them rather than to create the "perfect" educational experience.

Alvin, I'm hoping that you give some consideration to these ideas. My aim is to create a performance-based funding mechanism that will reward those who do the best work and eliminate ideological and political forces from making decisions for us. In this way, I hope that we can serve our highest ideological ideal -- the true dream of Zionism, which is to encourage our children to settle in Israel. I believe this can only be done by increasing the number of youngsters who take their first trip and by strengthening the Zionist feeling within those movements that have already proven most successful in reaching our children, teens and college age students.

Please let me know what you think about these ideas. I look forward to seeing you soon. Warm regards.

Sincerely,


Barry Shrage

BS:mm

cc: Rabbi Daniel Allen
Rabbi Jerome Epstein
Melvin Merians
Rena Rabinowitz
Michael B. Rukin
Alexander Shindler
Alan J. Tichnor
Rabbi Eric Yoffe

*Rabbi Alexander
Schindler*



Sym *Zed*
RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER • UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS
PRESIDENT 838 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 (212) 249-0100

July 14, 1992
13 Tammuz 5752

Rabbi Paul J. Menitoff
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
1330 Beacon Street, Suite 355
Brookline, MA 02146-3280

Dear Paul:

Thanks for your note regarding emphasizing the importance of Barry Shrage's letter. His approach is sound and logical. Needless to say, this is precisely the approach that we have been urging over the years via the WZO -- which still has substantial control over the recently constituted Education Authority thus giving the UJA only indirect access.

Nonetheless, I will contact Brian and urge his support. Perhaps we can do something on the US scene, at least, by putting pressure on Alvin from all sides. (I too sit on the Authority's Regional Commission).

There is some possibility, also, that the Deputy Chairmanship of the Education Authority in Jerusalem will be given to the Reform Movement -- this, at least, is what the preliminary and still informal discussions between the ARZA leadership and the WZO indicate.

Anyhow, thanks for caring.

Let me know how you fare with the Block Island people.

Be well.

Sincerely,

Alexander N. Schindler



Union of American Hebrew Congregations

SERVING REFORM JUDAISM IN NORTH AMERICA

PATRON OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE-JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION

1330 BEACON STREET, SUITE 355, BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS 02146-3280 (617) 277-1655

FAX (617) 277-3491

NORTHEAST COUNCIL

Rabbi Paul J. Menitoff
Regional Director

Audrey J. Wilson
Assistant Regional Director

June 30, 1992
29 Sivan 5752

Rabbi Alexander Schindler
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10021

Dear Alex:

Barry Shrage shared with me his letter to Dr. Alvin Schiff (Eric Yoffie, Michael Rukin, and you received copies- see enclosed). In that letter, Barry indicated to Alvin Schiff that the allocation of funds should be on a per capita basis rather than be politically motivated. I believe he is absolutely correct.

A few days ago, I spoke with Barry in order to see whether or not there had been some progress. Barry said that progress would only be made if the movements started putting pressure on the UJA. Barry thought that a call from you to Brian Lurie, expressing your concern and strongly urging the approach outlined in Barry's letter, would go a long way toward moving this along.

I hope you will give this some consideration.

Take care.

L'shalom


Rabbi Paul J. Menitoff

PJM/aw

cc: Rabbi Eric Yoffie
Rabbi Allan Smith
enclosures

NORTHEAST COUNCIL

Regional President
Irving Belansky

Vice Presidents
James Abraham
James Friedman
Ruth Glazerman
George Markley
Fred Wander

Secretary
David Goldenson

Director of Youth Activities
Monica Weinstein Kupferberg

Outreach Director
Paula Brody, LICSW, Ed.D

Social Action Coordinator
Barbara Proiman

College Area Director/
Israel Shaliach

Micha Ball

National Board

Sherman Baker
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Dr. Harold Faigenbaum
Jack Fischer

Marvin Freedman
Rabbi Roland Gittelsohn

Lois Gutman

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Carol Kur

Rabbi Lawrence Kushner

Sol Levites

Michael Rukin

Marvin Rumpier

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President

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Plan to attend

Northeast Council Biennial, October 30 - November 1, 1992 • Worcester, MA



COMBINED JEWISH PHILANTHROPIES

O F G R E A T E R B O S T O N

ALAN R. GOLDSTEIN
Chair, Board of Directors
BARRY SHRAGE
President

April 22, 1992

One Lincoln Plaza
Boston, Massachusetts
02111
(617) 330-9500
Telefax
(617) 330-5197

Dr. Alvin I. Schiff
339 Jordan Street
Oceanside, New York 11572

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Dr. Alvin I. Schiff

3

April 22, 1992

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Sincerely,


Barry Shrage

BS:mm

cc: Rabbi Daniel Allen
Rabbi Jerome Epstein
Melvin Merians
Rena Rabinowitz
Michael B. Rukin
Alexander Shindler
Alan J. Tichnor
Rabbi Eric Yoffe

*Rabbi Alexander
Schindler*



COPY

RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER • UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS
PRESIDENT 838 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10021-7064 (212)249-0100

June 2, 1992
1 Sivan 5752

Synagogue Federals

David W. Belin
Belin, Harris, Helmick, Tesdell
Lawson, McCormick
2000 Financial Center
Des Moines, IA 50309

Dear David:

When we met concerning the Federation issue, I told you about my speech at the installation of Chuck Rothschild as president of the North Bergen Federation, I repeated some of these things in Los Angeles when the wife of the president of Wilshire Boulevard Temple was installed as the president of the Los Angeles Federation.

Aron Hirt-Manheimer, to whom I had sent a copy of this speech, has determined to include it in the "Dear Reader" column in Reform Judaism. It will appear in the next issue and it contains much of what I said on the above occasions. I thought you might be interested in having these paragraphs. They might help you in your own thinking and speaking.

Needless to say, I am very much reassured that you have taken on this new and weightier responsibility. Given those political skills which you so amply manifested in launching the Outreach program, I am confident that we will achieve our goals.

Mazal tov on your marriage. I hope that the beautiful promise of your wedding hour will indeed be fulfilled during the years ahead.

I also hope we will be able to get together soon on a social level.

Sincerely,

AM

Alexander M. Schindler

#3
Dear Reader:

Jewish Federations and synagogues must go beyond the cordial but distant relationship that has kept them apart for decades. The new realities of American Jewry require that we establish strong bonds of interdependence and mutual support.

The Federation's own National Jewish Population study reveals that synagogue-affiliated Jews are more deeply committed than those who do not belong to a congregation. Temple members' attachment to Israel is more intense; their attitude toward intermarriage more wholesome from a communal perspective; their Jewish feelings so much more impassioned.

Synagogue-affiliated Jews are more likely to assume the mantle of Jewish communal leadership. The overwhelming proportion of American Jewish leaders are, in fact, synagogue affiliated; they attend worship with a measure of regularity; their children are involved in Jewish youth groups, summer camps, and a goodly number even attend day schools--all to a greater degree than the national average of all Jews.

All this should not be surprising. After all, the synagogue is the heartland of Judaism. All other Jewish institutions mobilize and utilize Jews in behalf of the community...only the synagogue creates Jews. Let there be no doubt that the synagogue-affiliated

Jews stand as guardians of the Jewish future.

If Federation seeks to assure Jewish continuity, it can do so most effectively by supporting specific synagogue programs, even at the risk of enduring some of our interdenominational frays. Such frays are simply the price paid for our passion, and that very passion is vital to the success of our efforts.

To be fearful of this passion is to embrace the "lowest common denominator Judaism" all too evident in too many communal schools, camps, and Israel programs. Why invest in a pale version of what the synagogue movements have already built? Instead, why not offer Federation scholarships for synagogue camps, Israel trips, Outreach programs, and other suitable points of Jewish connection, with each family choosing its own affiliation?

These and other beginning points of Federation involvement with synagogue life should be high on the agenda of leaders who stand in both worlds. Through their creative and diligent efforts, I am confident that we will bring to new heights our 3000 year old identity as a religious-national culture, united in our commitment to the land of Israel, the people of Israel, and the Torah of Israel--united in our dreams, our fate, our faith.

I wish to note that this edition marks a turning point in our magazine. Reform Judaism, like Time, has been redesigned to be

more aesthetically appealing and to invite your continued interest. Our new logo--graceful, elegant, and forward looking--conveys the spirit of Reform Judaism.

We also are pleased to inaugurate a new 8-page supplement entitled REFORM JUDAISM PLUS, which provides hands-on information for enriching your Jewish life at home and in the temple. Hopefully, it will respond to your personal interests and concerns, whether they be keeping your kids Jewishly active in college or learning Torah while you drive. Also, REFORM JUDAISM PLUS will offer practical strategies for temples in such areas as synagogue financial management and strengthening Black/Jewish relations. And it will make readily available many of the products and services you are entitled to receive as a member of a UAHC affiliated congregation.

We hope you are as pleased as I am with our redesign and with REFORM JUDAISM PLUS. Please let us know how we are doing, as we continue to serve you and our North American Movement, now more than 840 congregations strong.

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
President, UAHC

WHILE YOU WERE OUT

MESSAGE	TO	Eddie	DATE	5/26	TIME	10:46							
	FROM	Dr. Apelrod's office	AREA CODE		NUMBER								
	OF		EXTENSION										
	7:30 Appt. Tomorrow Reminder												
SIGNED													
URGENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	RETURNED CALL	<input type="checkbox"/>	CALL BACK	<input type="checkbox"/>	WILL CALL AGAIN	<input type="checkbox"/>	PHONED	<input type="checkbox"/>	WANTS TO SEE YOU	<input type="checkbox"/>	WAS IN	<input type="checkbox"/>

Jyn / Ted

File

2/25/10

A Communal Response to the Challenges of the 1990 CJF Jewish Population Study: Toward a Jewish Life Worth Living

Barry Shrage, President
Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston

With much wisdom comes much grief and he
who increases knowledge increases pain.

— Koheleth 2,16

In the morning sow they seed
And in the evening, let not thy hand rest.
For thou knowest not which will succeed
Whether this or that
Or whether both of them will be alike good.
Truly the light is sweet and it is a pleasant thing for the
eyes to see the sun.

— Koheleth 6,7

Union of American Hebrew Congregations
Board of Trustees Meeting
Minneapolis, MN May 16, 1992

INTRODUCTION: The QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF JEWISH LIFE

We've just come through the holy days of 5752 and it looks like our people have survived another year. During Succoth and Simchat Torah, my family and I enjoyed the mitzvah of Lulav and Esrog. We danced with the Torah; we sat around a dinner table in our Succah with guests and talked about Jewish life and Israel and Crown Heights and, of course, demographics and the fate of our people.

We listened to Koheleth chanted as it has been for a thousand years on the intermediary Shabbat between Succoth and Simchat Torah.

This was a good time to consider this latest population study, its implications for our Jewish future and, most important, the steps we must take now -- the steps we should have been taking for the last twenty years -- as individuals and as a community. It was a good time to remember that Jewish life cannot be summarized in equations and numbers.

The debate over numbers -- the size of the Jewish community in the next century -- is becoming sterile and may yet become counterproductive. The 1990 National Jewish Population Study can give us a good idea of the state of our Jewish people today, but it really can't tell us much about the future of our American Jewish community. The "optimists" and the "pessimists" may debate whether 42 percent of our youngest cohort, or 52 percent are marrying non-Jews without conversion and they may argue over whether 33 percent, or 42 percent are raising their children in another religion, but they really have no idea what the cumulative impact of mixed marriage will be on the Jewish future.

- Do we really know what kind of Jewish identity will emerge from mixed married (throughout this paper "mixed marriage" will refer only to intermarriage without conversion) households -- even among households who say they are raising their children as Jews?
- Do we really know what dynamics will begin to shape the American Jewish community when 60 percent of all Jewishly identified households are mixed married?
- Do we really know what will happen to current rates of mixed marriage when a majority of Jews are marrying non-Jews without conversion. What will the impact be when in-marriage is the exception rather than the rule? Will we reach a "tipping point" after which we will see geometric growth in mixed marriage rates?

The answer is -- we don't know -- but I don't see anything in any of these numbers to be optimistic about.

Let's think a bit about our current mixed married households and what kind of Jewish future they're likely to produce. According to Jerry Winter's analysis of young (under 45) married households (focusing on core Jews and core Jews married to non-Jews):

- Only 17.6 percent of young mixed married households belong to a synagogue (compared to 59 percent of young intra-married households).
- Only 17.2 percent with children between six and seventeen have a child receiving a Jewish education (compared to over 56 percent of intra-married households).
- Only 11 percent say they give any gift to a UJA campaign (compared to over 43 percent of intra-married households).

While it's difficult to predict the impact of these numbers on the Jewish identity of future generations, I think that the nightmares of the pessimists deserve at least as much consideration as the dreams of the optimists.

My own personal nightmares came alive in two New York Times articles that appeared during Succoth -- the first about life in the small Jewish communities of Mississippi, and the second about "lifestyles" of mixed married couples. Both stories are, I believe, instructive.

The article on the Jews of Mississippi ended with the following story:

Often the contradictions are never quite resolved.

After meeting with the Lums at the synagogue, Mr. Hart had lunch with Celia Starnes, one of two descendants of the Jewish community left in town.

Mrs. Starnes is married to a Baptist but wears a gold necklace with her first name in Hebrew. She does not go to synagogue, but when Mr. Hart asked if she was observant, she answered, "In my heart I am."

And though her children were not raised as Jews and the three oldest are practicing Baptists, she said she thought her youngest daughter, who lives in Jackson, was open to Judaism. At least she hopes so.

"I think she's Jewish by instinct," she said.

The second story ended as follows:

When Mr. Beckoff announced his engagement to Melissa, a Lutheran, his parents asked him to leave their house. But time and two other family interfaith marriages have eased the apparent strains. Any boys born in their marriage will be Jews, any girls will be Lutheran. "It's the only way we could compromise," Mrs. Beckoff said.

Paul and Marilyn Bornstein, both divorced and with children from previous marriages, occasionally attend temple and mass together. They light the Menorah and decorate the Christmas tree. She cooks no pork and they share a passion for bagels and lox.

APR 29 '92 02:08PM CJP

P.5

Larry and Bobbie Bruskin agree their sons will be Jewish and their daughters Roman Catholic. Mrs. Bruskin overcame initial tension with her mother-in-law by creating many occasions to shop and eat together. Mr. Bruskin attended mass last Easter and Mrs. Bruskin has gone to temple.

Now that they've been married an entire month, the Bruskins confront Christmas No. 1 together. "We'll probably have a Christmas tree," said Mr. Bruskin. An elbow in the ribs prompted an amendment. "We'll definitely have a Christmas tree." In return, last month the new Mrs. Bruskin ran out and bought a Jewish cookbook.

These stories made me think about what we will gain and what we will lose in our brave new world as a community and as individuals. They also made me cry. These stories make us cry because they take us beyond the realm of statistics and into "real life." They help us confront the human costs of mixed marriage to individuals and to families. It's comforting to know that we may have the same number of people who call themselves Jews in fifty years. But that will be cold comfort if those Jews don't include our own children or grandchildren.

While Steve Cohen says that "it is reasonable to assume that out-married couples are, in fact, producing Jewish children at a rate that is likely to have little impact either way upon the Jewish population size in the next generation," we may well ask what kind of Jewish population he envisions; what kind of Jews he thinks will populate the next generation; or his evaluation of the quality of the Jewish life they will live.

Tragically, the debate over the 1990 population study to date has avoided any real discussion of the quality of Jewish life. The survey may or may not indicate a decline in the number of people who call themselves Jews in the next generation but, even today, less than half of America's Jews say that being Jewish is "very important" in their lives and less than a third say they're very attached to Israel. Jewish commitment, Jewish knowledge, serious religious belief, all appear to be declining in each succeeding generation for all but the most intensively involved quarter of our Jewish people.

Increasing the number of Jews who answer "yes" to the question, "Are you a Jew?" in a Jewish population study must not become the overarching goal Jewish communal policy. We must ask ourselves whether we would rather have a Jewish community of 100,000 committed, knowledgeable Jews, who find joy and meaning in their Judaism, or 200,000 households raising their boys as Jews and their girls as Christians and who say they are "not attached" to Israel and that being Jewish is "not very important" or "not important" in their lives.

Raising a Jewish child with a Jewish heart and a Jewish mind, with Jewish commitment and Jewish knowledge, with an understanding of Jewish history and Jewish culture is very complicated in twentieth century America. Raising a Jewish child who has confronted the God of Israel as well as the people of Israel is particularly difficult. Every Jewish parent who cares knows how difficult this challenge is and how often we fail -- even with the best of intentions.

APR 29 '92 02:09PM CJP

P.6

Raising a Jewish child will be even more difficult in the twenty-first century. Clearly mixed married households trying to raise Jewish children will face complications, challenges and difficulties that are hard to imagine or predict. We have to face the possibility that each successive generation of mixed married households will have a somewhat more "watered down" definition of what we mean by "raising a Jewish child." And we must ask ourselves when this mix will become indistinguishable from the American ocean in which we all swim. A family in the year 2075 that lights a candle in a little jar on Yom Kippur "because Grandma did" will be interesting from an anthropological point of view — but it won't be Jewish.

UNAFFILIATED JEWS AND MIXED MARRIAGE: A TROUBLING VISION OF THE JEWISH FUTURE

Of course, our Jewish future will bring us Jews with a wide range of attachments to the Jewish people. There will be committed Orthodox, Conservative and Reform Jews who will be the most successful carriers of our tradition; there will be a significant "moderately affiliated" (in Steve Cohen's terms) Jewish community; and there will be many -- a very great many mixed married and religiously unaffiliated, self-identified American Jews, along with their children and grandchildren who will identify themselves and be identified by a bewildering variety of categories and descriptions.

All these categories exist today (they were beautifully described in Steve Cohen's very detailed and useful monograph, "Content or Continuity?" based on the 1989 Survey of American Jews, published by the American Jewish Committee. It should be required reading as a companion piece to the 1990 National Jewish Population Study) — the difference will be in the proportions. If we continue down the road we're going, the first category (Orthodox and highly committed Reform and Conservative Jews — now about twenty-five percent of American Jewish households), may well retain its "share" of the American Jewish community, while the proportion of "moderately affiliated" Jews (now roughly fifty percent of households) will probably shrink dramatically, and the third category — religiously unaffiliated Jews (now about 25 percent) become a clear majority of all American Jewish households.

Any significant decline in moderately affiliated Jews, combined with concomitant growth among religiously unaffiliated Jews, will have serious consequences for the American Jewish community. Religiously unaffiliated Jews ("JNRs" in the 1990 National Jewish Population Study, "Just Jewish" in Cohen's 1989 National Study of American Jews) are strikingly different from and far less Jewishly committed on almost every scale than moderately affiliated Jews.

For example, in the 1990 National Jewish Population Study:

- Only 5 percent of "JNRs" subscribe to a Jewish periodical compared to 28 percent of "JBRs" (people who report their religion as Jewish.)
- Only 11 percent of "JNRs" have visited Israel compared to 31 percent of "JBRs"
- Only 12 percent of "JNRs" attend High Holiday services compared to 59 percent of "JBRs"

The differences between "JNRs" and "JBRs" are also very striking on critical questions like "How important would you say being Jewish is in your life" and "How emotionally attached are you to Israel," and in most cases, the attitudinal profiles of "JNRs" are closer to "JCOs" (Born, raised Jewish - converted out) than to "JBRs"!

It's therefore not surprising that religiously unaffiliated Jews are more likely to produce children who marry non-Jews without conversion.

In a 1986 study of Jews over fifty in Cleveland:

- 15 percent of Orthodox parents with married children reported that at least one was married to a non-Jew without conversion.
- 31 percent of Conservative parents with married children reported that at least one was married to a non-Jew without conversion.
- 36 percent of Reform parents with married children reported that at least one was married to a non-Jew without conversion.
- While 63 percent of religiously unaffiliated parents with married children reported that at least one was married to a non-Jew without conversion.

"JNRs," "religiously unaffiliated Jews," "unaffiliated," "just Jewish" -- they are identified in different ways by different studies, but they share common characteristics. They rarely join synagogues or give their children a Jewish education. They give much less to Jewish charities. Consistent with the other statistics, they are much less committed to raising Jewish children, much less committed to Israel and, most important, much harder to find and much more difficult to touch emotionally and far more expensive to reach educationally or in any meaningful way. They are our toughest targets -- the best hidden and the best defended. Creating a strategy to touch, involve, and motivate the American Jewish community may seem difficult today, with 70 percent to 80 percent of American Jews dutifully passing through a congregational gateway when their children are between 8 and 13 years old, but it's a picnic compared to what it will be if fifty percent of America's Jewish households are religiously unaffiliated.

This generation of American Jews represents a window of opportunity for planners and educators -- all we need to do (but have thus far failed to do) is concentrate our energy on young families entering the congregational gateway. But if I'm correct, the window is rapidly closing - a mixed marriage rate of 40 percent to 50 percent in the youngest cohort of American Jews combined with a general decline in Jewish commitment among moderately affiliated Jews may close it forever and foreclose for us our most cost effective strategic options for strengthening the education, commitment and identity of American Jews.

What requires further study is the possibility of a vicious cycle with stunning ramifications for American Jewry. Steve Cohen, in his excellent 1985 article, "Outreach to the Marginally Affiliated," commented on the "family life cycle" pattern of Jewish life, affiliation and identity. Put simply, young singles tend to be religiously unaffiliated and somewhat alienated from Jewish life. Sooner or later, most marry and have children at which time raising those children "in the

faith of their fathers/mothers" suddenly becomes important. They then affiliate with a synagogue providing both a Jewish education for their children and an opportunity (generally not fully realized) for congregations and the community to reach out and deepen this "moderate affiliation" at this critical moment in time.

Clearly, a mixed marriage has a tendency to break this delicate cycle. Mixed married couples tend not to affiliate religiously and so produce Jews who (whatever they are raised) will be less likely to marry other Jews or care as deeply about Jewish life as their in-married / religiously affiliated cousins.

This analysis leads to two conclusions. First, increased mixed marriage may be the key factor in a larger trend that will lead to a far smaller proportion of American Jews affiliating with congregations. Since congregational affiliation seems to be a critical part of the cycle that maintains Jewish life in America, growing mixed marriage and declining religious identity tend to reinforce each other with disastrous implications for the American Jewish community.

Second, we may need to take a closer look at mixed married households that are members of congregations. Households that are members of congregations, mixed married and in-married, may be much more similar to each other (and much more Jewishly identified) than they are to Jews who are religiously unaffiliated. In fact, the division in American Jewish life between mixed married and in-married Jews may be less important than the division between religiously affiliated and religiously unaffiliated Jews. Affiliated, mixed married households have made a commitment to Jewish life. Though the intensity of this commitment may vary -- the act of affiliation itself provides an opportunity for the congregation and the community to deepen the household's involvement and encourage conversion.

AN ACTION PLAN FOR THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMUNITY

All of this, of course, is merely a prelude to a discussion of the steps, I believe, we must take now while we still have a (rapidly closing) window of opportunity:

1) From Counting Jews to Strengthening Judaism: A Jewish Life Worth Living for Every Jewish Family

The dialogue generated by the 1990 population study must shift from a debate about the number of Jews in the next century toward the creation of national and local strategic plans aimed at providing every Jewish family and child with the "resources" (again in Cohen's terms) to lead a full, rich Jewish life. No matter what we do, some Jews will assimilate, some Jews will "check out" of the Jewish people emotionally, some Jews will simply stop caring. These are all personal tragedies. They become a communal tragedy if we make their choice easy by failing to provide them with the basic knowledge and experience that makes Jewish life worth living and that might make them stop and ask, "What am I about to lose -- for me and for the generations that will follow me."

Assuring a creative, intense, joyful confrontation for every American Jew with the best of what Jewish life represents must be the highest priority of our Federations -- a priority that

must be implemented through a new relationship with our congregational movements. This is the minimum that our Jewish community and our congregations owe our people -- the knowledge, the feeling, the resource to experience Judaism in its totality: the people of Israel, the Land of Israel, the God of Israel, the Torah of Israel. Every Jew in America has a right to reject any or all of these categories, but every Jew who, by the grace of God, still walks through a synagogue gateway has a right to the full and complete experience that he or she will need to decide what kind of Jewish life to lead.

2) **Slowing the Growth of Assimilation and Mixed Marriage: Believing in Ourselves**

We must and can take steps to prevent the geometric increases in mixed marriage that now seem to be coming our way. To do this we must first believe that we can make a difference and that we should try to make a difference.

It is wrong, I believe, to say, as some have said, that there is nothing we can do to affect the trend toward increased mixed marriage as a community or as individuals. Everyone has a favorite story of a Hasidic Jew whose ten children all married non-Jews or a person who had no interest in Jewish life who now has grandchildren who are rabbis. Surely there are such cases. However, these cases evade the clear evidence of many studies and much research. Orthodox Jews are half as likely to have mixed married children as Conservative or Reform Jews; and Conservative or Reform Jews are half as likely to have mixed married children as religiously unaffiliated Jews. Involved Jews are less likely to have mixed married children than uninvolved Jews. Parents who strongly oppose mixed marriage are far less likely to have mixed married children than those who aren't strongly opposed. Our actions don't make all the difference, but they do make a difference.

Clearly, I would argue we can also make a difference as a community. The stronger the relationships we create in each religious "gateway" to Jewish life -- each temple and synagogue -- the more likely we are to attract and hold religiously affiliated Jews who are more likely to have children who will marry other Jews who can experience, enjoy and understand Judaism in all its beautiful complexity. We can make a difference. If we value Jewish life, if we want our children and grandchildren to experience a rich and full Jewish existence -- religiously, intellectually, emotionally, if we want to break the cycle of mixed marriage, non-affiliation, disinterest and increasing mixed marriage, we can, we must, we will develop plans that can shape our Jewish future.

3) **Toward A Workable Strategy: Moderately Affiliated Jews and Gateway Institutions**

We must focus our resources on moderately affiliated Jews (whether mixed married or in-married) and gateway institutions -- primarily synagogues. The 1990 National Jewish Population Study reinforces with new data the fact that most American Jews continue to affiliate with congregations over time and provide a Jewish education for their children, as long as this window of opportunity remains open. This continues to be the place where funding and programs can make the greatest difference.

This is not to say that resources should not also be used to strengthen and expand the inner core -- our most highly committed population. This can be accomplished through intensive adult education or more importantly by communal policies that aim at expanding the propor-

tion of youngsters receiving a day school education. While the main battle for the Jewish future will need to focus on retaining moderately affiliated Jews, the future will also depend on our ability to draw significant numbers of moderately affiliated Jews into the highly committed core.

4) The Right Programs in the Right Context for Families, Children and Teens

We must provide the families, children and teens passing through these gateways all the experiences that we know can inspire and empower them as Jews. These experiences are not a mystery. They are the same experiences that we have been discussing since 1969. What's been missing is the commitment to make them a standard part of every child and family's passage through the Jewish community and an understanding that the best organization and framework we have for these activities are our congregations and temples.

a) Developing Effective Strategies for "Universal" Family Education

Since the vast majority of Jewish parents affiliate with a congregation during their children's school years, the point in time when parents enroll their children in a Jewish school can provide our best opportunity to reach out to parents to increase their personal commitment and involve them in the Jewish educational process. By enrolling the child in a Jewish supplementary school (most commonly a congregational school) the parent has already taken an important first step in creating a connection to Jewish life. In addition to being a critical time in the development of a relationship between the family and the school, the years of early parenthood may also be a period of maximum psychological readiness in the Jewish life cycle.

The moment of congregational affiliation is a critical moment in Jewish life — a moment in which congregations have a strategic opportunity to reach out to strengthen the religious character of the Jewish home, deepen the spiritual values of parents, and make them partners in the Jewish education of their children. Congregations therefore need to consider developing careful inreach strategies with most resources and efforts focused on incoming families with school-age children. By targeting each incoming class, the task of family education becomes manageable and it also becomes possible to focus enough resources on the 50-100 families involved to make a real impact.

Federations could help provide the resources needed by congregations for a personal contact for each incoming family, a required in-depth intake interview, a personalized "contract," and a family education program that fits each family's own needs and lifestyle. In this way the community can help strengthen the critical link between families and congregations and help parents recognize that raising a Jewish child may require an increased commitment to and an understanding of Jewish life, religion and culture.

b) Jewish Youth: Jewish Experience as a Foundation for Jewish Life

After the need to involve young parents, the next most important transitional moment in Jewish life occurs during the teen years. Here again the congregational setting can provide very effective environments for experiencing Jewish life and for cognitive Jewish learning. Retreat programs, intensive Jewish summer camping, youth group activities and trips to Israel are all effective environments that provide the extended time, the role models, the social reinforcement and in Eric Erikson's terms, the "locomotion," the sense of movement and ac-

tivity, that pre-teens and teens need to learn and grow in a positive and joyful way. A key objective of communal policy might therefore be to provide resources for congregations to make these highly-effective "beyond the classroom" environments a standard part of every youngster's life experience. Each one of these experiences has proven effective by themselves. I believe that combining two or more for each child in the context of a total congregational/religious experience can have a cumulative impact that may be far more powerful and effective. Put simply, I believe Federations should set a relatively simple and concrete series of policy objectives:

- An educational trip to Israel for every American Jewish teen
- An intensive Jewish camping/retreat program for every American Jewish teen
- A Jewish youth group experience for every American Jewish teen.

5) The Other Gateway: The College Campus

In addition to the synagogue, the other nearly universal rite of passage in Jewish life is a college education. This means that we can easily locate and, perhaps with more difficulty, reach nearly every Jewish young adult at a critical moment in his or her young adult life. The college campus is a time of exploration and a time that young adults form important life-long relationships including, in some instances, marriage. It would clearly be in the interest of the American Jewish community to put our maximum effort in reaching this critical population.

Unfortunately, Federations provide relatively little support for Hillels and other campus activity. Moreover, at a time of shrinking resources, we seem to be allowing the entire structure of communal support for campus activity to deteriorate as the national B'nai B'rith Hillel organization goes through a critical crisis in its institutional life.

Incredibly, at the same time that we argue about the number of Jews in the year 2000, we are allowing our support for campus activities to collapse! This amounts to criminal negligence on the part of our national Jewish community and future generations will judge us harshly for our failure. An American Jewish community that can create a \$40 million national "collective responsibility" plan for Soviet resettlement and a billion dollar loan guarantee program can certainly create a national plan to serve college youth. We need to ask ourselves why we haven't and move quickly to redeem our Jewish future.

6) Programs for Jewish Singles

Since contact with other Jews has a significant impact on the choice of marriage partners, the Jewish community must make a larger investment in programs for Jewish singles. This is not going to be easy since few effective program models exist. Moreover, singles outside the college campus tend to be unaffiliated and far more difficult to reach than young married households. New cost-effective models will need to be created that can involve singles with attractive high status programs.

7) Outreach to Mixed Married Households in the Context of Jewish Life

We must confront the challenge of mixed marriage where we have the greatest chance of success -- again at the congregational gateway. The Reform Movement has invested significant resources in creating a comfortable environment for mixed married households, while at the same time, continuing to discourage mixed marriage. This has been a difficult line to walk but the Movement has had some success and, as a result, at least 18 percent of young mixed married households (Jerry Winter's analysis) are congregationally affiliated -- mostly with Reform congregations. We must focus communal resources on supporting those mixed married households who have made the difficult choice to raise their children as Jews and taken the critical step of affiliating with a congregation to actualize their desire. If Reform congregations -- hopefully with Federation resources and support -- can provide a meaningful spiritual Jewish experience for their in-married young families and their mixed married young families, we will have a chance of attracting more. Once again, the key will be the quality of Jewish life generated by the congregation for all its congregants. We must ask ourselves what the point of "outreach" is if the institutions we're attracting the unaffiliated and mixed married to lack the staff and the resources to provide the individualized support needed to create a warm, nurturing, intellectually stimulating for programs for each incoming congregant. If Federations do not join with congregations to provide the resources for this difficult challenge, we will have little chance of making an impact on any mixed marrieds who we might (at great expense) be able to attract.

Any communal strategy for dealing with this challenge of reaching mixed married Jews must -- if it is to be worthy of being called a strategy -- stipulate where and how significant numbers of mixed marrieds are to be reached at an acceptable cost. Reform congregations are already the institution of choice for most mixed married Jews who choose to affiliate. I believe that congregations, along with JCC pre-schools continue to be -- at least for the near term future -- the logical choice for most communal investment.

8) The JCC as a Bridge Institution

It's been difficult to get data from CJF on the proportion of mixed married households who affiliate with a JCC and not with a congregation. Nevertheless, for some families, JCC pre-schools can serve a gateway to Jewish life and as a bridge to congregational involvement if they have the resources to provide a meaningful intake and parent and family education process. Working with JCC's and coordinating the work of JCC's and congregations in these critical areas can provide an important opportunity for increased involvement of mixed married households.

9) Toward a New Communal Covenant Between Federations and Congregations

Federations must strengthen their relationships with congregations as a high priority communal policy and Federations and congregations must both take the role of the congregation in Jewish life more seriously. Congregations are our most broadly based communal institutions, involving far more young Jewish families (in-married or mixed married) than any other Jewish organization and probably more than all of our other institutions combined. Most importantly, congregations and their national movements are uniquely positioned to strengthen and integrate all of the experiences most likely to impact Jewish identity and Jewish living. They are the primary gateways for young Jewish families; their afternoon and weekend

schools educate the vast majority of Jewish children; their camps, youth groups, and Israel experiences dominate the market for these services and are generally among the most effective offered; and, of course, most day schools are religiously affiliated.

Congregations must be viewed and must view themselves as pivotal educational institutions in Jewish life. Properly conceptualized, structured and funded, they can use the powerful tools that are already part of their national movements in a coordinated fashion to create integrated strategies that can create a sense of real Jewish community and greatly enhance the Jewish experience of their members.

Since most congregations don't have the resources or manpower for this kind of additional sustained effort, new resources, more and better trained staff, new strategies and redefined missions may all be required. Federations must provide the resources that congregations need to "reinvent" themselves to meet the challenges of the very complex Jewish world revealed in the 1990 population study.

Federations simply cannot deal with the challenge of Jewish continuity without taking advantage of the opportunity for intensifying the affiliation process for Jews passing through this most critical "gateway to Jewish life." Congregations must therefore move from the periphery of Federation concern to a far more central position. Only through the development of closer ties and funding relationships between congregations and federations can we hope to maximize the potential of the congregation as a "gateway to Jewish life" for all Jewish families -- in-married and mixed married alike.

TOWARD A NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

All of these steps will take great national and local commitment and resources at a time when the American Jewish community seems overwhelmed by the overseas challenge and the debilitating effects of the recession. Moreover, our record as an American Jewish community -- as Federations and as congregations -- in providing a vision and an action plan, has not been good.

If, God forbid, we follow our pattern as a national community, we will spend a year debating the meaning of these statistics, six months mourning in the ashes of our community, or patting ourselves on the back for our great success, and then we will launch dozens of half-hearted experiments without follow-up or replication before sinking back into our collective torpor. We can then wake again in ten years to count the new bodies littering the landscape of the Jewish future, along with the Menorahs and Christmas trees in the homes of our children and grandchildren.

Of course, we can always do it differently this time. We can follow up on the effort already begun by the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education and create a full scale national process to review these issues and create an aggressive national work plan with real objectives and timetables. Like Jonah, we can wake ourselves from our collective sleep and carry the message of repentance and change. On this score, I too am an optimist. I believe that with the help of God we can and will emerge to shape our future for the sake of our children and grandchildren, for the sake of our communities, for the sake of our holy Jewish people.

A Communal Response to the Challenges of the 1990 CJF Jewish Population Study: Toward a Jewish Life Worth Living

Barry Shrage, President
Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston

With much wisdom comes much grief and he
who increases knowledge increases pain.

— Koheleth 2,16

In the morning sow they seed
And in the evening let not thy hand rest.
For thou knowest not which will succeed
Whether this or that
Or whether both of them will be alike good.
Truly the light is sweet and it is a pleasant thing for the
eyes to see the sun.

— Koheleth 6,7

Union of American Hebrew Congregations
Board of Trustees Meeting
Minneapolis, MN May 16, 1992

INTRODUCTION: The QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF JEWISH LIFE

We've just come through the holy days of 5752 and it looks like our people have survived another year. During Succoth and Simchat Torah, my family and I enjoyed the mitzvah of Lulav and Esrog. We danced with the Torah; we sat around a dinner table in our Succah with guests and talked about Jewish life and Israel and Crown Heights and, of course, demographics and the fate of our people.

We listened to Koheleth chanted as it has been for a thousand years on the intermediary Shabbat between Succoth and Simchat Torah.

This was a good time to consider this latest population study, its implications for our Jewish future and, most important, the steps we must take now — the steps we should have been taking for the last twenty years — as individuals and as a community. It was a good time to remember that Jewish life cannot be summarized in equations and numbers.

The debate over numbers — the size of the Jewish community in the next century — is becoming sterile and may yet become counterproductive. The 1990 National Jewish Population Study can give us a good idea of the state of our Jewish people today, but it really can't tell us much about the future of our American Jewish community. The "optimists" and the "pessimists" may debate whether 42 percent of our youngest cohort, or 52 percent are marrying non-Jews without conversion and they may argue over whether 33 percent, or 42 percent are raising their children in another religion, but they really have no idea what the cumulative impact of mixed marriage will be on the Jewish future.

- Do we really know what kind of Jewish identity will emerge from mixed married (throughout this paper "mixed marriage" will refer only to intermarriage without conversion) households — even among households who say they are raising their children as Jews?
- Do we really know what dynamics will begin to shape the American Jewish community when 60 percent of all Jewishly identified households are mixed married?
- Do we really know what will happen to current rates of mixed marriage when a majority of Jews are marrying non-Jews without conversion. What will the impact be when in-marriage is the exception rather than the rule? Will we reach a "tipping point" after which we will see geometric growth in mixed marriage rates?

The answer is — we don't know — but I don't see anything in any of these numbers to be optimistic about.

Let's think a bit about our current mixed married households and what kind of Jewish future they're likely to produce. According to Jerry Winter's analysis of young (under 45) married households (focusing on core Jews and core Jews married to non-Jews):

- Only 17.6 percent of young mixed married households belong to a synagogue (compared to 59 percent of young intra-married households).
- Only 17.2 percent with children between six and seventeen have a child receiving a Jewish education (compared to over 56 percent of intra-married households).
- Only 11 percent say they give any gift to a UJA campaign (compared to over 43 percent of intra-married households).

While it's difficult to predict the impact of these numbers on the Jewish identity of future generations, I think that the nightmares of the pessimists deserve at least as much consideration as the dreams of the optimists.

My own personal nightmares came alive in two New York Times articles that appeared during Succoth — the first about life in the small Jewish communities of Mississippi, and the second about "lifestyles" of mixed married couples. Both stories are, I believe, instructive.

The article on the Jews of Mississippi ended with the following story:

Often the contradictions are never quite resolved.

After meeting with the Lums at the synagogue, Mr. Hart had lunch with Celia Starnes, one of two descendants of the Jewish community left in town.

Mrs. Starnes is married to a Baptist but wears a gold necklace with her first name in Hebrew. She does not go to synagogue, but when Mr. Hart asked if she was observant, she answered, "In my heart I am."

And though her children were not raised as Jews and the three oldest are practicing Baptists, she said she thought her youngest daughter, who lives in Jackson, was open to Judaism. At least she hopes so.

"I think she's Jewish by instinct," she said.

The second story ended as follows:

When Mr. Beckoff announced his engagement to Melissa, a Lutheran, his parents asked him to leave their house. But time and two other family interfaith marriages have eased the apparent strains. Any boys born in their marriage will be Jews, any girls will be Lutheran. "It's the only way we could compromise," Mrs. Beckoff said.

Paul and Marilyn Bornstein, both divorced and with children from previous marriages, occasionally attend temple and mass together. They light the Menorah and decorate the Christmas tree. She cooks no pork and they share a passion for bagels and lox.

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Larry and Bobbie Bruskin agree their sons will be Jewish and their daughters Roman Catholic. Mrs. Bruskin overcame initial tension with her mother-in-law by creating many occasions to shop and eat together. Mr. Bruskin attended mass last Easter and Mrs. Bruskin has gone to temple.

Now that they've been married an entire month, the Bruskins confront Christmas No. 1 together. "We'll probably have a Christmas tree," said Mr. Bruskin. An elbow in the ribs prompted an amendment. "We'll definitely have a Christmas tree." In return, last month the new Mrs. Bruskin ran out and bought a Jewish cookbook.

These stories made me think about what we will gain and what we will lose in our brave new world as a community and as individuals. They also made me cry. These stories make us cry because they take us beyond the realm of statistics and into "real life." They help us confront the human costs of mixed marriage to individuals and to families. It's comforting to know that we may have the same number of people who call themselves Jews in fifty years. But that will be cold comfort if those Jews don't include our own children or grandchildren.

While Steve Cohen says that "it is reasonable to assume that out-married couples are, in fact, producing Jewish children at a rate that is likely to have little impact either way upon the Jewish population size in the next generation," we may well ask what kind of Jewish population he envisions; what kind of Jews he thinks will populate the next generation; or his evaluation of the quality of the Jewish life they will live.

Tragically, the debate over the 1990 population study to date has avoided any real discussion of the quality of Jewish life. The survey may or may not indicate a decline in the number of people who call themselves Jews in the next generation but, even today, less than half of America's Jews say that being Jewish is "very important" in their lives and less than a third say they're very attached to Israel. Jewish commitment, Jewish knowledge, serious religious belief, all appear to be declining in each succeeding generation for all but the most intensively involved quarter of our Jewish people.

Increasing the number of Jews who answer "yes" to the question, "Are you a Jew?" in a Jewish population study must not become the overarching goal Jewish communal policy. We must ask ourselves whether we would rather have a Jewish community of 100,000 committed, knowledgeable Jews, who find joy and meaning in their Judaism, or 200,000 households raising their boys as Jews and their girls as Christians and who say they are "not attached" to Israel and that being Jewish is "not very important" or "not important" in their lives.

Raising a Jewish child with a Jewish heart and a Jewish mind, with Jewish commitment and Jewish knowledge, with an understanding of Jewish history and Jewish culture is very complicated in twentieth century America. Raising a Jewish child who has confronted the God of Israel as well as the people of Israel is particularly difficult. Every Jewish parent who cares knows how difficult this challenge is and how often we fail -- even with the best intentions.

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Raising a Jewish child will be even more difficult in the twenty-first century. Clearly mixed married households trying to raise Jewish children will face complications, challenges and difficulties that are hard to imagine or predict. We have to face the possibility that each successive generation of mixed married households will have a somewhat more "watered down" definition of what we mean by "raising a Jewish child." And we must ask ourselves when this mix will become indistinguishable from the American ocean in which we all swim. A family in the year 2075 that lights a candle in a little jar on Yom Kippur "because Grandma did" will be interesting from an anthropological point of view — but it won't be Jewish.

UNAFFILIATED JEWS AND MIXED MARRIAGE: A TROUBLING VISION OF THE JEWISH FUTURE

Of course, our Jewish future will bring us Jews with a wide range of attachments to the Jewish people. There will be committed Orthodox, Conservative and Reform Jews who will be the most successful carriers of our tradition; there will be a significant "moderately affiliated" (in Steve Cohen's terms) Jewish community; and there will be many — a very great many mixed married and religiously unaffiliated, self-identified American Jews, along with their children and grandchildren who will identify themselves and be identified by a bewildering variety of categories and descriptions.

All these categories exist today (they were beautifully described in Steve Cohen's very detailed and useful monograph, "Content or Continuity?" based on the 1989 Survey of American Jews, published by the American Jewish Committee. It should be required reading as a companion piece to the 1990 National Jewish Population Study) — the difference will be in the proportions. If we continue down the road we're going, the first category (Orthodox and highly committed Reform and Conservative Jews — now about twenty-five percent of American Jewish households), may well retain its "share" of the American Jewish community, while the proportion of "moderately affiliated" Jews (now roughly fifty percent of households) will probably shrink dramatically, and the third category — religiously unaffiliated Jews (now about 25 percent) become a clear majority of all American Jewish households.

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It's therefore not surprising that religiously unaffiliated Jews are more likely to produce children who marry non-Jews without conversion.

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- While 63 percent of religiously unaffiliated parents with married children reported that at least one was married to a non-Jew without conversion.

"JNRs," "religiously unaffiliated Jews," "unaffiliated," "just Jewish" -- they are identified in different ways by different studies, but they share common characteristics. They rarely join synagogues or give their children a Jewish education. They give much less to Jewish charities. Consistent with the other statistics, they are much less committed to raising Jewish children, much less committed to Israel and, most important, much harder to find and much more difficult to touch emotionally and far more expensive to reach educationally or in any meaningful way. They are our toughest targets -- the best hidden and the best defended. Creating a strategy to touch, involve, and motivate the American Jewish community may seem difficult today, with 70 percent to 80 percent of American Jews dutifully passing through a congregational gateway when their children are between 8 and 13 years old, but it's a picnic compared to what it will be if fifty percent of America's Jewish households are religiously unaffiliated.

This generation of American Jews represents a window of opportunity for planners and educators -- all we need to do (but have thus far failed to do) is concentrate our energy on young families entering the congregational gateway. But if I'm correct, the window is rapidly closing - a mixed marriage rate of 40 percent to 50 percent in the youngest cohort of American Jews combined with a general decline in Jewish commitment among moderately affiliated Jews may close it forever and foreclose for us our most cost effective strategic options for strengthening the education, commitment and identity of American Jews.

What requires further study is the possibility of a vicious cycle with stunning ramifications for American Jewry. Steve Cohen, in his excellent 1985 article, "Outreach to the Marginally Affiliated," commented on the "family life cycle" pattern of Jewish life, affiliation and identity. Put simply, young singles tend to be religiously unaffiliated and somewhat alienated from Jewish life. Sooner or later, most marry and have children at which time raising those children "in the

faith of their fathers/mothers" suddenly becomes important. They then affiliate with a synagogue providing both a Jewish education for their children and an opportunity (generally not fully realized) for congregations and the community to reach out and deepen this "moderate affiliation" at this critical moment in time.

Clearly, a mixed marriage has a tendency to break this delicate cycle. Mixed married couples tend not to affiliate religiously and so produce Jews who (whatever they are raised) will be less likely to marry other Jews or care as deeply about Jewish life as their in-married / religiously affiliated cousins.

This analysis leads to two conclusions. First, increased mixed marriage may be the key factor in a larger trend that will lead to a far smaller proportion of American Jews affiliating with congregations. Since congregational affiliation seems to be a critical part of the cycle that maintains Jewish life in America, growing mixed marriage and declining religious identity tend to reinforce each other with disastrous implications for the American Jewish community.

Second, we may need to take a closer look at mixed married households that are members of congregations. Households that are members of congregations, mixed married and in-married, may be much more similar to each other (and much more Jewishly identified) than they are to Jews who are religiously unaffiliated. In fact, the division in American Jewish life between mixed married and in-married Jews may be less important than the division between religiously affiliated and religiously unaffiliated Jews. Affiliated, mixed married households have made a commitment to Jewish life. Though the intensity of this commitment may vary -- the act of affiliation itself provides an opportunity for the congregation and the community to deepen the household's involvement and encourage conversion.

AN ACTION PLAN FOR THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMUNITY

All of this, of course, is merely a prelude to a discussion of the steps, I believe, we must take now while we still have a (rapidly closing) window of opportunity:

1) From Counting Jews to Strengthening Judaism: A Jewish Life Worth Living for Every Jewish Family

The dialogue generated by the 1990 population study must shift from a debate about the number of Jews in the next century toward the creation of national and local strategic plans aimed at providing every Jewish family and child with the "resources" (again in Cohen's terms) to lead a full, rich Jewish life. No matter what we do, some Jews will assimilate, some Jews will "check out" of the Jewish people emotionally, some Jews will simply stop caring. These are all personal tragedies. They become a communal tragedy if we make their choice easy by failing to provide them with the basic knowledge and experience that makes Jewish life worth living and that might make them stop and ask, "What am I about to lose -- for me and for the generations that will follow me."

Assuring a creative, intense, joyful confrontation for every American Jew with the best of what Jewish life represents must be the highest priority of our Federations -- a priority that

must be implemented through a new relationship with our congregational movements. This is the minimum that our Jewish community and our congregations owe our people – the knowledge, the feeling, the resource to experience Judaism in its totality: the people of Israel, the Land of Israel, the God of Israel, the Torah of Israel. Every Jew in America has a right to reject any or all of these categories, but every Jew who, by the grace of God, still walks through a synagogue gateway has a right to the full and complete experience that he or she will need to decide what kind of Jewish life to lead.

2) Slowing the Growth of Assimilation and Mixed Marriage: Believing in Ourselves

We must and can take steps to prevent the geometric increases in mixed marriage that now seem to be coming our way. To do this we must first believe that we can make a difference and that we should try to make a difference.

It is wrong, I believe, to say, as some have said, that there is nothing we can do to affect the trend toward increased mixed marriage as a community or as individuals. Everyone has a favorite story of a Hasidic Jew whose ten children all married non-Jews or a person who had no interest in Jewish life who now has grandchildren who are rabbis. Surely there are such cases. However, these cases evade the clear evidence of many studies and much research. Orthodox Jews are half as likely to have mixed married children as Conservative or Reform Jews; and Conservative or Reform Jews are half as likely to have mixed married children as religiously unaffiliated Jews. Involved Jews are less likely to have mixed married children than uninvolved Jews. Parents who strongly oppose mixed marriage are far less likely to have mixed married children than those who aren't strongly opposed. Our actions don't make all the difference, but they do make a difference.

Clearly, I would argue we can also make a difference as a community. The stronger the relationships we create in each religious "gateway" to Jewish life – each temple and synagogue – the more likely we are to attract and hold religiously affiliated Jews who are more likely to have children who will marry other Jews who can experience, enjoy and understand Judaism in all its beautiful complexity. We can make a difference. If we value Jewish life, if we want our children and grandchildren to experience a rich and full Jewish existence – religiously, intellectually, emotionally, if we want to break the cycle of mixed marriage, non-affiliation, disinterest and increasing mixed marriage, we can, we must, we will develop plans that can shape our Jewish future.

3) Toward A Workable Strategy: Moderately Affiliated Jews and Gateway Institutions

We must focus our resources on moderately affiliated Jews (whether mixed married or in-married) and gateway institutions – primarily synagogues. The 1990 National Jewish Population Study reinforces with new data the fact that most American Jews continue to affiliate with congregations over time and provide a Jewish education for their children, as long as this window of opportunity remains open. This continues to be the place where funding and programs can make the greatest difference.

This is not to say that resources should not also be used to strengthen and expand the inner core – our most highly committed population. This can be accomplished through intensive adult education or more importantly by communal policies that aim at expanding the propor-

tion of youngsters receiving a day school education. While the main battle for the Jewish future will need to focus on retaining moderately affiliated Jews, the future will also depend on our ability to draw significant numbers of moderately affiliated Jews into the highly committed core.

4) The Right Programs in the Right Context for Families, Children and Teens

We must provide the families, children and teens passing through these gateways all the experiences that we know can inspire and empower them as Jews. These experiences are not a mystery. They are the same experiences that we have been discussing since 1969. What's been missing is the commitment to make them a standard part of every child and family's passage through the Jewish community and an understanding that the best organization and framework we have for these activities are our congregations and temples.

a) Developing Effective Strategies for "Universal" Family Education

Since the vast majority of Jewish parents affiliate with a congregation during their children's school years, the point in time when parents enroll their children in a Jewish school can provide our best opportunity to reach out to parents to increase their personal commitment and involve them in the Jewish educational process. By enrolling the child in a Jewish supplementary school (most commonly a congregational school) the parent has already taken an important first step in creating a connection to Jewish life. In addition to being a critical time in the development of a relationship between the family and the school, the years of early parenthood may also be a period of maximum psychological readiness in the Jewish life cycle.

The moment of congregational affiliation is a critical moment in Jewish life — a moment in which congregations have a strategic opportunity to reach out to strengthen the religious character of the Jewish home, deepen the spiritual values of parents, and make them partners in the Jewish education of their children. Congregations therefore need to consider developing careful inreach strategies with most resources and efforts focused on incoming families with school-age children. By targeting each incoming class, the task of family education becomes manageable and it also becomes possible to focus enough resources on the 50-100 families involved to make a real impact.

Federations could help provide the resources needed by congregations for a personal contact for each incoming family, a required in-depth intake interview, a personalized "contract," and a family education program that fits each family's own needs and lifestyle. In this way the community can help strengthen the critical link between families and congregations and help parents recognize that raising a Jewish child may require an increased commitment to and an understanding of Jewish life, religion and culture.

b) Jewish Youth: Jewish Experience as a Foundation for Jewish Life

After the need to involve young parents, the next most important transitional moment in Jewish life occurs during the teen years. Here again the congregational setting can provide very effective environments for experiencing Jewish life and for cognitive Jewish learning. Retreat programs, intensive Jewish summer camping, youth group activities and trips to Israel are all effective environments that provide the extended time, the role models, the social reinforcement and in Eric Erikson's terms, the "locomotion," the sense of movement and ac-

tivity, that pre-teens and teens need to learn and grow in a positive and joyful way. A key objective of communal policy might therefore be to provide resources for congregations to make these highly-effective "beyond the classroom" environments a standard part of every youngster's life experience. Each one of these experiences has proven effective by themselves. I believe that combining two or more for each child in the context of a total congregational/religious experience can have a cumulative impact that may be far more powerful and effective. Put simply, I believe Federations should set a relatively simple and concrete series of policy objectives:

- An educational trip to Israel for every American Jewish teen
- An intensive Jewish camping/retreat program for every American Jewish teen
- A Jewish youth group experience for every American Jewish teen.

5) The Other Gateway: The College Campus

In addition to the synagogue, the other nearly universal rite of passage in Jewish life is a college education. This means that we can easily locate and, perhaps with more difficulty, reach nearly every Jewish young adult at a critical moment in his or her young adult life. The college campus is a time of exploration and a time that young adults form important life-long relationships including, in some instances, marriage. It would clearly be in the interest of the American Jewish community to put our maximum effort in reaching this critical population.

Unfortunately, Federations provide relatively little support for Hillels and other campus activity. Moreover, at a time of shrinking resources, we seem to be allowing the entire structure of communal support for campus activity to deteriorate as the national B'nai B'rith Hillel organization goes through a critical crisis in its institutional life.

Incredibly, at the same time that we argue about the number of Jews in the year 2000, we are allowing our support for campus activities to collapse! This amounts to criminal negligence on the part of our national Jewish community and future generations will judge us harshly for our failure. An American Jewish community that can create a \$40 million national "collective responsibility" plan for Soviet resettlement and a billion dollar loan guarantee program can certainly create a national plan to serve college youth. We need to ask ourselves why we haven't and move quickly to redeem our Jewish future.

6) Programs for Jewish Singles

Since contact with other Jews has a significant impact on the choice of marriage partners, the Jewish community must make a larger investment in programs for Jewish singles. This is not going to be easy since few effective program models exist. Moreover, singles outside the college campus tend to be unaffiliated and far more difficult to reach than young married households. New cost-effective models will need to be created that can involve singles with attractive high status programs.

7) Outreach to Mixed Married Households in the Context of Jewish Life

We must confront the challenge of mixed marriage where we have the greatest chance of success — again at the congregational gateway. The Reform Movement has invested significant resources in creating a comfortable environment for mixed married households, while at the same time, continuing to discourage mixed marriage. This has been a difficult line to walk but the Movement has had some success and, as a result, at least 18 percent of young mixed married households (Jerry Winter's analysis) are congregationally affiliated — mostly with Reform congregations. We must focus communal resources on supporting those mixed married households who have made the difficult choice to raise their children as Jews and taken the critical step of affiliating with a congregation to actualize their desire. If Reform congregations — hopefully with Federation resources and support — can provide a meaningful spiritual Jewish experience for their in-married young families and their mixed married young families, we will have a chance of attracting more. Once again, the key will be the quality of Jewish life generated by the congregation for all its congregants. We must ask ourselves what the point of "outreach" is if the institutions we're attracting the unaffiliated and mixed married to lack the staff and the resources to provide the individualized support needed to create a warm, nurturing, intellectually stimulating for programs for each incoming congregant. If Federations do not join with congregations to provide the resources for this difficult challenge, we will have little chance of making an impact on any mixed marrieds who we might (at great expense) be able to attract.

Any communal strategy for dealing with this challenge of reaching mixed married Jews must — if it is to be worthy of being called a strategy — stipulate where and how significant numbers of mixed marrieds are to be reached at an acceptable cost. Reform congregations are already the institution of choice for most mixed married Jews who choose to affiliate. I believe that congregations, along with JCC pre-schools continue to be — at least for the near term future — the logical choice for most communal investment.

8) The JCC as a Bridge Institution

It's been difficult to get data from CJF on the proportion of mixed married households who affiliate with a JCC and not with a congregation. Nevertheless, for some families, JCC pre-schools can serve a gateway to Jewish life and as a bridge to congregational involvement if they have the resources to provide a meaningful intake and parent and family education process. Working with JCC's and coordinating the work of JCC's and congregations in these critical areas can provide an important opportunity for increased involvement of mixed married households.

9) Toward a New Communal Covenant Between Federations and Congregations

Federations must strengthen their relationships with congregations as a high priority communal policy and Federations and congregations must both take the role of the congregation in Jewish life more seriously. 'Congregations are our most broadly based communal institutions, involving far more young Jewish families (in-married or mixed married) than any other Jewish organization and probably more than all of our other institutions combined.' Most importantly, congregations and their national movements are uniquely positioned to strengthen and integrate all of the experiences most likely to impact Jewish identity and Jewish living. They are the primary gateways for young Jewish families; their afternoon and weekend

schools educate the vast majority of Jewish children; their camps, youth groups, and Israel experiences dominate the market for these services and are generally among the most effective offered; and, of course, most day schools are religiously affiliated.

Congregations must be viewed and must view themselves as pivotal educational institutions in Jewish life. Properly conceptualized, structured and funded, they can use the powerful tools that are already part of their national movements in a coordinated fashion to create integrated strategies that can create a sense of real Jewish community and greatly enhance the Jewish experience of their members.

Since most congregations don't have the resources or manpower for this kind of additional sustained effort, new resources, more and better trained staff, new strategies and redefined missions may all be required. Federations must provide the resources that congregations need to "reinvent" themselves to meet the challenges of the very complex Jewish world revealed in the 1990 population study.

Federations simply cannot deal with the challenge of Jewish continuity without taking advantage of the opportunity for intensifying the affiliation process for Jews passing through this most critical "gateway to Jewish life." Congregations must therefore move from the periphery of Federation concern to a far more central position. Only through the development of closer ties and funding relationships between congregations and federations can we hope to maximize the potential of the congregation as a "gateway to Jewish life" for all Jewish families — in-married and mixed married alike.

TOWARD A NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

All of these steps will take great national and local commitment and resources at a time when the American Jewish community seems overwhelmed by the overseas challenge and the debilitating effects of the recession. Moreover, our record as an American Jewish community — as Federations and as congregations — in providing a vision and an action plan, has not been good.

If, God forbid, we follow our pattern as a national community, we will spend a year debating the meaning of these statistics, six months mourning in the ashes of our community, or patting ourselves on the back for our great success, and then we will launch dozens of half-hearted experiments without follow-up or replication before sinking back into our collective torpor. We can then wake again in ten years to count the new bodies littering the landscape of the Jewish future, along with the Menorahs and Christmas trees in the homes of our children and grandchildren.

Of course, we can always do it differently this time. We can follow up on the effort already begun by the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education and create a full scale national process to review these issues and create an aggressive national work plan with real objectives and timetables. Like Jonah, we can wake ourselves from our collective sleep and carry the message of repentance and change. On this score, I too am an optimist. I believe that with the help of God we can and will emerge to shape our future for the sake of our children and grandchildren, for the sake of our communities, for the sake of our holy Jewish people.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
MAY 14-17, 1992

AGENDA

Saturday Night - May 16, 1992- 8:15 TO 10:30 PM

✓ APPROVAL OF MINUTES

✓ REMARKS OF THE CHAIRMAN

MELVIN MERIANS

✓ ~~MAINTENANCE OF UNION MEMBERSHIP~~

~~JOYCE OTTENHEIMER~~

✓ REPORT OF THE TREASURER

JEROME H. SOMERS

INTRODUCTION OF THEME - RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER

ADDRESS BY BARRY SCHRAGE, President,

Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Boston

✓ REPORT OF THE BUDGET COMMITTEE

JEROME H. SOMERS

~~BIENNIAL PROGRAM COMMITTEE~~

~~MARK C. LEVY~~

1 Copy Heritage - Marshall Krolch
Sunday, May 17, 1992 - 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM

✓ BAR/BAT MITZVAH CELEBRATION

RABBI ALAN D. BREGMAN

✓ UAHC NEW LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

LAWRENCE ROTHENBERG

✓ NATIONAL COMMISSION ON RABBINIC-
CONGREGATIONAL RELATIONS

may
THEODORE H. PAILET/
RABBI PAUL J. MENITOFF

✓ UAHC ENDOWMENT FUND COMMITTEE

DAVID W. SAMPLINER

✓ UAHC FUND FOR REFORM JUDAISM

HARRY HELFT

✓ NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON CAMP-INSTITUTES

LAWRENCE SIMON

✓ NEW CONGREGATIONS COMMITTEE

STANLEY R. LOEB

✓ BALTIMORE BIENNIAL RESOLUTIONS

JUDGE DAVID DAVIDSON/
JEROME H. SOMERS

-over-

*KIRA
Lawson*



HEBREW UNION COLLEGE-JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
Cincinnati • New York • Los Angeles • Jerusalem

Handwritten note:
HUC - JIR
NY

BROOKDALE CENTER
ONE WEST 4th STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10012-1186
(212) 674-5300

June 9, 1992

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
UAHC
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10021

Dear Alex:

I'm sure you'll recall that the enclosed was sent you as a draft in preparation for the meeting of the Board of Governors held in Cincinnati May 28, 1992. All the Board members present at the May 28th meeting voted in favor of the enclosed resolution, but their number fell short of the 36 member minimum required by Ohio law to vote at a meeting in order to amend the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion merger agreement (constituting its articles of incorporation). An alternative mode of amendment is approval in writing by every member of the Board, which we hope to achieve.

It will be a real service to the College-Institute if you affix your signature to the enclosed and return it without delay in the self-addressed stamped envelope to Sylvia Posner in New York.

It was made clear to all those in attendance at our May 28th meeting by Chairman Stanley P. Gold, that many a future Board meeting will be held in New York, but we do need the flexibility the revision will give us.

Yours most cordially,

Charles H. Tobias, Jr.

Charles H. Tobias, Jr.
Board Secretary

Handwritten signatures and dates:
S. Posner
M. Gold
6/17/92

/zg
enclosures

Memorandum

HEBREW UNION COLLEGE-JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION

3077 UNIVERSITY AVENUE • LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90007-3796 • PHONE 749-3424

Memo to Board of Governors

May 5, 1992

TO

Dr. Uri D. Herscher

DATE

FROM

It's been brought to my attention that my memo of April 27th re amendment of the merger agreement between HUC and JIR cited no reason for the proposed amendment. I am glad to do so now.

The proposed amendment is intended to afford the Board of Governors greater flexibility in scheduling meetings and designating meeting places. This matter of flexibility is especially important in view of the Board's wish to conjoin a meeting every two years with the UAHC Biennial, which took place last November in Baltimore and in 1993 will be held in San Francisco and in 1995 in Atlanta.

I look forward to seeing you May 28th in Cincinnati.

UDH:dks



RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER • UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS
PRESIDENT 838 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 (212) 249-0100

MEMORANDUM

December 27, 1990
10 Tevet 5751

FROM: Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
TO: Chairs and Directors of Joint Commissions
RE: CONSULTATION ON POLICY & PROGRAM

It has come to my attention that situations have arisen wherein partners in Joint Commissions have not been consulted. I refer particularly to the matter of appointment of chairpeople and staff as well as matters of fundamental policy. This is patently unfair to our partners and I urge that you take great care in working in close harmony with them.

Thanks for your cooperation in this regard. All good wishes.

CCCR

CANTOR HOWARD STAHL
RABBI DANIEL FREELANDER
CANTOR NANCY HAUSMAN

*all
Cantor
Cong Relator*



איחוד
ליהדות
מתקדמת
באמריקה

Union of American Hebrew Congregations

PATRON OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE-JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
100 WEST MONROE STREET, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60603 (312) 782-1477 FAX (312) 782-1642

GREAT LAKES REGION

Rabbi Alan D. Bregman
Director

Gerard W. Kaye
Director of Camping &
Youth Activities
Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute

November 28, 1989
30 Cheshvan, 5750

Rabbi Paul Menitoff
UAHC
1330 Beacon Street, Suite #355
Brookline, MA. 02146

Dear Paul,

I am belatedly responding to your memo with regard to the Federation and its many issues.

First, I believe that you are correct with your analysis that Federation, today, has a real problem. The so called sexy causes, upon which Federation raised so much of its money are no longer sexy issues. Of course, Israel remains problematic and it has its implications in terms of raising money. The Chicago community raises an excess of fifty seven million dollars, however, if you talk with Federation employees on a personal level, they will tell you that it is getting harder and harder to raise that money based upon the needs of the State of Israel. I can tell you that the Soviet re-settlement fundraising program in Chicago has been a disaster. If my figures are correct, the goal was to raise seven million dollars and the campaign resulted in a little more than two.

In Chicago, the issues are a little more complicated. It is not so much that Federation itself wishes to deal directly with synagogues, but that its agencies wish to do so. As a matter of fact, the synagogue community has the one commodity that Federation needs desperately, that is people. No other institution in the community has a constituency the likes of the synagogue community. Our battles tend to be with the Jewish Community Center rather than with the Federation itself. By the way, I might add, that the larger the community, the more apt there is to be problems. For instance, problems are now emerging in Minneapolis. They have adopted the program called the Minneapolis Two Hundred fashioned after Philadelphia One Thousand which is a mission to Israel. Recently, Temple Israel had its regular congregation trip to Israel and great pressure was brought on the Rabbi to cancel the trip so as not to interfere with this Federation sponsored mission. However, in the smaller communities, there does not seem to be the kind of conflict of which you elude to in your memo.

Paul, I want to expand your comments into other areas because there are forces in the Jewish community which are both entering into fields which neither the synagogue community nor the Federation community seems to have a hold on. Perhaps it all started with CAJE. CAJE emerged as one of the first independent organizations to enter into a field, this time education,

Chairman
Allan B. Goldman

President
Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler

President - Great Lakes Region
Robert Kohn

President - Chicago Federation
Zelda Wise

B.J.E. Director of
Reform Education
Dr. Betsy Katz

Outreach Coordinator
Mimi Dunitz

Administrative Coordinator
Audrey H. Goldblatt

that was heretofore the provence of the so called Jewish community which includes the synagogue community, I would now mention three other programs which are emerging as well. First of all, there is the Wexner program. I cannot begin to tell you how much of a Fraternity and Sorority the Wexner Fellowship program has become in Chicago. They have their own network, which in some ways, are the same Federation folks, on the young side. On the otherhand, they have some sense of independence from the community itself. They are becoming a vital force in the Chicago Jewish Community. It is already a joke that if you do not filter your ideas through the Wexner fraternity and sorority, you have a little chance of success. The second institution is that of the Melton minischool. I have first hand knowledge of this because Betsy Katz is the National Director of this program. Florence Melton funded this program with millions of dollars. It is formed in conjunction with the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and is meant to be an adult education program which teaches the fundamentals. Many communities are participating in the program. It has taken off with great success in Chicago though under the direction and supervision of the JCC. They have money, they provide teachers, and the program has some substance to it. The third program that is about to come on the scene is funded by Mort Mandell. He has recently done a study of the Jewish, educational needs of congregations and is trying to interest numerous organizations into working with him to develop programs to address those needs. Currently, he has reached out to CAJE as an organization to be the form on which he can start his program. Of course, the lower is always big dollars which may come to the CAJE organization.

As a matter of fact, that really is the point, is it not? These independent organizations come along with large numbers of dollars which are very attractive to our congregations. It is very difficult for me to say, why don't you turn to the resources of the UAHC, when these organizations hold out money, staff and other resources to start programs within the context of the congregation.


So I think that we have more to talk about than merely the Jewish Federation. Questions come to mind such as should we join with these independent organizations, should we resist them, should we try to develop programs in competition with their programs? It is very difficult to respond because I have not yet felt a sense of where the UAHC is going vis avis the regions. That is to say, will the regions be funded with staff in order to meet these kinds of needs and programs which are being offered to our congregations by the Federation and independent organizations. Inevitably, the question will arise, if we can get all these things from other sources, why pay the substantial of number of dollars to the UAHC. I must say that that question has not arisen yet. But I have no doubt that as these organizations spread their programs, the question will arise and we will have to respond.

I hope that this response to your memo shows my concern as well. It deserves a hearing, first in order that we understand what is happening in the Jewish community. It would not be my intention to develop a strategy to fight or not to fight but there are implications in terms of our work which need to be discussed. I do not know what the form will be or should be, but I would support you in your concern that it does have implications for our

work.

With best wishes.

Sincerely,


Rabbi Alan D. Bregman, Director
UAHC, Great Lakes Region

ADB/mrg

CC: Mr. Arthur Grant
Rabbi Daniel Syme
Rabbi Paul Menitoff



Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler

July 10, 1985

Rabbi Joseph B. Glaser

*Syni Fedy
Fetale*

The Don Day letter is the letter I had in mind to send you. It explains in effect why Don decided to recommend the disbanding of the national committee. He feels that the only effective work that can be done is on a local level.

Perhaps a national committee should be reconvened nonetheless in order to give the proper kind of guidance to the local communities who might want to pursue these kinds of efforts. Indeed they should.

I'm returning the letter to you herewith and I hope that you will distribute it to Don Berlin and Jack Stern as well.

Warm regards.

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler

July 2, 1985

Rabbi Joseph B. Glaser

In the light of our conversation in regard to the Synagogue/
Federation Joint Committee, I enclose herewith a letter re-
cently received from Don Day on this subject. Please let me
have your reaction to it.

Warm regards.



Encl.

SAPERSTON, DAY, LUSTIG, GALLICK, KIRSCHNER & GAGLIONE, P.C.

DONALD S. DAY
LAWRENCE J. GALLICK
FRANK T. GAGLIONE
MORTON MENDELSON
ROGER B. SIMON
THOMAS F. SEGALLA
GARY L. MUCCI
DONALD H. LISCHER
THOMAS C. BAILEY
NEIL J. KATZ
LAWRENCE A. SCHULZ
BERNARD M. BRODSKY
ROBERT L. BESANCENEY
EDWARD J. WAGNER
RUSSELL N. BROWN

HERBERT J. LUSTIG
JOHN L. KIRSCHNER
FRANCIS W. GREUNE
WELLS E. KNIBLOE
FREDERICK A. WOLF
NEIL A. GOLDBERG
BENJAMIN J. ANDREWS, JR.
TRICIA T. SEMMELHACK
RICHARD J. DAY
JOHN M. HART, JR.
ROBIN L. STONE
CARMEN J. PINO
SAMUEL GOLDBLATT
WILLIAM G. GANDY

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ROBERT W. MICHALAK
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COUNSEL TO THE FIRM
HOWARD T. SAPERSTON, SR.
R. KERFORD WILSON

June 4, 1985

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10021

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Warmly

Donald S. Day /csk

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DSD:csk

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler

July 5, 1985

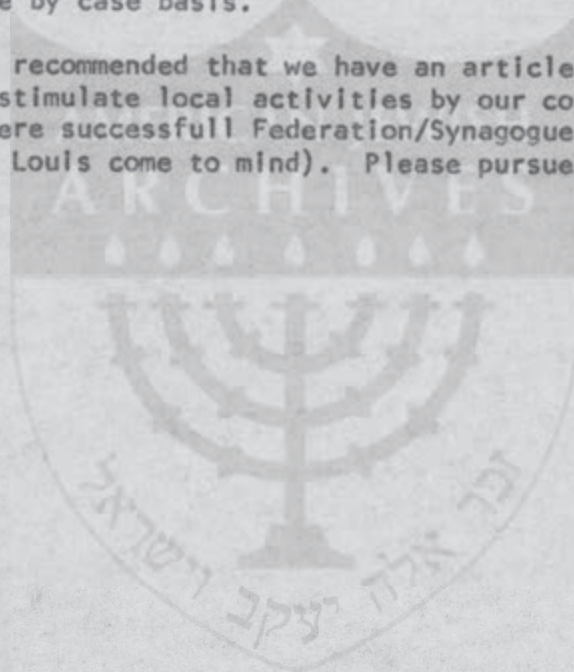
Aron Hirt-Manheimer

Charles J. Rothschild, Jr.

SYNAGOGUE/FEDERATION RELATIONS

Some years ago the UAHC and the CCAR had a Synagogue/Federation Committee to deal with Federation/Congregational Relations. The enclosed letter from Don Day will tell you why we ultimately decided to disband the committee. In brief, he feels that this is an area in which very little can be done on a national level, he feels that this issue has to be dealt with on a congregational local level on a case by case basis.

Chuck Rothschild has recommended that we have an article on the subject in REFORM JUDAISM in order to stimulate local activities by our congregations, giving them information about where successful Federation/Synagogue projects have taken place (Los Angeles and St. Louis come to mind). Please pursue this and let me know how you progress.



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cc DSA

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler

May 22, 1985

Rabbi David S. Hachen

YOUR LETTER TO ME OF MAY 23, 1985

I'll get back to you as quickly as I can in response to the questions you posed in the above noted letter. Don Day chaired a committee on this matter and worked closely with Ted, z.l. Since I wasn't involved in any depth and my recollection of reports to me is a bit hazy, I've asked Don to share his recollections with me. When I hear from him I will get back to you. Hope you understand.

Fond regards.





Union of American Hebrew Congregations

PATRON OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE—JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
25550 CHAGRIN BLVD., SUITE #108, CLEVELAND, OHIO 44122 (216) 831-6722

NORTHEAST LAKES COUNCIL

Dr. David S. Hachen
Regional Rabbi

May 23, 1985

Dear Alex:

A couple of weeks ago we held a Regional Board meeting in Detroit. Jim Jonas, the President of Temple Israel in West Bloomfield, Syme's congregation, raised a couple of questions^{TO} which we need to respond.

1) Can the UAHC do anything nationally with the Council of Jewish Welfare funds to promote the local sharing of Jewish Welfare funds for the support of congregational Jewish education. I think what Jim was suggesting was that we make some kind of approach on a national level which might help to produce results on the local level. He felt that you personally might be persuasive in this regard.

2) Jim felt that we should have, on a national basis, demographic information that would be helpful for our congregations on a local level. For example, if we know what our population figures are by age across the country, then a congregation could do an analysis of its own congregation and compare this with the national figure to see where the local congregation stands.

It seems to me we're talking about some kind of a demographic study.

Please get back to me on these two questions, and I would appreciate your guidance as to the response for Jim Jonas and the rest of the leadership in our region.

There were also some other issues which were raised at the Regional Board meeting which are of interest, such as (1) how do we reach young Jews on the smaller college campuses? (2) How do we strengthen our program for young adults who are in their 20's and 30's so as to bring them closer to the synagogue. (3) How do we combat "zero population" so as to encourage our young people to have more children? (4) With a decreasing school

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population, how do we encourage joint schools - and how do we encourage joint programs for other age groups without undermining the strength of the individual congregations?

Alex, I look forward to your response on the first two items that Jim Jonas posed, and I share the other questions so that you might know what is on the minds of our people.

I hear the Board meeting went well. I think Dan Syme is a marvelous choice for Vice President.

Love from home to home.

Sincerely,

David S. Hachen
Regional Rabbi

