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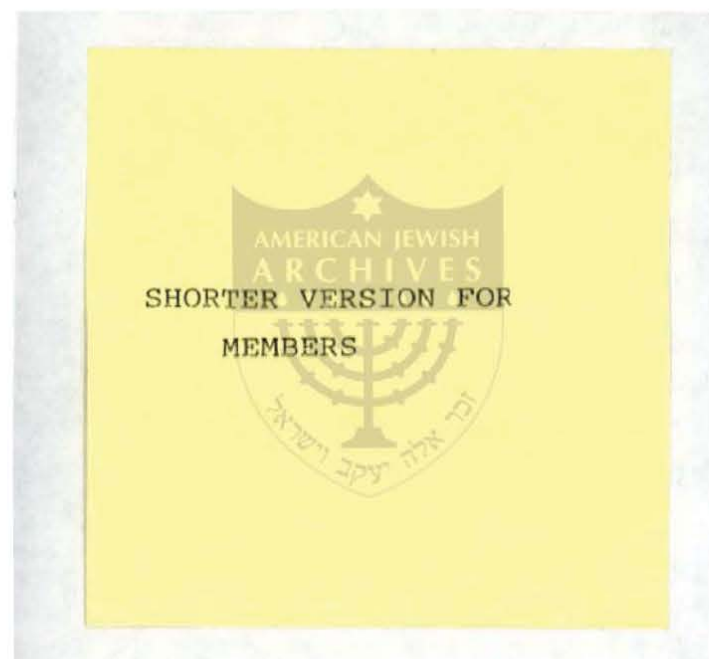
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ALUMNI RETREAT

Evergreen Conference Center - Atlanta

April 26-28, 1991

CRISIS AND LEADERSHIP

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

A crisis is usually thought of as one cataclysmic event - an earthquake, a bank failure, a presidential assassination - and leadership usually knows how to respond.

A much more deadly crisis is a historical trend - harder to perceive and analyze, not always recognized until serious damage is done, often impossible to repair, therefore irreversible.

The two most powerful Jewries in the world seem to be entering historical crises at the end of the 20th century - and the respective leaderships have not shown signs of meeting them adequately.

In America, the great wave of migration which started a little more than 100 years ago, bringing millions of Jews here, who were hovering at that time between a traditional form of life

in the ghetto and shtetl, and the temptations of a more emancipated form of life in the new world - that migration has brought you, the third generation, 100 years later, into a full-blown assimilation which some Cassandras predict will seriously threaten the very continuity of the Jewish population on this continent.

In Israel, we seem also to be entering a historical crisis, for after its 100 years, i.e. a half century of pioneering settlement, plus almost another half century of sovereign statehood, the nation has indeed created many miracles, but the present mood is one of confusion as to goals and systems in Israeli society, which has produced a government that is in disarray, and a people adrift, uncertain of itself, split into many movements offering different nostrums.

The Israeli crisis is one of failing to express Jewish values in the new condition of sovereignty and physical power. Peace, democracy, equal rights for all citizens, in other words, the creation of the model moral society - still elude the grasp of the government and citizens. The state has created an instrument of power which has successfully defended it against ferocious and continuous onslaughts, thank G-d for that - but a wonderful army is only a means, not an end in itself. The end is a particularistic Hebrew society envisioned by the Biblical prophets in which the needy are nourished, the rich are

idealistic, the nation is dedicated to morality, thus serving as an example leading to a universal repair of the entire world - Tikkun Olam.

There is some impatience, even annoyance, on the part of diaspora Jewry that Israel, already 43 years old, has not yet achieved the desired moral goal. We want her to move faster toward that state of grace in which the brilliant theories will become practical realities. We want a steady stream of achievements and victories, for this is our image of her glorious potentiality - and we are alienated as we analyze her poor governmental performance or inflexibility when dealing with the pressing subjects of Arabs, Palestinians and peace. We forget that she wins the wars and absorbs the millions of immigrants. We should be appreciative of her progress, while at the same time reminding her that she should not remain rooted in a 19th century combination of shtetl politics plus fear of the outside world. She will never serve as a model for the world if she constantly operates under the paranoia that the whole world is against her because she is a Jewish state. How can she inspire what she considers to be an enemy?

Having said all this - we must leave it largely to her citizens to impress upon their leaders that this crisis, involving purpose, modalities, and destiny, demands solutions, and if the leadership comes up short, then changes must be sought in every sphere which influences society - namely, the

government, the religious establishment, the universities, and many others.

The American Diaspora crisis is totally something else - having nothing to do with instruments of power, for we have none, but dealing rather with the voluntary self-determination of a large affluent community to remain linked to a future continuity as Jews. We have two choices - to maintain our strong sense of identity and peoplehood by all possible means, or to allow ourselves to drift off into the large sea of American permissiveness in which all barriers are down and we can disappear without trauma or difficulty. Our crisis is Shakespearean - to be or not to be - and the solution depends on our leaders and ourselves - no one else.

The Jewish mass in America is undoubtedly moving into a crisis phase - there are many signs of it - many people who feel it. Arthur Hertzberg's latest book ends on a pessimistic and distressed note regarding the future of the American Jew. His last paragraphs state: "In fact, the mass of American Jews are only 50 years out of the ghetto ... and it is already possible in this new age of America to evaporate out of being Jewish without making a decision to be anything else ... They remain proud to be Jews but they are less and less likely to live their lives within the ethnic community...Jews who cared about being Jewish knew, if only in their bones, that they had to turn to religion, and most did not know how to begin ... Most Jews could not accept

the fundamentalism of the Lubavitcher rebbe, the most striking leader of the Orthodox revival. If a spiritual revival does not happen, American Jewish history will soon end and become a part of American memory as a whole."

Nothing drastic will happen in the U.S. The American democratic tradition will not self-destruct and turn this country into some monstrous military dictatorship which will swallow up its Jews. Rather the permissiveness, which enables anyone who strives hard enough to reach any heights, envelops the Jews in an embrace so seductive as to cause a loss of specifically Jewish identity. We have as much to fear from death by a kiss of equality as death by some murderous genocide. It is so easy in America to forget one's Judaism, cease practicing it, grow lazy about passing on the tradition to our children that, almost without our realizing it, the ethnic ties that bind lose their power, memory of the Holocaust fades, the special tug of Israel weakens as we take it for granted - and we slide into living like single-identity Americans instead of double-identity American-Jews.

Given two generations of such a life-style, the crisis phase, so discernible now in the high intermarriage rate, lowering conversion rate and low knowledge base, will no longer be discernible because the crisis will have passed, and the patient will have entered that pleasant comatose state whose end will be the disappearance of most Jews by immersion in the vast

majority, leaving behind a nucleus of far-right religious people and a centrist secular group caring for some communal infrastructure capable of sustaining a minimal Jewish existence. Two generations of active indifference will be sufficient to create the conditions for a gentle reduction of the Jewish community into almost zero.

Contemporary thinkers and scholars take this crisis feeling very seriously, and seek nostrums and solutions. Recently, one of the major theologians, Rabbi Eugene Borowitz of the H.U.C.- J.I.R., who edits a journal called Sh'ma, wrote an essay stating his premise that the twin themes of Holocaust and Israel are not enough any longer to retain a sense of Jewishness for American Jews. What is needed, he says, is a "new priority" - namely, religion and faith. Only these are strong enough to buttress our sense of identity. Ethnicity is not enough, and "The Holocaust-Israel symbols, for all their remaining potency, have lost their recent authority."

His argument runs as follows: "The American economic boom transformed us into the country's wealthiest ethnic group; the Ivy League colleges gladly accepted our kids almost without discrimination; and Jews disproportionately enlivened American culture...We now belonged, only to discover that equality gave us so much personally that it made our Jewishness comparatively superfluous...Israelocentrism no longer can be the engine driving American Jewish life, keeping us ahead of the assimilation

threatening to overtake us.

Belief is now our major priority...I don't think that Jewish education without believing teachers and parents will help us much. More than ever, the key issue is religious. Are we Jewish 'Unitarian' Americans or devoutly Jewish Jews who are also humanitarian Americans? Our community's answer to this question will determine its future Jewish vitality."

I don't agree with Borowitz that Israel has lost its magnetic attraction. I think we haven't even begun to plumb the possibilities Israel has for awakening spirit and determination in American Jewry. I think we must solve the twin historical crisis for both Jewries by linking them more closely together, and having each help solve the crisis of the other. A stronger connection with Israel can help strengthen American Jews, by giving them a greater pride in a truly Jewish Israel, if that very Israel overcomes its inadequacies and achieves the state of moral height which is her true potential. What I am describing is a mobius knot, in which the intertwining could bring each of the two elements into an unbreakable and mutually supportive condition, beneficial to both.

American Jews must learn to relate to Israel in a much deeper fashion - beyond slogans, occasional tourist trips, admiration for military prowess and willingness to accept all immigrants who come, whatever the difficulty. These are aspects

which provide thrill and pleasure at the display of sovereign power, but in many ways they are superficial.

We must understand the deeper meanings - that Israel is the vehicle of supreme Jewish identity, the container carrying the message of redemption for the whole world. We have to dig into that concept - really to grasp it, internalize it, live with it without embarrassment, call it by its right name - the mission of the chosen people and the chosen land.

If we look for this in Israel's soul, we can find it in the secular heart of the kibbutz farmer, the intensity of the fighter pilot, the dedication of the business man who has remained and not emigrated out. We can find it in the religious heart of the modern Orthodox. We can find it in the astounding cultural level of a high civilization, embracing music and art and science and literature.

Our dissatisfactions with Israel are legitimate - for there is an unnecessary discrepancy between ideals and actions in the areas of peace-making, political process, religious freedom, civil rights, to mention only some of the issues which irritate and confound us.

But on balance the inspirational aspects of Israel far outweigh its shortcomings - and in the words of the song we should accentuate the positive.

YOU'VE GOTTA ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE
ELIMINATE THE NEGATIVE
LATCH ON TO THE AFFIRMATIVE
DON'T MESS WITH MR. IN-BETWEEN.
YOU GOTTA SPREAD JOY UP TO THE MAXIMUM
BRING GLOOM DOWN TO THE MINIMUM
HAVE FAITH OR PANDEMONIUM'S
LIABLE TO WALK UPON THE SCENE.
TO ILLUSTRATE - MY LAST REMARK
JONAH IN THE WHALE - NOAH IN THE ARK
WHAT DID THEY DO
JUST WHEN EVERYTHING LOOKED SO DARK
MAN THEY SAID WE'D BETTER.....

Further, we deepen the manner in which we seek to obtain
more insights, to understand the inner definitions. More of us
must:

Learn the Hebrew language;
Live there for periods of time;
Send our children for periods of education;
Develop a new tool to improve Israeli society - i.e.
citizen voluntarism, replacing the tradition of
expecting the government to solve all problems.
Do everything possible to move Israel from being the
last Bolshevik society on earth to a free-market
economy;

Assist in Israel's industrial development, which will create employment and stimulate exports.

I have one idea linked to Israel, which could achieve the objective of combatting assimilation among American Jews and instilling a fierce determination toward continuity. This plan could at the same time restore Israel's faith in itself, and restore her to a central place in the Diaspora's soul. In other words, this plan could avert the historical crisis in both centers of Jewish life with subsequent similar effect throughout the entire Diaspora. This idea requires your acceptance of a basic premise - namely, that you can more easily learn your Judaism by living for a time in the Jewish state where you will have every variety of experience at your fingertips. Living in Israel, even for a period as short as one year, will produce startling results, if your time is properly programmed, in a specially crafted educational environment.

I am proposing an International Family Village on its own campus with all facilities for housing, feeding, socializing, recreating, studying - all the physical features which are often unsatisfactory and overly expensive when one family tries to create such a total environment all by itself. Each arriving family can move into the pre-arranged housing and the very next day begin living and learning instead of trying to get organized for living. Solve the logistics in advance. Avoid the aggravations of dealing with lots of mechanical problems. To

avoid creating an American ghetto, make arrangements to incorporate tens of Israeli families to come live in your village and study with you. There are Israeli candidates galore, your peers in age, experience and outlook, who are also ignorant of and hungry for Judaic knowledge. Lastly, you have an enormous source of power with which to create this campus. Counting all the alumni of Wexner, plus all the Young Leadership programs, started by the UJA and replicated in hundreds of federations, over 30 year period, you have a corps of thousands of persons who are potential contributors of money, expertise and experience. I think the Family Village is exciting and easily doable.

Before going into the details of how the campus would be constructed, we must first establish the premise I referred to a moment ago. You must believe in the value of spending that year in Israel, and you must plan for it long in advance. Planning is easier or harder depending on the ages of your children and your personal financial status. The older you are - the easier. Children are grown and away on their own. Your financial condition is more secure. The younger you are - the harder. Children's needs must be considered. You would have to arrange a leave of absence from job or profession; older kids could be enrolled in an Israeli university; younger kids could be gathered into an elementary school to be organized right on the campus. You pick the right time in your life, preparing for it several years in advance, and making a reservation for a house at a time best suited for your family.

Once you move in you are no longer a tourist. You will enter into the very bloodstream of the nation. You will learn Hebrew - enough to read the headlines in the afternoon paper Maariv, not enough to follow the news on TV; enough to handle the shopping, the bank and the post office, not enough to follow a play at the theater. You will go to the great public ceremonies on Independence Day or Holocaust Memorial Day in the midst of streams of people who walk to the stadium or the cemetery or the parade - not sitting in special reserved sections which the UJA has arranged for you, but mixed in with the masses. You will spend Friday evenings at Israeli friends' homes, worrying with them about their kids in the army and talking about the chances of the next war. You will stand in the lines created by uncaring bureaucrats and figure out how to beat the system. You will thrill to the magic of the sudden sunset in Jerusalem or witness the huge red globe slipping into the Mediterranean while walking on the beach in jeans and sneakers instead of looking at it through the windows of the tourist's hotel.

Taste the land, smell it, love it, hate it - but live in it, from listening to the morning radio news to walking the midnight watch in the civil guard. This is the only way you will ever come to feel that it is really yours in a hard, true practical fashion, rather than just admiring it in some distant sentimental manner.

Not only will this be better for you, but also for the

country, because, as you live the problems, you will itch to solve them. And only by staying there, for a while at least, will you make a dent. Through your American experience in creating voluntary organizations and making things happen, you will establish a similar tradition in Israel. Most Israelis think in conservative and centralized patterns. They believe that if there is a problem, the government should solve it. There are only the primitive beginnings of citizens' organizations trying to take things in their own hands. What is a century-old practice in the United States has yet to take root in Israel - but it can be done. Waves of you, coming year after year, for a decade or two, will help voluntarism to catch on.

Really major matters, like religion-state relationships, racial and ethnic suspicions between population groups, civil rights, women's rights, electoral reform, religious pluralism are all waiting for solutions or at least improvements. These can come about, slowly but surely, if there is a constant turn-over of people like you, coming into the country, sensing the problems, seeking change, and creating movements for improvement.

I am not talking about the heavy portentous matter of "making aliyah" for the rest of your life. I am talking about a new kind of aliyah - organizing your life in the United States to enable you to come to Israel for a year, even two - with the double purpose of acquiring knowledge of your Judaic heritage, for your own and your children's self-improvement, and then

improvement of Israel's systems of society. This means learning something of the Hebrew language and living inside an Israeli skin, as much as possible. It will be marvelous for you - magnificent for the country - and help re-navigate the course. I'm suggesting it not only as a pleasure - but also as a duty. You owe a duty to Jewish continuity and Israeli advancement. This is a call to duty, like so many other calls to which you are trained to respond.

In quick outline, let me present some of the details of the International Family Village:

I. Purposes

1. House families coming for extended periods to study.
2. Provide instant mix with israelis, by inviting families with similar study purposes to take up residence.
3. Invite families from other countries (U.K., Western Europe, South Africa, Australia, Russia) to join.
4. Provide faculty from nearby universities to study all relevant subjects. Basic one year curriculum to be devised, combination of compulsory and optional subjects.
5. Provide Ulpan, for basic Hebrew.
6. Serve as base for intensive touring.
7. Provide counselling and advisory services, to

assist with integration into present life, and offer advice for possible future permanent life in Israel.

II. Physical Description

1. Residential quarters for 50-100 families; condominium style, basic 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom, fireplace, all amenities.
2. Clubhouse type facility - large lounge; big stone wall with fireplace; lots of comfortable furniture; game rooms; billiard tables; dining room, et.
3. Education building - class rooms; auditorium, library with study carrels; all audio-visual facilities; administration offices.
4. Sport facilities:
 - a) outdoor - 8 tennis courts; volleyball courts, baseball, football, and soccer fields, olympic swimming pool.
 - b) indoor - gymnasium; machine rooms; squash courts, basketball court with bleacher seating; pool.
5. Parking lot - busses, private cars, luggage handling.

III. Sites

1. Build near a university.
2. Possibility of building three, slightly smaller, rather than one, larger. If one, site it between Herzliya and Netanya (i.e. near Tel Aviv University). If a second, site it near Carmiel in the Galilee (i.e. near Haifa University). If a third, site it near Beersheba (i.e. near Ben Gurion University).

IV. Operational Procedure

1. Develop various curricula - for varying periods of time - i.e. define one semester as 4 months - make up curricula for one, two and three semesters.
2. Develop individual tutorials in selected list of subjects.
3. Develop Hebrew language courses - at various levels, beginner, intermediary, advanced; one, two or three semesters.
4. Make up brochure describing all above.
5. Set up administrative office in United States.
6. Recruit by mail, phone, networking - take reservations for fixed period.

V. Personnel

1. In United States -
Executive director, with necessary staff, for

recruiting, registration, handling finances -
all administration.

2. In Israel -

President of college, for inspiration and
policy.

Vice-President, for administration.

Dean, for academic direction and affairs.

Conclusion

It will take several years to plan and build the Family Village, to recruit the first pioneers, to work out the operating system. Let that process start now, even while our major concentration during these same several years must be on the immediate challenge of absorbing the Russians and the few remaining Ethiopians. There is no conflict. The fund-raising for taking the next million into Israel has priority. But the planning process for the Family Village can proceed simultaneously.

Planning releases all sorts of juices. Someone might suggest a youth village, as a special parallel project; another idea might be a fine money-making conference center. There is not a single professionally designed conference center in the entire country. Imagine if we had a place such as this, in which to live and study. Start to think of Israel as a potential

Switzerland (for it will not be many years before she reaches the actual population of Switzerland, 7.5 million). Let your imagination race ahead, feel the adrenalin start to flow, and translate that into a source of energy which will activate, stimulate, nourish an American Jewish community into a deeper understanding of itself.

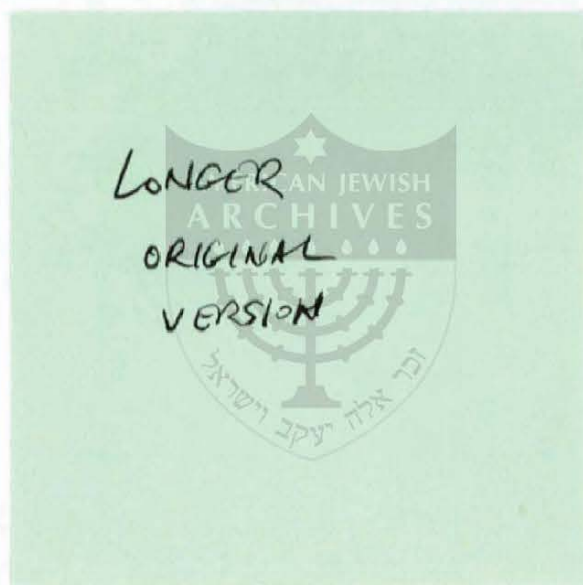
The crisis here is one of identity. Leaders must devise a strategy of survival. Yes - Rabbi Borowitz - strengthening faith and belief is a good thing - but I feel it is an uncertain remedy in this secular scientific age. Linkage to Israel, in matters of culture, language, economy, pride and peoplehood, including religion, seems a better prescription - at least for the 21st century.

Previous generations of Jews erected the community buildings and institutions in America. This was relatively easy. They were motivated by a sense of ethnic Jewish identity, which they expressed through financial generosity and an instinct that the physical manifestation of ethnic community was necessary in America. The non-Jewish neighbor had his church, we had to have our synagogue, beautiful and prominent, as proof of our existence, whether we entered it very often, or not. And so with our community center and federation building and old folks' home.

Your generation, the third in America, has the harder task of building systems, not necessarily buildings, for learning

the contents of the heritage, the knowledge without which everything your fathers and mothers built physically might fall apart through disuse and neglect. Learning is the opposite of abandonment. You must go and learn, if you would not make a mockery of your ancestors.

What a crisis, what a testing, what a challenge! Are you up to it? Your generation, and perhaps your children, no more than that, will face the judgment of history. You will earn the applause of the future if your leadership meets the present crisis, or you will be branded as failures, guilty of abetting the disappearance of American Jewry in the fourth century of its existence. Link to Israel, draw inspiration from it, from land and peoplehood, from heritage and faith, to fashion a strong creative American Judaism, while at the same time shaping Israel into the reality carried in our dreams. May you succeed with honor.



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question will determine its future Jewish vitality."

Borowitz invited a number of people to respond to his premise, and their replies were published in subsequent issues of Sh'ma.

1. Rabbi Harold Schulweis of California said that not ideology, but chavurot, were necessary, to bring Jews together, and thus unite them in determination to survive.
2. Tom Dine of AIPAC said that Israel is not dead, still claims the hearts of American Jews, and in supporting Israel the American Jews will rejuvenate their own community.
3. Rabbi Walter Wurzberger believes that what really matters to American Jews is their life-cycle events (birth, marriage and death) and participation in rituals such as Seder or Chanukah candles.
"The real challenge confronting our religious leadership is to devise strategies to employ...Jewish ethnic loyalties as the foundation for building an imposing structure of Judaic values."
4. Jonathan Woocher of JESNA, author of "Sacred Survival", says that pulling away from Israel won't help, that the issue is religious, and that we must believe (in some mysterious way) that we are a special people with a special way of life which, for us, is supremely rewarding, and for the world is part of the slow process of redemption.

5. Professor Lawrence Hoffman of HUC-JIR believes that ethnicity alone no longer guarantees Jewish survival. He agrees with Borowitz that "Jews will have to find their way to God, not just peoplehood, or they may...abandon both." He also believes that "we require as well a reassertion of the ethical mandate which has been called prophetic Judaism." A combination of these elements - reform of worship by spirituality, peoplehood and ethical conduct - will sustain us into the 21st century.
6. Rabbi Michael Berenbaum, of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial, says that the old Emancipation slogan "Be a Jew at home and a universal man in the street" must now be reversed. Many American Jews are "Jews in public" but their private lives are devoid of Jewish content. "American Jews will either choose high intensity Jewish identities, or their identity will wither away."
7. Rabbi Balfour Brickner of the Stephen Wise Synagogue in New York agrees with Borowitz that a religious revival is necessary, but is worried about who will do it. Rabbis don't have audiences; academics don't get paid to share their knowledge; writers could perhaps be commissioned to write dramatically on issues of belief; Christians could help by asking curious questions, thus forcing Jews to focus on their beliefs. Our continuity is not in question, only the quality of our self-identification.

8. Professor Ellen Umansky of Swarthmore College believes that "the hierarchical model of leadership that still dominates much of Jewish communal life must be altered. Leaders should not lead through control, but should be facilitators, helping their congregants or members to get involved in lay committees for creating programs and new rituals; also welcoming those "minimal Jews" who stay out of organized community because they are uncomfortable or non-conformist.
9. Professor Henry Feingold of CUNY says that modern secular Jews can no longer be great believers. There is a conceit in proposing that a religious elite can lead Jews back to Judaism in a secular age. But the secular can become a saving remnant. Look at the fascinating amalgam between religious and secular in Israel where the whole nation observes the religious calendar which enriches secular life. In America we may yet see a Judaization of the secular mind-set. That is far more likely than a forced march back to religion.

From all the above it is clear that savants and scholars are far from agreeing on a diagnosis of and prescription for the disease which might lead to disappearance. While they argue, let us look once more into the magic of Israel, to make certain that we do not dismiss too lightly the luminous incandescent power of her miraculous presence.

I don't agree with Borowitz that Israel has lost its magnetic attraction. I think we haven't even begun to plumb the possibilities Israel has for awakening spirit and determination in American Jewry. I think we must solve the twin historical crisis for both Jewries by linking them more closely together, and having each help solve the crisis of the other. A stronger connection with Israel can help strengthen American Jews, by giving them a greater pride in a truly Jewish Israel, if that very Israel overcomes its inadequacies and achieves the state of moral height which is her true potential. What I am describing is a mobius knot, in which the intertwining could bring each of the two elements into an unbreakable and mutually supportive condition, beneficial to both.

American Jews must learn to relate to Israel in a much deeper fashion - beyond slogans, occasional tourist trips, admiration for military prowess and willingness to accept all immigrants who come, whatever the difficulty. These are aspects which provide thrill and pleasure at the display of sovereign power, but in many ways they are superficial.

We must understand the deeper meanings - that Israel is the vehicle of supreme Jewish identity, the container carrying the message of redemption for the whole world. We have to dig into that concept - really to grasp it, internalize it, live with it without embarrassment, call it by its right name - the mission of the chosen people and the chosen land.

If we look for this in Israel's soul, we can find it in the secular heart of the kibbutz farmer, the intensity of the fighter pilot, the dedication of the business man who has remained and not emigrated out. We can find it in the religious heart of the modern Orthodox. We can find it in the astounding cultural level of a high civilization, embracing music and art and science and literature.

Our dissatisfactions with Israel are legitimate - for there is an unnecessary discrepancy between ideals and actions in the areas of peace-making, political process, religious freedom, civil rights, to mention only some of the issues which irritate and confound us.

But on balance the inspirational aspects of Israel far outweigh its shortcomings - and in the words of the song we should accentuate the positive.

YOU'VE GOTTA ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE
ELIMINATE THE NEGATIVE
LATCH ON TO THE AFFIRMATIVE
DON'T MESS WITH MR. IN-BETWEEN.
YOU GOTTA SPREAD JOY UP TO THE MAXIMUM
BRING GLOOM DOWN TO THE MINIMUM
HAVE FAITH OR PANDEMONIUM'S
LIABLE TO WALK UPON THE SCENE.
TO ILLUSTRATE - MY LAST REMARK
JONAH IN THE WHALE - NOAH IN THE ARK
WHAT DID THEY DO
JUST WHEN EVERYTHING LOOKED SO DARK
MAN THEY SAID WE'D BETTER.....

Further, we deepen the manner in which we seek to obtain more insights,
to understand the inner definitions. More of us must:

Learn the Hebrew language;
Live there for periods of time;
Send our children for periods of education;
Develop a new tool to improve Israeli society - i.e. citizen
voluntarism, replacing the tradition of expecting the
government to solve all problems.

Do everything possible to move Israel from being the last Bolshevik society on earth to a free-market economy;
Assist in Israel's industrial development, which will create employment and stimulate exports.

I have one idea linked to Israel, which could achieve the objective of combatting assimilation among American Jews and instilling a fierce determination toward continuity. This plan could at the same time restore Israel's faith in itself, and restore her to a central place in the Diaspora's soul. In other words, this plan could avert the historical crisis in both centers of Jewish life with subsequent similar effect throughout the entire Diaspora. This idea requires your acceptance of a basic premise - namely, that you can more easily learn your Judaism by living for a time in the Jewish state where you will have every variety of experience at your fingertips. Living in Israel, even for a period as short as one year, will produce startling results, if your time is properly programmed, in a specially crafted educational environment.

I am proposing an International Family Village on its own campus with all facilities for housing, feeding, socializing, recreating, studying - all the physical features which are often unsatisfactory and overly expensive when one family tries to create such a total environment all by itself. Each arriving family can move into the pre-arranged housing and the very next day begin living and learning instead of trying to get organized for living. Solve the logistics in

advance. Avoid the aggravations of dealing with lots of mechanical problems. To avoid creating an American ghetto, make arrangements to incorporate tens of Israeli families to come live in your village and study with you. There are Israeli candidates galore, your peers in age, experience and outlook, who are also ignorant of and hungry for Judaic knowledge. Lastly, you have an enormous source of power with which to create this campus. Counting all the alumni of Wexner, plus all the Young Leadership programs, started by the UJA and replicated in hundreds of federations, over 30 year period, you have a corps of thousands of persons who are potential contributors of money, expertise and experience. I think the Family Village is exciting and easily doable.

Before going into the details of how the campus would be constructed, we must first establish the premise I referred to a moment ago. You must believe in the value of spending that year in Israel, and you must plan for it long in advance. Planning is easier or harder depending on the ages of your children and your personal financial status. The older you are - the easier. Children are grown and away on their own. Your financial condition is more secure. The younger you are - the harder. Children's needs must be considered. You would have to arrange a leave of absence from job or profession; older kids could be enrolled in an Israeli university; younger kids could be gathered into an elementary school to be organized right on the campus. You pick the right time in your life, preparing for it several years in advance, and making a reservation for a house at a time best suited for your family.

Once you move in you are no longer a tourist. You will enter into the very bloodstream of the nation. You will learn Hebrew - enough to read the headlines in the afternoon paper Maariv, not enough to follow the news on TV; enough to handle the shopping, the bank and the post office, not enough to follow a play at the theater. You will go to the great public ceremonies on Independence Day or Holocaust Memorial Day in the midst of streams of people who walk to the stadium or the cemetery or the parade - not sitting in special reserved sections which the UJA has arranged for you, but mixed in with the masses. You will spend Friday evenings at Israeli friends' homes, worrying with them about their kids in the army and talking about the chances of the next war. You will stand in the lines created by uncaring bureaucrats and figure out how to beat the system. You will thrill to the magic of the sudden sunset in Jerusalem or witness the huge red globe slipping into the Mediterranean while walking on the beach in jeans and sneakers instead of looking at it through the windows of the tourist's hotel.

Taste the land, smell it, love it, hate it - but live in it, from listening to the morning radio news to walking the midnight watch in the civil guard. This is the only way you will ever come to feel that it is really yours in a hard, true practical fashion, rather than just admiring it in some distant sentimental manner.

Not only will this be better for you, but also for the country, because, as you live the problems, you will itch to solve them. And only by staying there, for a while at least, will you make a dent. Through your American experience in creating voluntary organizations and making things happen, you will establish a similar tradition in Israel. Most Israelis think in conservative and centralized patterns. They believe that if there is a problem, the government should solve it. There are only the primitive beginnings of citizens' organizations trying to take things in their own hands. What is a century-old practice in the United States has yet to take root in Israel - but it can be done. Waves of you, coming year after year, for a decade or two, will help voluntarism to catch on.

Really major matters, like religion-state relationships, racial and ethnic suspicions between population groups, civil rights, women's rights, electoral reform, religious pluralism are all waiting for solutions or at least improvements. These can come about, slowly but surely, if there is a constant turn-over of people like you, coming into the country, sensing the problems, seeking change, and creating movements for improvement.

I am not talking about the heavy portentous matter of "making aliyah" for the rest of your life. I am talking about a new kind of aliyah - organizing your life in the United States to enable you to come to Israel for a year, even two - with the double purpose of acquiring knowledge of your Judaic heritage, for your own and your children's self-improvement, and then improvement of Israel's

systems of society. This means learning something of the Hebrew language and living inside an Israeli skin, as much as possible. It will be marvelous for you - magnificent for the country - and help re-navigate the course. I'm suggesting it not only as a pleasure - but also as a duty. You owe a duty to Jewish continuity and Israeli advancement. This is a call to duty, like so many other calls to which you are trained to respond.

In quick outline, let me present some of the details of the International Family Village:

I. Purposes

1. House families coming for extended periods to study.
2. Provide instant mix with israelis, by inviting families with similar study purposes to take up residence.
3. Invite families from other countries (U.K., Western Europe, South Africa, Australia, Russia) to join.
4. Provide faculty from nearby universities to study all relevant subjects. Basic one year curriculum to be devised, combination of compulsory and optional subjects.
5. Provide Ulpan, for basic Hebrew.
6. Serve as base for intensive touring.
7. Provide counselling and advisory services, to assist with integration into present life, and offer advice for possible future permanent life in Israel.

II. Physical Description

1. Residential quarters for 50-100 families; condominium style, basic 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom, fireplace, all amenities.
2. Clubhouse type facility - large lounge; big stone wall with fireplace; lots of comfortable furniture; game rooms; billiard tables; dining room, et.
3. Education building - class rooms; auditorium, library with study carrels; all audio-visual facilities; administration offices.
4. Sport facilities:
 - a) outdoor - 8 tennis courts; volleyball courts, baseball, football, and soccer fields, olympic swimming pool.
 - b) indoor - gymnasium; machine rooms; squash courts, basketball court with bleacher seating; pool.
5. Parking lot - busses, private cars, luggage handling.

III. Sites

1. Build near a university.
2. Possibility of building three, slightly smaller, rather than one, larger. If one, site it between Herzliya and Netanya (i.e. near Tel Aviv University). If a second, site it near Carmiel in the Galilee (i.e. near Haifa University). If a third, site it near Beersheba (i.e. near Ben Gurion University).

IV. Operational Procedure

1. Develop various curricula - for varying periods of time - i.e. define one semester as 4 months - make up curricula for one, two and three semesters.
2. Develop individual tutorials in selected list of subjects.
3. Develop Hebrew language courses - at various levels, beginner, intermediary, advanced; one, two or three semesters.
4. Make up brochure describing all above.
5. Set up administrative office in United States.
6. Recruit by mail, phone, networking - take reservations for fixed period.

V. Personnel

1. In United States -
Executive director, with necessary staff, for recruiting, registration, handling finances - all administration.
2. In Israel -
President of college, for inspiration and policy.
Vice-President, for administration.
Dean, for academic direction and affairs.

VI. Funding

1. Create 501-c)-3 non-profit corporation to raise funds and construct the campus - possible cost \$25 million.

Approximate Capital Costs

(Average Condo - 150-180 m² (1650-1980 sq. ft.)

100 Condominia @ \$150,000 each =	\$	15.	mill.
Club-house 2000 m ² x \$1000 per meter =		2.	mill.
Educational Bldg. 5000 m ² x \$500 per meter =		3.5	mill.
Gymnasium Bldg. 3000 m ² x \$500 per meter =		1.5	mill.
Sport fields + landscaping, etc. =		<u>2.</u>	<u>mill.</u>
Land Acquisition		<u>1.</u>	<u>mill.</u>
Approximate Capital Cost	\$	25.	mill.

2. Determine operational costs. Fees charged for rent, board in dining room (if desired), studies, touring, overhead must enable operations to be self-liquidating. Determine whether you want to recover any of the capital investment. Total amount charged must be reasonable - should not exceed \$1500 per month, if possible.

Conclusion

It will take several years to plan and build the Family Village, to recruit the first pioneers, to work out the operating system. Let that process start now, even while our major concentration during these same several years must be on the immediate challenge of absorbing the Russians and the few remaining Ethiopians. There is no conflict. The fund-raising for taking the next million into Israel has priority. But the planning process for the Family Village can proceed simultaneously.

Planning releases all sorts of juices. Someone might suggest a youth village, as a special parallel project; another idea might be a fine money-making conference center. There is not a single professionally designed conference center in the entire country. Imagine if we had a place such as this, in which to live and study. Start to think of Israel as a potential Switzerland (for it will not be many years before she reaches the actual population of Switzerland, 7.5 million). Let your imagination race ahead, feel the adrenalin start to flow, and translate that into a source of energy which will activate, stimulate, nourish an American Jewish community into a deeper understanding of itself.

The crisis here is one of identity. Leaders must devise a strategy of survival. Yes - Rabbi Borowitz - strengthening faith and belief is a good

thing - but I feel it is an uncertain remedy in this secular scientific age. Linkage to Israel, in matters of culture, language, economy, pride and peoplehood, including religion, seems a better prescription - at least for the 21st century.

Previous generations of Jews erected the community buildings and institutions in America. This was relatively easy. They were motivated by a sense of ethnic Jewish identity, which they expressed through financial generosity and an instinct that the physical manifestation of ethnic community was necessary in America. The non-Jewish neighbor had his church, we had to have our synagogue, beautiful and prominent, as proof of our existence, whether we entered it very often, or not. And so with our community center and federation building and old folks' home.

Your generation, the third in America, has the harder task of building systems, not necessarily buildings, for learning the contents of the heritage, the knowledge without which everything your fathers and mothers built physically might fall apart through disuse and neglect. Learning is the opposite of abandonment. You must go and learn, if you would not make a mockery of your ancestors.

What a crisis, what a testing, what a challenge! Are you up to it? Your generation, and perhaps your children, no more than that, will face the

judgment of history. You will earn the applause of the future if your leadership meets the present crisis, or you will be branded as failures, guilty of abetting the disappearance of American Jewry in the fourth century of its existence. Link to Israel, draw inspiration from it, from land and peoplehood, from heritage and faith, to fashion a strong creative American Judaism, while at the same time shaping Israel into the reality carried in our dreams. May you succeed with honor.

Notes

1. This paper was written before the election of the Rabin Government, and before the word "continuity" became a new slogan.
2. The Family Village proposal is found on pages 13-20.