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WEXNER HERITAGE FOUNDATION

San Francisco, April 1 - 3, 1997

Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman

Session 13: DUAL IDENTITY

Living in Two Worlds

This session will deal with the main problem which faces American Jews: how to live creatively with our American nationality and our Jewish peoplehood.

Outline and Readings

I. H.A.F. - INTRODUCTION

1. American Jewry is in a state of crisis caused by a number of factors: almost universal ignorance of its history and religion; assimilation to the point of loss of identity; intermarriage to the point of possible extinction. This crisis must be averted by a huge national effort, or we shall disappear as a community by the third quarter of the next century.
2. Letty Cottin Pogrebin puts it this way:

"To have Jewish grandchildren you either move to Israel where your children are most likely to meet, date and mate with Jews - or you stay in the Diaspora and fill their hearts and heads with Jewish things so they will choose to live as Jews regardless of the seductions of North American life."
3. You have three historic tasks in your lifetime:
 - a. Turn American Jewry around from weakness and disappearance, to strong and positive Jewish living.
 - b. Support Israel all the way through to peace and economic prosperity.
 - c. Create a Jewish infrastructure in the former Soviet Union.
4. Now let's go back and look at how American Jewry got into its present predicament. It all started about 200 years ago.

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- Editor, David Englander, The Jewish Enigma
Chapt. 3 - Jewish Emancipation in Europe in 18th and 19th Centuries
pp 81 - 109 (precis of this chapter follows)

Enlightenment - 17th Century

1. Turning point in human ability to understand and control the world.
 - a. Sir Isaac Newton's (1642-1727) laws of physics opened the physical universe.
 - b. John Locke (1632-1704) philosopher, explained that the mind worked through reason.
2. Religion was challenged.
3. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) stated that mankind was to assume responsibility for itself through the use of intellect and reason.
4. Enlightenment emerged after the terrible wars of religion (1560-1648) Catholic vs. Protestant, and during the relative peace between 1648 and 1789 (French Revolution).
5. Enlightenment proposed religious peace, toleration and economic growth, without the heavy destruction of wars - also the growth of states and state absolutism.

Enlightenment and Jews

1. After 1648, Jews found their way back to Central and Western Europe and England. The rulers wanted help in breaking the nobles, clergy and closed guilds - so Jews were admitted into Germany, France, etc. but did not become equal citizens.

2. Jews were considered morally inferior, because of their relationship to commerce and money. Voltaire and Kant used the Jews as a stick with which to beat on Christianity.
3. In 1781, Joseph II Edict of Toleration granted Protestants and Jews limited religious toleration. But, toleration contained provisions for regeneration (i.e. occupational restructuring, use of vernacular language, changes in social manners, secular education, relinquishing autonomous courts, and paying all taxes.)
4. Emancipation became a contract in which regeneration was exchanged for rights.

Moses Mendelsohn - stunning figure - example of relations with Christians because of his intellect plus social grace.

1. Accepted the contract of Emperor Joseph II.
2. Advocated separation of church and state - i.e. Jews to give up their autonomous self-government (schools, courts, social welfare, etc.), except for religion. THIS OPINION ALREADY PRESAGED NAPOLEONIC SANHEDRIN.

French Revolution and Emancipation for Jews

1. Rights of Man - 26 August, 1789.
2. Ashkenazim in Alsace; functioned separately from French civilization.
3. Sephardim in Bayonne, Bordeaux; wealthy and acculturated, integrated with French.
4. In a debate, in National Assembly, Count Clermont-Tonnere made famous statement "The Jews should be denied everything as a nation, but granted everything as individuals. They must be citizens."
5. Opponents prevailed - invoking Voltaire - saying the mob would riot.

6. Sephardim separated from Ashkenazim and were quickly granted equality.
7. On 27 September 1791, Ashkenazim gained their rights; and next day the Assembly stipulated that the Jews had renounced their own special autonomy, and also passed a law against Jewish usurers.

Napoleon and the Jews

1. Jews gave credit at high percentage to French peasants to buy lands expropriated from the churches. Collection on these debts by foreclosing on these lands caused great tension between Jews and peasants.
2. Napoleon, passing through Strasbourg in 1806, was importuned to solve this problem of Jews and usury. He decided to convene an Assembly of Jewish Notables to ascertain whether Judaism prevented the Jews from complying with French laws and civic morality. Twelve questions were asked.
3. The answers given showed that the Jews accepted a redefinition of Judaism, and did not preclude social regeneration.
 - a. Judaism was defined as solely a religion.
 - b. Jews were permitted to marry non-Jews.
 - c. The Jews subordinated themselves entirely to the authority of the state; and recognized the superiority of civil over religious law, asserting that rabbis could refuse to give religious sanction to a mixed marriage but were obligated to recognize that it was legally binding in civil law.
 - d. The Jews recognized the equality in Jewish law of their French fellow citizens, and professed their loyalty to the Emperor of France.

4. In 1807, a Sanhedrin of rabbis was convened to give religious sanction to the Assembly of Notables' answers. Napoleon then recognized Judaism as a consistoire (council) following the model of the French Catholic church. Since this model was a clerical hierarchy, Judaism became a rabbi-centered religion.
5. In 1808, "The Infamous Decrees" were passed which regulated the economic activities and residential rights of the Ashkenazim for the next ten years. The Jews felt themselves demoted to second-class citizens.
6. In 1818 the Bourbon Kings did not renew these decrees, and in 1831 the Parliament accorded equality to Judaism with Christianity. Jewish emancipation had been achieved.

Turning Back The Clock On Emancipation

1. What Napoleon demanded of the French Jews (regeneration) and what he gave them in return (equal rights and citizenship) - did not take place in the German states and large cities. There was a reaction backwards after the Congress of Vienna (1815).
2. Out of frustration and dissatisfaction, new forms of Judaism began to develop in the German states between 1815 and 1848. Reform, then neo-orthodox, then the compromise conservative, all began to take form.
3. In addition, there developed the scientific study of Judaism, "Wissenschaft des Judentums", which was intended to make Judaism familiar to non-Jews, thus aiding emancipation. This gave rise to a new type of rabbi - educated in the secular university, not only the yeshiva. David Friedlander (reform); Samson Raphael Hirsch (neo-orthodox); and Zechariah Frankel (conservative). The latter founded the first modern rabbinical seminary in Breslau in 1854.

Jewish Involvement In Liberal and National Movements

1. The alliance of the Jews with liberalism was firmly cemented. Gabriel Riesser in Germany; Adolphe Cremieux in France; Sir Moses

Montefiore in England all fought for Jewish rights.

2. Given their liberal affiliations, Jews were actively engaged in the Revolution of 1848, fighting on the barricades and dying in action. The first funeral turned into a demonstration for the removal of religious distinctions. Five Jews were elected to the German National Parliament; many were elected to state parliaments, also in Austria.
3. But 1848 did not bring real emancipation and equal rights. The liberals were not strong enough to retain power. However, Jewish emancipation had become a principle of liberalism, and the next upheaval would finally establish emancipation.

Achievement Of Full Emancipation In Europe

1. Liberalism achieved its greatest triumph when it succeeded in establishing unified states based on individual rights. This occurred in the 1860's and 70's.

Austria	1867
Germany	1869
Italy	1870
England	1845 (except for a seat in Parliament)

1858 (Lord Rothschild was finally seated in Parliament after the oath "as a Christian" was altered).

III. EMANCIPATION

-- Mendes-Flohr and Reinhartz, The Jew in the Modern World, Second Edition

- (1) Tolerance:
Lessing: "A Parable of Tolerance" pp. 64 - 67
- (2) Citizenship:
Napoleon: Convenes Assembly of Jewish Notables pp.123 -124
Answers to Napoleon pp. 128 - 132

Parisian Sanhedrin pp. 135 - 136

(3) Political Equality:

England pp. 151 - 152

Germany pp. 153 - 154

IV. SELF-DEFINITION

(in each of the following readings, note underlinings in the texts)

- Plaut, The Growth of Reform Judaism
Pittsburgh Platform (1885) pp. 31 - 34
Columbus Platform (1937) pp. 96 - 98

- Karp, Haven and Home
Judaism as a Civilization pp. 360 - 373
Conservative and Reconstructionism

- Sacks, Arguments for the Sake of Heaven
Dilemma of Orthodoxy pp. 183-199
Modern Orthodoxy

V. MAPS

- Gilbert, Jewish History Atlas,
Please refer to the Maps on pages 58 & 59:
Napoleon and the Jews
The Emancipation of European Jewry

Questions and Issues to consider while reading:

The Balancing Act

1. How can we maintain a strong sense of Jewish identity, while living in a free permissive society as absolutely equal Americans?
2. How do we prevent a deterioration of values, so that we don't descend to the lowest common denominator of ideal-less, mind-less materialistic mores?

3. How do we teach our children the best and highest aspects of American culture and at the same time the full richness of the Jewish heritage?
4. How do we grow from mere "survivalists" to a full Jewish "creative society"?
5. How do we relate ourselves to Israel in a manner which benefits both her and us?

Cultural Literacy Terms (that will be discussed in this class)

Section VI:#1-3; Section IX:#7-10; 13; 41-42; 44; 52-53; 63

Emancipation

"The Jews Should be Denied Everything as a Nation, but Granted Everything as Individuals"

Napoleonic Sanhedrin

HUC -- Hebrew Union College 1875

Pittsburgh Platform 1885

Columbus Platform 1937

JTS -- Jewish Theological Seminary

YU -- Yeshiva University 1886

Mordecai Kaplan -- Reconstructionism

Judaism as a Civilization

Day School

Assimilation

Intermarriage

Modern Orthodox

EULOGY

given by Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman

at Funeral of

Charles J. Bensley

June 6th, 1995

Riverdale Temple, NY

Charles Bensley was my father-in-law for thirty two years, and my friend and colleague for longer. We spent the years talking ideas and ideals - working together on the projects dear to us both, reading books together - arguing politics and intellectual subjects.

We traveled the Golan Heights during the Yom Kippur War and walked the Caesarea beach in peaceful times - and I loved him

Charles Bensley built houses - all sorts of houses all his life. No - he was not a contractor. Many of you know his occupations. He was a lawyer, who headed a petroleum distributing company; owned many gasoline stations; engaged in various real estate transactions; and did his share during WW II by manufacturing special parts for bomber aircraft engines. But all these activities revealed very little of the soul of the man.

The true man was possessed of high ideals, moved by a constant search for improving the world, seeking morality and civilization, and reading constantly on these major themes which formed the outline of his personality.

When I said he built houses, use that metaphor to think of what he really did. First of all he built this house - this temple in which we gathered to take our parting from him. Was he deeply religious in the sense of praying every day, seeking God, pondering on the afterlife? No. This house was to him an instrument for protecting the community of the Jewish people - keeping them together, helping them survive so they could make their matchless contribution to the betterment of human society. He believed that the Jews were a genius people, whose gift of moral and philosophical ideals to the world led to the great social achievements of democracy and justice. So he became one of the founders of this synagogue when he moved to this neighborhood.

Secondly, he built many large houses - called schools. If any one term applied to him, Charles Bensley was an educator. He believed that a good education was the only route by which people could rise in this world - the underclass to overcome its poverty and other classes to make the changes necessary to solve social and political problems. Education was the key to move humans from a primitive to a civilized state of being. And so, he gave decades of his life to building the school system of this city; hundreds and hundreds of schools, fighting the very bureaucracy in which he was a central player on behalf of the kids who were his main concern.

Thirdly, he built another kind of house - this time a workshop through the ORT Federation, which provided vocational training to underprivileged Jewish youngsters all over the world. On every continent, for almost a century, from Russia to India, Argentina to Israel, ORT has taught and trained and Charlie Bensley was among those who suggested and supported, who led and rejoiced as these garages and hangers, shops and sheds kept rising and doing their beautiful work.

Lastly, he built the biggest house of all - the nation of Israel, for whose children he provided one-room kindergartens and complex high schools, libraries and community centers, all through the Israel Education Fund of the UJA, which he helped to form and whose founding president he was. More than 700 institutions throughout the new nation were the fruit of his labors, and universal high school education was the goal he spendingly achieved.

Psalm 127:1 says

אִם יֵבֶן אִישׁ בֵּיתוֹ
וְלֹא יִבְנֶה ה' אֶת-בֵּיתוֹ
וְלֹא יִשְׁכְּנוּ בָּהֶם
וְלֹא יִשְׁכְּנוּ בָּהֶם

“Unless the Lord builds the house
Its builders labor in vain.”

I do not know whether the Lord was at his side, but even if not, Charles Bensley didn't labor in vain. He was a giant man who worked on big projects and largely succeeded. When a person such as he leaves this earth, the commonweal is deprived, not only his family. We have all lost a benefactor.

To his wife, whom I joined to him in marriage 16 years ago, who has been a rock of support, whose loving care undoubtedly lengthened his life, we express our tribute and sympathy.

To his daughter and son, who gave to him and received from him unbounded love and understanding; to his stepson and stepdaughter, and their children, who formed a deeply loving bond with him; to his grandchildren upon whom he doted with such pleasure; and to his extended family and friends who have gathered from far distances - we know our feelings of loss - and hope that all may take comfort in the thought that his life was long and productive.

Those of us in the family who surrounded him in the final two days saw and heard the essential Charlie - courageous to the end, humorous, displaying a zest for life even as he struggled for breath, a man filled with good memories, just as we should have of him at our final departure.

Goodnight, sweet Charlie.

ג'הק | צ' | דאנא

AMEN

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April 18, 1995

Dr. Chaim Y. Botwinick
Chief Education Officer
Council on Jewish Education Services
5800 Park Heights Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21215-3996

Dear Dr. Botwinick,

Many thanks for your letter of 4/10/95 and the enclosed material, which will be helpful to me as background.

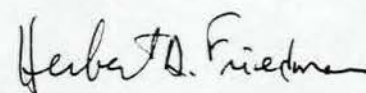
Regarding your request for a theme or topic, which is necessary for your advance publicity, I'm not sure I have one. The general subject of my remarks will underline the fact that knowledge, which derives from a solid education, has always been our most effective weapon in the continuous struggle for our existence. Knowledge equals strength. Knowledge is our shield. Knowledge gives us staying power. Ignorance is our enemy. Ignorance weakens our will to continue.

Put together any combination of words which strikes your fancy and fits your space requirements. You have carte blanche.

Regarding the "brief bio", there has been nothing brief about my life - so here are two versions, among which you can rummage.

Looking forward to our meeting.

Sincerely,



Herbert A. Friedman



April 10, 1995

משרד החינוך היהודי דבולטימור

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CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICER

MARCI B. DICKMAN, R.J.E.
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
SERVICES

Rabbi Herbert Friedman
The Wexner Heritage Foundation
551 Madison Avenue
New York New York 10022

Dear Rabbi Friedman:

Mr. Searle E. Mitnick has asked me to forward to you pertinent background information regarding the Council on Jewish Education Services.

Enclosed please find a copy of our Board Manual and brochure which provides an overview of our agency's structure, educational activities and mission statement.

The Council on Jewish Education Services is indeed honored that you will be the keynote speaker at its May 25, 1995 Annual Meeting and we sincerely look forward to what I am sure will be a stimulating presentation.

I would be most appreciative if you will provide me with the theme of your remarks, a brief bio, and a photograph which will be used for publicity prior to the Annual Meeting. The theme of your remarks or topic will be included in our invitation to the community. It is therefore essential that I have this information by April 25th.

In the interim, please feel free to contact me should you require additional information.

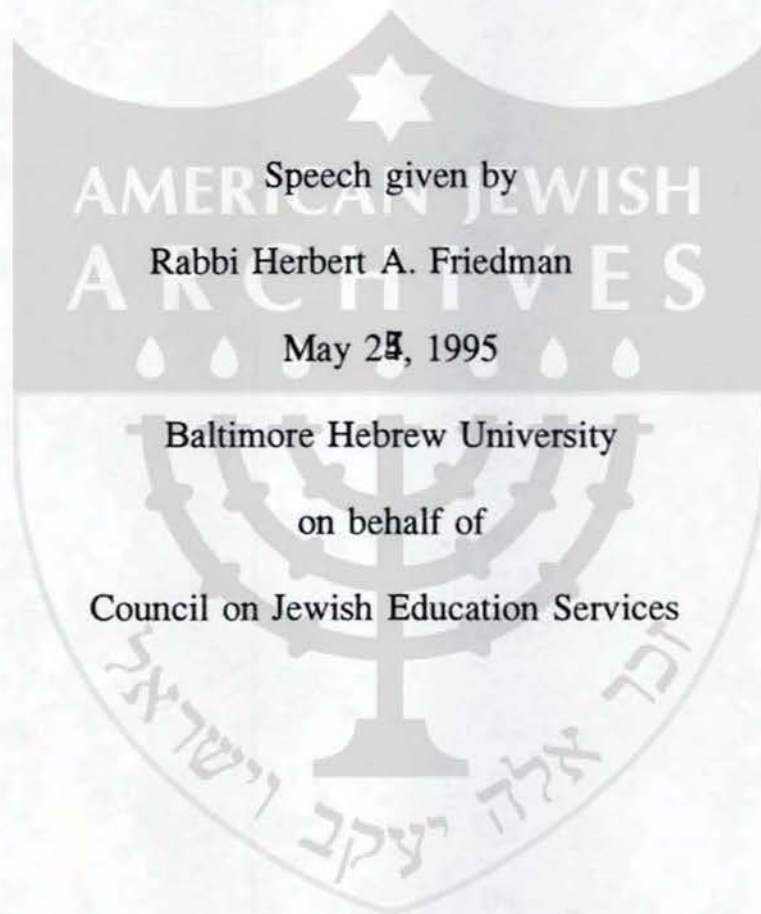
With best wishes for a *Chag Kosher V'someach*.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Chaim Y. Botwinick
Chief Education Officer

copy: Searle E. Mitnick

"THE POWER OF JEWISH KNOWLEDGE -
THE CRISIS OF IGNORANCE"



Speech given by

Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman

May 24, 1995

Baltimore Hebrew University

on behalf of

Council on Jewish Education Services

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I was pleased to accept your invitation to come here this evening because I like this community and respect its steady achievements. For many years, in my past incarnation as head of the National UJA, I used to come to the Sunday morning big gifts breakfast in the fall which inaugurated the annual campaign of the Associated. I came to Baltimore one Sunday morning in October 1977, as Anwar Sadat came to Jerusalem on that same morning. I made a short speech, saying that Israel would have to be generous with the Egyptian president in return for peace, and my listeners would have to be generous with Israel in their pledges to the Associated. I have made many close friends over the decades, particularly the Meyerhoff family, and most recently, new friends through our Wexner seminar group. You have every right to feel yourselves as one of the proudest Jewish communities in America.

The title of this evening's lecture is lovely. Searle Mitnick and Dr. Botwinick fashioned it from some notes I sent them, as follows: Knowledge equals strength. Knowledge is our shield. Knowledge gives us staying power. Ignorance is our enemy. Ignorance weakens us in the continuous struggle for our existence. Their title is a more elegant formulation than my notes, but the message is the same.

What do I mean by the phrases - Knowledge is Power; Knowledge is a Defensive shield - Knowledge sustains and protects? These words refer to one's self-image, sense of self-respect and self-worth. This self-image is true of nations as well as individuals. Every Jewish person, family, community which is possessed of knowledge of our history, religion, philosophy, our peoplehood, nationhood and homeland, our language and literature, is filled with a surge of pride, and can accept the badge of honor implicit in the slogan "chosen people." Every Jewish person whose knowledge base is small or absent and might not feel that pride, might think secretly that the slogan is pompous, pretentious or even prejudicial.

We are dealing tonight with the most serious question of all: the destiny of a whole people, the meaning of our existence, the purpose for which we survive, the basis for all our struggles to remain on the stage of history, where we are still one of the oldest continuous peoples of the entire human race. Anyone who has learned something of this history, and the purpose behind it, feels strong and proud.

Avraham Harman, once Ambassador of Israel to the United States, later President of the Hebrew University, liked to describe the secret of Jewish survival and continuity in two words: Emigration and Education.

Whenever the Jews of any area were confronted with political or economic or religious problems which threatened their lives or made it impossible for normal daily life to continue, they found their solution in flight. The wagons and caravans rolled to a new place, often from one continent to another, Asia to Europe to Africa, as the wandering Jews sought a refuge in a more hospitable environment. This is not to say that they were always safe in a new place. The orgies of slaughter polluted the air with screams and the earth with blood, century after century - yet a saving remnant always managed to flee and strike new roots.

In the early days the Jews were a fighting nation. They raised a sword against the Greeks and won. They tried the same against the Romans and lost. Eastward they fled to Babylonia, and westward to Egypt and the Mediterranean basin. The lands of ancient enemies sometimes became the new havens. For a thousand years Babylonia which destroyed the First Temple served as the cradle in which the Talmud and Siddur grew to maturity.

I have a theory that the God who shapes history, or fate, or whatever power you believe in, had a way of somehow anticipating the migratory flow and preparing a new place, often some centuries in advance, so that a pioneering wave of wanderers could settle in and cultivate the new environment to the

point where it could receive those who later would come rushing in urgent need, often in panic. This process has occurred with uncanny precision so many times as to seem like an ineluctable rule of Jewish history. Without going off on a long tangent, let me simply remind you of some examples.



As Babylonia wound down, around the 9th - 10th century, due to economic and political decline, from its position as home to the then largest Jewish community in the world, a new center was growing in Spain. And as this Golden Age ended in the expulsion of 1492, Holland was ready to receive, as were Turkey, Italy and North Africa. And while these places were still growing, a new focal point was already being prepared for a future center in 16th century Poland. When German, Polish and Russian Jewry started to empty westward to the New World in the middle and end of the 19th century, the little colony in America grew so strong that it was ready by the middle of the 20th century to assist the new state which was born in Israel. This is a favorite theme of mine: Jewish history seems possessed of a thermostat and a compass, anticipating the heat of persecution and danger, sensitive as to the time to move, and steering an advance party to the next creative location, to prepare a new home for some later need.

During all these millennia of migrations, the second operative principle was also always at work: education. Sometimes the education was purely Jewish - just Hebrew reading, Chumash, a little Talmud, and prayer book. Sometimes it included secular subjects - mathematics, philosophy, astronomy.

In some places, as Spain in the 13th century or Germany in the 17th, it included the language of that area. In addition to the schoolroom education, there was the holiday observance in home and synagogue, as well as the saturation effect of the ghetto and shtetl ambience where clothing, customs, mores and manners all served to create a total identity, passed on to every generation of children without any break or negative influence from the external environment.

Emigration and education were the twin characteristics of Jewish existence - lighting the Sabbath candles on the run; fresh martyrs serving always to hammer home the lesson of the terrible price of Jewish uniqueness; pride remaining intact even as some new edict was promulgated in order to degrade and insult.

And now it appears that the twenty centuries of migration are coming to an end. When the current waves of Soviet Jews roll up on the shores of their new homes, mostly in Israel, some in the United States, with isolated sprinklings of family reunions in places as distant as Sweden and Australia, the last of the really great movements will be done. By the time the Soviet move exhausts itself - in three years or ten - the Jewish world will have settled down in four primary, and six secondary locations.

Israel will contain the largest number, United States second, the Russian Commonwealth and France will probably tie for third, and following that, groups of Jews numbering 100,000 and upwards will be found in England, Canada, Argentina, Brazil, South Africa and Australia.

Hopefully, the end of the period of compulsory migrations will then have been reached, and from the 21st century onward, Jewish movement from one country to another will probably be voluntary, based on desire and free will. When Israel overcomes its birth pangs, finishes its wars, improves its system of governance, stabilizes its economy into a free-market format with a solid standard of living, and a good safety net of social services, large numbers of Jews from all over the world, including the United States, will probably migrate there happily through choice. And as that old-new land grows more prosperous and safe, its Jewish soul will express itself with renewed vigor, creating a model society, which, in turn, will make it even more attractive. The Jewish world will then be anchored on two strong pillars, United States and Israel, casting their protective embrace over all the scattered tribes, each of whom has by then, found its own secure identity.

When that time comes, and the basic technique of migration will have done its work of assuring survival by returning the majority to the original homeland, and landing others in safe havens, the era of migration will have passed from the stage of history, leaving the second tool, education, as the most important concern of Jewish communities everywhere, including Israel. When physical persecution ceases, the continuity of this unique peoplehood will depend only on its own internal motivation. You have all heard those pessimistic voices which assert that the only reason the Jews have remained alive is because of the pressure upon them from their enemies. What will happen when the enemies relent and gradually disappear?

I have always believed, to the contrary, that the Jews achieved their incredible record of persistent existence not as a result of outside pressure on them, but rather due to a sense of their own worth, pride in their chosen-ness, and an acceptance of moral standards imposed upon them at the very beginning of their national existence. These two endowments, of pride in themselves which is their particularism, plus a mystical obligation toward the improvement of the world and life itself, which is their universalism, are the strong mortar which has cemented them into an unbreakable unit - tiny in quantity, infinitely large in quality. All of this represents their internal cohesion, which is much

stronger than any external pressure, when one seeks to analyze the source of their continuous existence. One of the oldest peoples on the face of the earth, and now entering a period of new testing, we must summon all possible creativity to devise those ideas, programs, systems, methods of educating our members, adults and children alike, so that the chain of continuity adds new links, generation after generation, in the face of a permissive, friendly, non-threatening environment, which will allow us to be as creatively Jewish as we wish, or to assimilate painlessly and disappear, if we wish. From now on, it's entirely up to us.

I have many ideas for new methods and improvements on old methods in the areas of Jewish education. Let me propose some of them to you. You choose the ones which strike you as easiest to bring into reality - or take the opposite tack. Select the most difficult, and if you can succeed with one of them, others will suddenly seem easier. I am dividing the projects into three sections: some for adults, others for teen-agers, and still others for younger children. Most people, upon hearing the word "education" tend to think of children, and I tend to think of adults first because they have less time left, also because younger people, seeing the strange sight of adults at study will be more inclined to follow suit.

Beginning with adults, then, I have four suggestions of good programs which can be implemented in the United States, all proven on the battlefield, so to speak, all successful, all with lots of experience behind them, all possessing a cadre of administrators and faculty, willing to share that experience with anyone eager to replicate any one of the four. These are as follows:

1. a Wexner-type seminar
2. a Franz-Rosenzweig kind of Lehrhaus
3. a Hebrew Literacy course
4. a Family Educator on the staff of every synagogue which receives at least 50 new families each year (on average).

Let me explain each one, briefly, leaving out many details, which I am willing and eager to supply to any person wanting to know more.

The Wexner-type seminar comes in two models - full luxury, paid for by one generous patron; or trimmed down, paid for by the students themselves. A third possibility falls between these two, requiring one wise backer, plus some financial input from other individuals or institutions, such as a synagogue or federation. It is a very serious program, calling for four-hour seminars every two weeks continuing minimally over a two-year period with 50-100 page

reading assignments for each seminar. You will learn a tremendous amount. The subject for the first year is history, and for the second is thought. Bible is taught both years. The student body for this curriculum must be carefully chosen, for the course requires a strong motivation and an intellectual capability. It is not easy or superficial, but the rewards are enormous, in terms of self-improvement plus increased ability to contribute to the communal good.

The Lehrhaus was a German invention of the 19th century, brought to perfection by Franz Rosenzweig in the early 20th Century. Essentially it was a high-quality afternoon and evening school for adults, based on lectures and discussions. The new movements of the time, Reform and Conservative, were analyzed in detail. Assimilation was beginning to take its toll, and the effects were studied in strict pedantic fashion. Rosenzweig himself was about ready to convert to Christianity, when he suddenly drew back and turned to Orthodox Judaism. A Lehrhaus could be set up in a JCC, with a magnificent faculty, funded by the whole community, offering a large menu of courses, which should be attended once or twice weekly. If it became socially important, as it was in Frankfort, where it was the place to be seen on certain afternoons of the week, then the presence of the leaders of the community would guarantee the quality

of the curriculum. Steady attendance at the Lehrhaus over a three or four year period would give the average adult a very good general knowledge of Judaism. A conscientious student would feel mightily empowered and proud of self.

The Hebrew Literacy Course promises a mastery of reading Hebrew in 12 weeks. The program is usually centered in several synagogues in town. Classes are taught by lay people for lay people, and are held every day, morning, afternoon and evening, so there is no excuse for missing. If you must miss your regularly scheduled class, you can make it up in another session the same week. More than 70,000 adults in many cities have learned how to read the Friday evening services by the end of the 12th week. There is no need for me to stress the importance of Hebrew, as the international language which can connect the entire Jewish Diaspora in addition to being the key to closer understanding of 4 million Israelis.

The family educator concept derives from the fact that the synagogue is the gateway through which heretofore unaffiliated Jews or intermarried couples enter the Jewish communal structure. The usual motivation for joining is to place children into the synagogue school system. It is exactly such new families who need the careful tutorial care which a specially designated professional

educator can give them - someone devoted solely to them, concentrating on the whole spectrum of adult study groups, home rituals for Shabbat and holidays, learning the prayer book, Bible and other basic texts - and above all, empowering them to progress in tandem with their childrens' newly acquired knowledge. You can sense the almost limitless possibilities. This is an expensive program, for after only a few years, this educator will require an assistant because the program will be embracing hundreds of adults. After some number of years, people will graduate from this program, but every year new ones will be entering.

Up to now, I have been speaking of adult education, to make the specific point that "going to school" should not be thought of as applying only to children. The chain of continuity begins with parents, and if they place no value on Jewish knowledge, why should their children?

Once a system is started for attracting and embracing as many adults as possible, then we must turn to the creative management of the next generation's educational opportunities. There are five items on my list.

1. Country Day schools. (Such as the Park School.) These should

preferably be community schools. The buildings must be attractive and comparable, with outdoor playgrounds and indoor gymnasias. These are private Jewish schools, and they must compare favorably with the best private schools in town. The teachers should be young, bright, clever. The school must develop a reputation of such excellence that the waiting list grows long. Then you know you have a success on your hands. Once the school is difficult to get into, all problems disappear. Tuition at private schools is universally high, but you must have enough scholarship money available, so that any child who is admissible, is not left out because of financial difficulties in the family. Your curriculum of Judaic subjects must be complete, the curriculum of secular subjects must be of the highest standards, and the extra-curricular options must be so attractive as to start the pupils on enjoyable hobbies and sports which can last a lifetime.

2. Hebrew High Schools. Here is where you must be really creative, for these are the crucial years in a teen-ager's life. Judaism and Hebrew language will strike deep roots, if the school is successful.

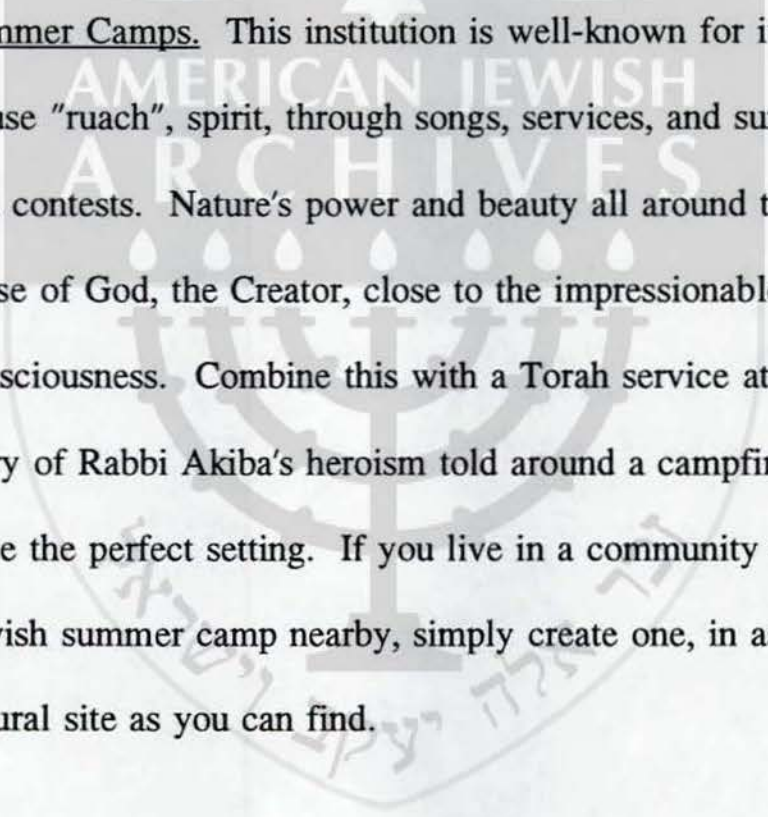
There is the additional objective of admission to a good university, even Ivy League if the student so desires, for which the high school must prepare the youngster properly. There must be a school paper, a dramatic group, intra-mural athletic teams, language clubs, and all the varied activities which shape a well-rounded student. There are only a handful of high-quality Hebrew high schools in America today. Sending a child to day school is the best way to start Jewish children in life, but usually this ends at grade 8 - and what if there is no high school? Their Jewish education is finished when they are 14. The truly impressionable years, between 14 and 18, are lost. These are the years when the deepest impact can be made, when the chances can be increased that the 18 year old, going on to college, will enter the Hillel orbit and further strengthen his/her strong sense of identity.

3. Boarding Schools. This is a new thought for American Jewish parents. Except in cases where "sending a child away" to boarding school or military school is a form of discipline for an unruly or unwanted child, the assumption must be made that the student is eager to go and the parents are willing to make the "sacrifice" of

"losing" the youngster during these formative years, in order to provide the advantage of the very best type of educational experience. At a boarding school, the educational process is constant - in the very act of living, as much outside the classroom as in it. In the classroom, where the groups are small, mostly seminar style, and the teacher's relationship to each pupil is almost individual tutorial, the very best can be drawn out of each student, whose mind is stretched by vigorous demands, to the extent that his later university years are also more profitable because the student has learned how to study and think. This is not true for most kids coming out of most public high schools.

In addition to the cultural process, there is the socialization process of living in a closed system - sharing room-mates, eating and playing together, constant contact with teachers who live on or near the school campus. And from a Jewish point of view, tolerance and pluralistic thinking will develop naturally, as children from all kinds of backgrounds, living together, will learn to appreciate and accept different points of view. Finally, what might be the greatest value

of all is the shaping of character, in the form of establishing ethical values by which the person will live for an entire lifetime. Busy parents, or a value-free public school, cannot be guaranteed to produce that character. A good boarding school makes character-building one of its primary objectives.

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- A large, semi-transparent watermark is centered on the page. It features a Star of David at the top, followed by the words "AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES" in a serif font. Below the text is a menorah with seven lit candles. At the bottom, there is a line of Hebrew text: "ארכיון יהודי אמריקני".
4. Summer Camps. This institution is well-known for its ability to infuse "ruach", spirit, through songs, services, and sundry games and contests. Nature's power and beauty all around them bring a sense of God, the Creator, close to the impressionable teen-age consciousness. Combine this with a Torah service at lake-side, or a story of Rabbi Akiba's heroism told around a campfire and you have the perfect setting. If you live in a community without a good Jewish summer camp nearby, simply create one, in as impressive a natural site as you can find.
5. Junior Year in Israel. There are two aspects of this - junior year in high school, and junior year in college. Preferably you should encourage your children to do both. Two experiences, four years

apart, one when the student is 17 and the other at age 21, will reinforce each other and work in tandem, yielding a permanent effect. There are wonderful 10th and 11th grade programs available in Israel today, many with decades of experience already. Kfar Blum, a Kibbutz in the Upper Galilee, is the most famous - offering a marvelous program with everything you could want for creating a positive attitude toward Israel and Judaism; the High School in Israel program, started by Rabbi Morris Kipper of Miami, is a close runner-up. The Reform and Conservative movements also have their programs, and the Jewish Agency Department of Education has a long list.

College students have a wide choice at the various Israeli universities. Hebrew University and Tel Aviv University have large components of foreign kids - sometimes running close to 1000 each year. Others have smaller numbers. Your sons and daughters should read the brochures and select carefully what interests them most. One word of warning: impress upon them the necessity of going beyond the narrow ghetto of English-speaking foreign

students, and reaching toward the wider spectrum of Israeli students. Otherwise they will not get to learn well enough the Hebrew language and the Israeli mentality. If they do the year right, your children will return tightly bonded to the land and people of Israel. Isn't that creating the link of continuity into the next generation?

In closing, let me recommend to you a small book, entitled "American Assimilation or Jewish Revival?" by Steven M. Cohen, published by The Indiana University Press in 1988. The book is a contribution to the continuing debate concerning the future of Jewish life in America. The author's opinion, based upon surveys and statistics and moods he has analyzed, is cautiously optimistic. He recognizes the strong forces leading toward assimilation, with its danger of Judaism's disappearance in the vast sea of permissive inclusive non-discriminatory quarter-billion strong American population. On the other hand, he believes that American Jews are transforming themselves, and he sees conversion, education, and ritual observance on the increase. One is encouraged by this analysis and perhaps Prof. Cohen's feelings will themselves be a catalyst to move us even further along the path away from assimilation.

The real question is not the accuracy, or lack thereof, of his predictions and projections. The real question is your will power. You and you alone will determine what happens to the eternal Jewish people. You will continue to keep it alive one more generation, by passing the torch to your children to continue it - or you will cut it off right now by not preparing the next generation. Eternal existence is decided anew every 40 years.

If you protect your heritage, it will protect you. The value of Judaism to you is that it gives you an identity and provides a meaning to your life by linking you to an ideal greater than yourself. The value of Judaism to the world is that of the greatest civilizing moral force man has ever known. Thus you are part of something which gives value to you and to the whole world. What more can any one person or whole people desire?

You are obligated, elevated, commanded to struggle, perhaps to suffer, above all, to witness. Through you the Jewish people will live forever - as long as this planet spins - and wherever we find other men and women - on other planets - to whom to teach our message. You are touched with eternal greatness - as a prophet is touched by his dream - and through you God, Israel and Torah will be eternal.

May you live forever.

NEW MEMBER INSTITUTE
ASPEN, COLORADO
JUNE 29, 1996

Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman

IT'S YOUR WORLD: WHAT WILL YOU MAKE OF IT?

The subject written into the program was "It's Your World - What Are You Going To Do About It?" Before tackling that subject, I would like to give some thanks. I wanted to say thanks to Shelley. She really did a great job. (Applause.) Okay, that's better than all the words. And I want to thank Cara, and Erica who have been working as her assistants here and I would like to thank the staff of the hotel who are very cooperative, very helpful and they make this institute function. I would like to express gratitude to Nathan and Ramie because I think they are running the program excellently and have really selected a sterling bunch.

I would like to welcome you to the Wexner family. You are joining a family that is rapidly reaching 1,000 people in 25 cities. So you represent a lot of power, which is implicit until you make it explicit. You have come into this two-year program to learn. Some of you have said to me that you are overwhelmed by what you have already learned in the last few days, yet alone what you are going to absorb in the next two years. Without denigrating or minimizing the study process in any way, I would like to talk to you today not about what you will learn but what you will do with what you learn. Because the

doing, the acting, the creating in your communities of all the programs which you will come to believe as being crucial for the maintenance of a strong Jewish identity in yourselves and your children - these actions are the outcome of the study, and the basic reason for the existence of this Wexner endeavor.

Today's topic is "It's your world, what are you going to do with it?". I would like to say very simply that your world, and mine for as long as I'll still be in it, is in a parlous condition. Let me state it in just one simple sentence. There is a possibility that the American Jewish community, as we know it, will dwindle to an insignificant number within a reasonably short time. 50 or 75 or 100 years is a very short time and that's the span of time concerning which the fears are beginning to bubble up to the surface and more and more people are beginning to be aware of the fact that indeed this may be a period of historic crisis which we are now facing. Words are often abused, and like Gresham's law in which cheap currency drives good currency out of circulation, excessive usage of certain words drives them into becoming simply cliché's and you don't hear them anymore.

Everybody was shocked in 1992 when the Council of Jewish Federations (CJP) got all excited and started to hype the program at the General Assembly to emphasize the results of a population study which showed the intermarriage rate among American Jews was 52%. The CJF started screaming "continuity, continuity" and that word has become so badly abused that responsible people

don't even want to use it anymore because you can talk a word into the ground by not doing anything which the word mandates that you do. If you are really concerned about continuity and the fact that the American Jewish Diaspora may fade off the stage, if you really are worried about it, then you know perfectly well that you have no right to sit on your hands and do business as usual and go through the same endless committee meetings in the same process-oriented form and on and on and on, doing nothing but talking. Action was required, not talk. And three years later, there is still more talk than action.

This problem of intermarriage started about 200 years ago. You will get it all in your history curriculum. In 1806 Napoleon convened what he called a Sanhedrin, composed of all the Rabbis who were in France at that time and lots of lay leaders and business people, more than 100 persons. He put 12 questions in front of them, 12 questions in which he wanted to find out whether they were willing to be good and loyal citizens of France. They had gotten their citizenship earlier in 1791, right after the revolution, but that was purely a formality, it didn't mean very much. The thrust of the 12 questions was as follows: Do you consider yourselves good French citizens? Do you consider yourselves loyal to France and on a level of equality with all other Frenchmen? These questions led up to the key question: are you willing to marry non-Jewish French persons? Bingo. Now we are at the heart of the matter. What were they going to say? What would you have said if you were sitting in on that meeting with Napoleon's

commissioners at the front of the room waiting to hear your answers? If they were willing to marry non-Jewish French citizens, then what have we got to complain about if 200 years later in the United States of America the average rate reaches 52%, or 85% in Phoenix or I don't know what it is elsewhere in the West. Stop whining. Some predecessors of yours 200 years ago opened up the door. Should they have said no? And if they had said no, what were they saying to Napoleon - that they were not going to be good French citizens and that they were going to hunker down in the corner in their own little ghetto and then what would have been their fate? It was an unenviable position.

They answered yes and they put a caveat or footnote saying they were sure that the rabbis among them didn't agree on the question of intermarriages. And yet on the other hand, they quoted a passage which said that the only kind of persons whom Jews were not allowed to marry were idolaters who worshipped some other gods. And since the French were all Christians and the Christian religion is in its own way a monotheistic religion, therefore they were not idolaters and therefore it was permissible to marry them.

200 years later we are where we are. The Jews are free, equal, affluent, capable of rising in the social-economic ladder to any heights, all universities are open, all businesses are open. The free permissive western world is open to Jews in all fields. They can become anything to which they aspire. Thus, we have a condition of raging assimilation based on ignorance, which results in an "I

don't care attitude" that is quite wide-spread in all the diasporas of the world. To greater or lesser extent the affliction is universal.

The real question is whether you as leaders recognize the danger or not. That's really one of the very key questions. You sit stolidly in every community. You take part in all the discussions of what shall we do about this, what can we do, it's a terrible crisis, but so far nowhere in America do I hear anybody standing up in any city in America raging in fury, in frustration, in a feeling of impotence and demanding some action in order to try to reverse this trend. I just don't hear it. I hear silence.

When did the first Jews come to the North American continent? Give me a year. Close. 1654. How many of them were on board that ship? Don't guess. Either you know or you don't know. 21. They were living in Brazil, under beneficent Dutch rule, but then the Portuguese conquered Brazil and introduced the Catholic Inquisition. This started an exodus, and the first ship fled to a place under Dutch sovereignty. That was New Amsterdam, later called New York.

Incidentally, as a digression, the relationship between Holland and the Jews has been friendly and supportive for hundreds of years. At the time of the Six-Day War, 1967, when Nasser closed the Suez Canal and threatened war, Israel appealed to the U.S. for help, to avoid war. Israel was pleading that there be no war, but that the Straits of Tiran must be opened to all shipping, President

Lyndon Johnson told Abba Eban that he couldn't send any troops, because America was bogged down in Vietnam, but that he would try to organize a naval blockade to open the waterways and maybe several countries in the world would help break the canal open, so that Israel would not have to fight a war. The only country in the world that responded to the United States request to join in a naval blockade was Holland, but by that time war was over. Israel did what she had to do, quite brilliantly.

Now back to our story. When the Portuguese soldiers came to Brazil, also came the priests and monks of the Inquisition and those first 21 Jews started their flight. They wanted to go to another Dutch colony and that was New Amsterdam. They stayed on board the ship in the harbor all that winter because Governor Peter Stuyvesant wouldn't let them in. Finally an order from the Board of the Dutch West Indies Company commanded him to admit the Jews. He did so, on condition that they not be allowed to bear arms and that they must take care of their own poor and sick.

So 1654 is the beginning of the Jewish diaspora, or settlement, or whatever you want to call it, in the United States. Fast forward. What's the next critical date? 2054. What are we going to look like on the 400th anniversary of the existence of the American Jewish diaspora? There was a demographer in Harvard who said that by the third quarter of the 21st century, the number of Jews living in this country would be fewer than 1 million. The guy may very

well be right. It would be a major tragedy in Jewish world history if that were to happen.

All through this present century, immigrant Jews made the climb upwards, out of the lower east side, out of the ghettos, out of the sweat shops, out of the \$2 a day jobs making cigars, up and up and up, finally landing in the fine suburbs of Beverly Hills and Shaker Heights and Scarsdale. And all the time, as they moved up, their kids were getting into Yale and Duke and Princeton and Harvard and Wellesley and Smith. And all the time that the Jews were moving up the economic and social ladder, Americanizing themselves, they paid very little attention to the education of their young. The poor Catholic immigrants who came into the same Ellis Island at the same time the Jews did, started building a network of parochial schools so that all through this 20th Century they were giving the finest education to the poorest of the poor and propagating their faith while we, what did we do? How many Solomon Schechter day schools do you think there are in the whole United States of America today? Don't guess, you couldn't. 66. That's a joke. That's criminal neglect. It's not funny, it's tragic. Outside of the Yeshiva network of schools, how many upper schools, high schools, communal schools, grades 9 to 12 are there in the whole United States of America? There aren't a dozen. Would you believe that? No you don't want to believe it, you shake your head. It's a fact.

Okay. I don't think it's crazy to say that in 2054 when we celebrate our

400th anniversary, many of you will be here, for it will be reasonably easy to get to age 90 and 100. You know that if you don't smoke, do your jogging or your treadmill, don't eat fat. you can make 90 or 100. You are going to be here in 2054. Then you will know whether that demographer from Harvard was right or wrong. And if he was right, you are going to be sitting in a desert. Fewer than 1 million Jews aren't anywhere near enough to maintain the infrastructure. The centers will crumble and the synagogues will crumble and the old folks homes will crumble and nothing will remain.

Sixty years to go until 2054 means that we have to fight a long war. Everybody can get excited about a short war. Six day war, fine. Yom Kippur War came along. How long was it, do you know? It was three times as long, it was 18 days. The whole Yom Kippur War was 18 days. That we can always manage. We, being the collectivity of the Jewish people because that's when you woke up. Or really you woke up in the 67 war, you the American Jews. When General Sharon dragged Israel into a three year war in Lebanon from 1982 to 1985, it couldn't be sustained. His objective was wrong, his methodology was wrong. Prime Minister Begin went into retirement. He was a casualty of that war. Begin believed in Sharon at first, but later said that the general had deceived him. Sharon said he wanted to go only 40 kilometers north of the Israel border. Instead, he really wanted to conquer Beirut. We are not a people that conquers other people's capitals and tries to become an empire, we are not an

empire building nation. We are not Rome. We are not Persia. And the people of Israel and the whole Jewish people with them made a bad mistake. Okay it's over, thank God, 600 needless dead and several billion dollars. It's done, mistakes happen.

But my point is that we are accustomed to fighting short wars hard, intensively. We have never undertaken a long war, so I believed, until I had a sort of a death bed conversation with David Ben Gurion. The Yom Kippur War was in October of 1973 and he died in December, two months later. His wife had already died. He was sitting alone in the Caesarea Hotel, a few blocks from our house, with a trunk full of books at his feet, sitting on a kitchen chair. He and I had been friends for a very long time. He, before Israel was created as a state, recruited me to join the secret operations of the Hagana, which I was happy to do. And so we have known each other that long. And I came to the hotel really to say good-bye to him because I heard how ill he was and I had a long face when I walked in to that bleak room. The kitchen chair, a cot, the trunk of books and the man - nothing else, not a piece of furniture, nothing. He asked why I looked so downcast, but didn't wait for my answer, because he had all the answers to all the questions so why should he wait for anybody's question. I mean he was lovely, he was too much. He said that he knew why I was so worried.

We had just come through this Yom Kippur war, and everyone had heard

what the legendary warrior Moshe Dayan had said, on the second day of the war: namely, that the Third Jewish Commonwealth was about to fall. Ben Gurion, this dying man, was telling me not to lose hope. And then, he gave me a little talk. He said: "Listen, you know history. There were times in history when there was a 100 year war. Yes? 100 year war. France against England. England was trying to conquer France. Edward III of England claimed he was the King of France. The French said nothing doing. And by 100 years later, the English were out and back across the Channel, and the only French territory they kept was the port city of Calais.

Ben Gurion continued: now this is 1973. We are in 100 years war also - as a matter of fact, it's 102 years. In 1871 there was a French Zionist leader, a man by the name of Charles Netter, who brought a bunch of young boys, a dozen of them, 12 years old, from France, to an agricultural settlement on a small piece of land outside of the port of Jaffa. It was called Mikveh Yisrael - the hope of Israel. Tel Aviv didn't exist, not even in anybody's mind. A Beduin on a camel came out of Jaffa, toured this little settlement, saw a boy with a hoe scratching into the earth. That Beduin was a leader. He looked at that boy and recognized future danger. A Jewish boy was starting to till this soil. He knew that the Arabs would be in trouble. Behind this boy would come a wave and another wave and another wave. So he shot and killed the boy. He didn't kill the settlement, there were 11 other kids and Netter was there and he got some adults

and they got a couple of guns and Mikveh Yisrael is still there. Thus, the first casualty was in 1871 and we are now 1973. So it's 102 years. We have survived 100 years war and we're still here. "That was the end of Ben Gurion's history lesson.

So now if you want to take 1995 we are practically finished with a completed peace process, another half year, another year, doesn't have any longer to go than next November. So that will be from 1871 to 1996. That's 125 years. That's more than the English-French 100 years war. This Jewish war is 125 years of seeking independence, sovereignty, power, freedom and therefore the ability of the Jewish people to go forward. So what he was trying to say to me was - don't be discouraged and don't think that you can't fight a long war. We have already fought a long war.

Now switch over to our problem here in the United States with this beautiful, affluent, rich, educated, intelligent American Jewish diaspora. If we have a war to fight for the next 60 years in order to prevent the debacle, which may be lying very closely in the future, then long before the 21st century is over, we will know whether we have made it or whether we haven't made it.

The real trick is to recognize the danger and then sit down and figure out what you want to do about it. There are no mysteries, no secrets, no magic formulae and no silver bullets. We don't have to look for some kind of magic. You know what it is that you have to do. You have to create a sense of Jewish

identity which contains in it elements of knowledge, pride, caring, conviction, that one can live comfortably with two identities because nobody is asking anyone to give up their American identity. What you are asking yourselves and your children to do is to assume their Jewish identity instead of shucking it off and throwing it away like an old coat. This is what has happened to so many millions of Jews who have slid away. Parenthetically, in that process of drifting away there is no noise, you don't hear it. There is no raucous shouting, there is no revolution, there are no cops running around trying to put handcuffs on people to bring them back into Judaism, begging them not to leave it, not to get out of the boat. No. It's silent. It's almost like the anesthesia given to a patient under surgery on the operating table. Silently. An anesthetized feeling spreads over the whole Jewish population. Everyone asks what can we do about it? And another meeting is scheduled to talk about the crisis.

There must be created an educational establishment that is all embracing. The afternoon schools connected with congregations don't provide enough. They are just too minimal. Any cognitive scientist will tell you what the forgetting curve is. It's 50% in the first 24 hours. So if a kid is learning something in the class on Tuesday, and the next class is Thursday, that's 48 hours later and that kid goes into the Thursday class with more than half of what he learned before wiped out already. That is simply a fact, the way the brain works.

Accumulation, addition, more study and more study and more study, a

momentum developing. 66 Schechter schools is an insult. Compliments to the Conservative movement for at least having gotten started. Now the Reform movement has caught on and they have 20, and growing. 12 high schools is a spit in the face. So what you have to do is build a large educational establishment. Now just translate it into your own town. What have you got in the San Francisco area? And whatever you have, you know perfectly well it isn't enough. And so you have to make a decision that what you want to do is create schools a, b, c and you have to fight through all the politics, all the financial planning, all the pedagogical work which that involves. You have to find the head master and build a curriculum and it's all revolutionary. That's what your attitude has to be. You have to stand up and protest that you are simply not satisfied in your town with what exists. You want more. And you have to know what it is that you want. If you don't know what you want, then don't start trouble. But if you do know what you want, then it's worthwhile starting trouble in order to achieve what you want.

So the buck keeps passing upstairs, higher and higher and higher seeking definitions of goals. You people are now pretty high up in the hierarchy of your town. Or if you are not, push yourself up a notch higher and a notch higher and get into the decision-making level and goal-setting level. Let's say, for example, there is one Torah study group in Portland and you think you want ten. Maybe you should have seven. Goal setting always takes a little tiny bit of research, not

a lot, don't spend a lot of time on it but do some research. Set your goal. And the second thing you need is enough manpower to achieve it.

Now you, as a group, represent a powerful new force in your town, especially if you are united in your goals. 80 of you are a lot of people, plus your spouses who will be your allies. How many people do you think it took to make the Russian revolution? Ten. Ten people. That's what Lenin had. So you need your goals set, you need your manpower and you need all your ammunition. Your ammunition consists of two things: money and willpower. Willpower. You must be passionate about what you want and clear in your reasons. Nothing else counts. If you don't possess a strong determination, you haven't got anything; you are not ready to fight.

The educational network in town has to embrace a sufficient number of elementary schools; one or two high schools; up to the Hillel at college. The average college graduate is 21 or 22. If the average age for marriage is 26 to 30, then you still have a little gap in there, in which you must develop adult education programs. Anything that you do before that fateful marriage takes place is crucial because when that inter-marriage does take place, we might have lost another family. I don't call a marriage between a Jewish person and a convert to Judaism an inter-marriage. The convert to Judaism is as the home born. The honesty and the sincerity and the long period of study and everything that goes with it, most often makes the convert a more knowledgeable Jew than

one born a Jew. So when I say inter-marriage I'm talking about a Jewish person and a non-Jewish person. And you notice I'm not saying a Christian. Many people in America are not practicing Christians anymore. They are secular Americans. If a person says I am a Methodist, that person is defining himself as a Christian. He or she goes to a Methodist church, sings Methodist hymns and accepts Methodist theology. But the large majority of American citizens don't define themselves religiously.

Thus, many of these marriages involve Jews who are marrying simply an American person, but the Jewish partner doesn't do anything about bringing in this neutral person, who is not a practicing Christian, and therefore could be a candidate for being brought into the Jewish people. The Jewish partner doesn't care enough to bother to do that, so that inter-marriage takes the couple out and it takes their kids out. This multiplies geometrically and that is how the loss of the Jewish population adds up.

An educational network must cover the waterfront from about age 13 up to age approximately 26. It's not an insuperable task. In addition you must organize a program on behalf of adults - 35 to 45. You have got to do superior adult education. That's what this Wexner program is all about. Here is an unusual man who spends millions of dollars a year to cultivate what I call a whole battalion of motivated lay leaders. With his sense of vision he believes that by doing this, investing this effort in you he is creating a bulwark, a bastion,

a wall, a protective fence. And so you have to, in your own way, in your own town, find the equivalence of this one man and set up similar adult education programs perhaps not with as much careful selectivity as we exercised with you. You can lower that a notch because you want to broaden the base in your town and you can duplicate Wexner programs but it's not going to happen unless you do it. Mr. Wexner is not going to do it, nobody is going to do it, nobody is going to come into your town from the outside and set up five duplicate Wexner programs which would cover 100 people, 20 in each group. But you can create another 100 soldiers. You want to protect the future of Judaism in America? Put that down on your list of things to do. So when I say an educational network, it must stretch from Bar/Bat Mitzvah to full maturity. It's 14 to 40.

There is a whole list of other things to be done. The Israel Experience, for youngsters and teen-agers, is prominently on the agenda, and is terribly important. Yitzhak Rabin gave a speech at a General Assembly in which he urgently said he would like to see 50,000 young people a year coming to Israel on a variety of different kinds of programs and having a very deep experience, not just a quick trip for a week, not just some superficial thing, but undergo something transformative. 50,000! You know how many young people are going now from all the movements, Reform, Orthodox, Conservative, Young Judea, everybody? A total of 7,000. So you are shaking your head. It's nothing. The whole mass muscle of the whole organized Jewish world can only

manage to mobilize that number. Furthermore, most of these 7,000 kids are expected to pay the full expenses for themselves. This is ridiculous. Middle class families are being priced out. Day school tuition in most cities costs \$7,000 or \$8,000 per child per year. And an Israel Experience another \$4,000. That is not possible for the average family. Day school education has got to be funded by the total community. It's a communal obligation, it's not a personal family obligation. And the same with the Israel Experience. You must force the revolution which will provide all education from communal funds, with tuitions and fees paid by the individual family to be only nominal.

People ask me where we are going to get all that money. And my answer is the amount of money that's available is infinite. The amount of time which is available is finite. The number of people to do the job is finite. But the amount of money is infinite.

For example. Do you in San Francisco have an endowment fund in your community? You are shaking your head affirmatively. Do you know how much money is in all the endowment funds held by all the federations in this country? I see your finger one, that means one billion? No. Yes? What do you think? Three. Three is the number. Three billion dollars. Held in endowment funds. It's public money. Private individuals put it in there, private individuals took their tax deduction for putting it in there. So they got what they wanted. And

the money is sitting there for a rainy day, is that what I hear? Well, I can't think of a rainier day than where we are now.

So don't tell me that the problem is money. The problem is not money. You want to rip open those endowment funds? They are yours, they belong to you, they belong to the Jewish community. You will hear all the lawyers and officials say no - it's all restricted, no - we can't touch it. If you want to accept such an answer, then you are guilty. You can't be a communal leader and at the same time duck raising difficult, embarrassing, hard questions or accepting bureaucratic answers. If you are going to raise the question, if you have the courage to do that, then don't be satisfied with a silly answer. Fight it through.

Look, I don't want to leave you with a feeling that the picture is black. The picture is not black. The picture is filled with danger. I don't want anybody to rest easy. I really believe that if you work with massive energy and innovation you will be able in a short number of years to achieve this total educational environment in your town and then enthusiasm will spread to another town. Where you know people in some other town write them a letter and tell them what you did and start the ground-swell in their town. You must fight hard. We do not want to see us disappear in the 21st century.

I would like to conclude by telling you what I think the results will be if we do disappear. What will happen? Well, number one, I think the general American public will notice it after a while. I mean there will be 10 seats empty

in the Senate, which are now held by Jews. So somebody else will grab those seats. Ditto about 25 seats in the House. And businessmen will look around and turn around and they will say, hey what is happening here, where is so and so? The disappearance will certainly be noticed by the Presidents of major American universities, but they are probably not going to raise any kind of an outcry that the Jewish student population on their campuses is dwindling. Nobody is going to protest, nobody is going to beg us not to commit suicide. If that happens it won't create much of a ripple among the general American population.

The second thing that will happen is other diasporas in the world will be considerably weakened. America is the greatest diaspora ever in the entire history of the Jewish people. Babylonia lasted 1,000 years and produced the Talmud and the Siddur and a lot of other things. We are here 350 years so far, haven't produced very much but if we were to stay who knows what we could create. It could be the greatest creative diaspora that ever existed. Do you think that the Jews in South Africa or Scotland or Australia or Toronto aren't going to feel the earthquake-like reverberations as they watch American Jewry slide down into 4 million and 3 million and 2 million? Surely they will feel it and they will lose confidence and strength as they witness our erosion.

Another consequence will be that Israel will feel the absence of the American diaspora. They will feel it in a whole variety of ways, not necessarily financial, or maybe not even necessarily political, although those two

consequences they will certainly feel. But I think what they will feel most is a sense of loneliness because, once again, all the eggs will be in one basket and the one basket will be Israel.

Before Israel was created, all the eggs were in one basket and that basket was here, America. European Jewry was gone in the Holocaust. And Israel was not yet born. So the whole fate of the Jewish people was here in the United States. Okay. Gradually, the powerlessness of American Jewry will become apparent.

Then Israel will begin to feel funny, peculiar. They will suddenly come up against a certain reality that they don't have to face now. This might force them to solve a lot of their own internal problems. That would be on the good side. On the bad side will be the psychological feeling of lonesomeness and that might weaken them. I don't know.

So, I've quickly mentioned what will happen to us, what will happen to other diasporas, and what will happen to Israel if we begin to disappear. The last question is whether such a future in the U.S. would be fatal for the future existence of the entire worldwide Jewish people. And the answer is no. Spanish Jewry through its golden age did what it did and when they slid off into disappearance, that caused ripples, that caused problems but it didn't affect the fate of the whole Jewish world. Poland was already being prepared as the next nest. Jewish history has a way, when a catastrophe occurs and some community

gets wiped out, for another community to be ready to pick up the slack, because the seeds of that other community were planted 100 years earlier. This is a very fascinating theory of history, which I hold.

The world Jewish community will not be fatally destroyed because by that time, 60 years from now, Israel will have a population of somewhere between 8-9 million people. Many of the internal social welfare problems, the educational, the religious and secular fight, the undue influence of the hard right haredi - all these things will have been mitigated and ameliorated and solved and compromised out. And the economy will have grown and Israel's strength will have grown. She has no intention of diminishing her military strength, not one iota, not for decades. She will have signed peace with everybody, but will not close down Dimona.

So if you have an Israel of 8 or 9 million people, then that becomes the bulwark of strength for the whole Jewish world. And another million Russians will have come into Israel and another million and a half Jews will have come out of the woodwork inside the FSU who must be shaped into a large functioning diaspora community in Russia. And life will go on. But how much better it would be, how much better it would be if life went on with us as well. Strong, powerful and extant.

I would like to read a closing paragraph, which I wrote to express my personal philosophy. "The real question is not the accuracy of whatever

projections are made about the future. The real question is your willpower. You and you alone will determine what happens to American Jewry and Judaism. You will continue to keep it alive one more generation by passing the torch to your children to continue it. Or you will cut it off right now by not preparing your children and the next generation will grow up ignorant and therefore easy prey. Eternal existence is decided anew every 40 years. When you talk about a people that's 3500 years old, just remember there is no such thing. There is a people which every 40 years must renew its claim to eternity. If you protect your heritage, it will protect you. The value of Judaism to you is that it gives you an identity and provides a meaning to your life by linking you to an ideal greater than yourself. The value of Judaism to the whole world is that of the greatest civilizing moral force man has ever known. Thus you are part of something which gives value to you and value to the whole world. What more can one man or one people desire. You folks are especially selected and therefore you are obligated, you are elevated, you are commanded to struggle, perhaps to suffer. Above all to witness to the meaning of Judaism. Through you this Jewish people will live forever, as long as this planet spins and wherever we find other men and women on other worlds to whom we can teach our message. You are touched with eternal greatness, touched by a dream and through you God, Israel and Torah, will be eternal. May you live forever. Thank you.

TALKING POINTS

Speech for NEW BOSTON JEWISH HIGH SCHOOL

By Herbert A. Friedman

Boston, MA

June 3, 1997

1. **BEN GURION - "DISASTER IS POWER"**
2. **TODAY'S DISASTER IS ASSIMILATION** leading to Dissolution.
Debacle of 2054. Elihu Bergman's prediction of 1976.
3. a.) Everyone agrees, even Alan Dershowitz, that a **JEWISH**
EDUCATION and upbringing **IS THE STRONGEST WEAPON** we
have against the plague which diminishes our numbers.
b.) This **EDUCATION**, in all its forms, is so large and costly that it should
be handled **AS A NATIONAL PROBLEM**. Building scores more of
elementary schools; dozens more of high schools, scores of summer
camps in U.S.; hundreds of campus Hillels; sending tens of thousands
of young persons age 15 - 25 to receive the transforming magic of an
Israel experience; - and finally, sponsoring adult education in its many
forms, Wexner and others - so that parents at home can back up what
the youngsters learn in school - all this requires capital funds in the

billions of dollars and annual operating funds in the hundreds of millions. The UJA & CJF should be raising and administering these funds in cooperation with the local community.

4. a.) **NATIONAL U.S. Jewish ORGANIZATIONS DON'T ACT** or manifest sense of crisis - not using our disaster to leverage themselves into action.
- b.) **THE SOLUTION DEVOLVES TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY,** since the national organizations do not address this problem, either because they don't see it, or because they are afraid of it.
5. Read the **"STORY ABOUT 4 PEOPLE"** (see next page)
6. **VALUE** of what you are doing **AS AN EXAMPLE** and stimulus to other communities:

* Atlanta

* Ft. Lauderdale

* San Diego

* Denver

* Phoenix

* Seattle

Your success is **CRUCIAL**, because you are farther along than any of the others. And they will draw strength from you.

A STORY ABOUT 4 PEOPLE

Four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody, and Nobody met to accomplish an important task.

Everybody was asked to do it.

Everybody was sure Somebody would do it.

Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it.

Somebody got angry about that, because it was Everybody's job.

Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it.

It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done.

7. **THE SOUL OF YOUR SCHOOL:** Just a few points - can't cover them all

a.) **BUILD JEWISH IDENTITY** through **PRIDE**:

What's so great about Judaism?

- ## 1. Ethics & morals - social justice -

the hungry and the homeless -

the orphan and the widow -

[illegible]

Do not hide yourself

Do not be indifferent

Do not ignore

Do not withhold help.

- ## 2. Basis of American Democracy - Puritans and the Bible -

Franklin's Great Seal.

3. Optimism & hope - the world can be improved - Messiah

4. We gave birth to the other two world religions.

b.) **BUILD CHARACTER IN EACH STUDENT** through competitive

sports and athletics. Wellington - Napoleon - Waterloo - Rothschild's money and the playing fields of Eton.

c.) **BUILD CULTURE** through exposure to all the arts. (Your campus must be aesthetic)

d.) **BUILD A CORE CURRICULUM.**

People of Israel - Land of Israel - Faith of Israel - Language of Israel

Basic literacy. (Give them copy of Wexner cultural literacy book.)

e.) **BUILD A COMMUNITY SCHOOL** so that everyone can come. This means a token tuition of \$1000 - even though it might cost the school \$0 - 12,000. **LARGE** endowment fund.

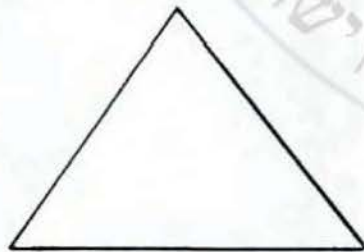
8. **RAISING FUNDS**

a.) ***FIRST RAISE PEOPLE*** who are passionate about the cause.

Teach them how to solicit

b.) ***DECIDE ON THE GOAL.***

c.) ***SHAPE THE TRIANGLE.*** How many seven figure gifts?



How many six figure gifts?

How many five figure gifts?

How many four figure gifts?

d.) ***GO TO WORK.***

9. CODA - DISASTER IS POWER

“When the Nazis shook the earth and split it under the feet of the Jews, Ben Gurion built a plow with which to make the graves into blooming fields, of a new Israel, turning death into revival.”

Shabbtai Teveth: “Ben Gurion and the Holocaust” p. 260

May your *NEW BOSTON* (like his *NEW ISRAEL*) be the first step in turning American Jewry's possible fate into a revival - May you educate and graduate thousands of young American Jews who will struggle to protect and preserve this phenomenal national community of ours from self-destruction.

Yochanan ben Zakkai built a school at Yavneh and protected the future of Judaism, even at the same moment when the Romans were burning Jerusalem. May the good Lord give you the will power and the energy to carry out this noble dream of building the New Boston Jewish High School.

REFERENCE TO SPEECH POINTS:

1. B.G. "**DISASTER IS POWER**" from S. Tevet "Ben Gurion and the Holocaust" p. xli - xliii Introduction.

Arab riots of 1929 - serious, widespread, Yishuv was small, weak. "Whereas others - true to tradition during pogroms - bemoaned the suffering and called for help, Ben Gurion's reaction was utterly different: "The blood we shed cries out not for pity and help but for doubling of our strength and of the Zionist enterprise....The Jewish people will redeem the spilled blood of their children by increasing the Yishuv by thousands and tens of thousands of new builders and defenders. This should be our one and only revenge."

Just after the riots, a worldwide "Voluntary Fund" appeal had been launched, especially in Europe and the United States, to raise 5 million Palestinian pounds (\$25 million at the time or \$750 million in today's dollars.) to be distributed among the victims. B.G. suggested that this enormous sum should go "entirely to new construction, defense, and expansion, as well as to the immigration of at least 50,000 young people within less than a year."

B.G. coined a slogan: "Disaster is Power". He was already seeing Jewish disaster as a kind of steampower that could be harnessed for political and military purposes. He understood that the role of a leader was to turn Jewish disaster to the overall advantage of the Jewish people by using it to help ensure their future survival. Disasters had befallen the Jews since time immemorial, but no one before Ben Gurion had ever dreamed of using them as weapons - as "leverage" in his words - or viewed them as sources of strength. He was absolutely unique in the Zionist movement.

The push to absorb scores of thousands of German Jews who fled to Palestine between 1933 and 1936 did more than double the Yishuv. And in 1936, the Arabs rioted again, with terror plus an economic boycott and a general strike. And again, B.G. used the terrible times as a challenge to raise the stakes by declaring the Jews must have their own state. He urged physical restraint and economic expansion to

accommodate more immigrants. "Disaster is Power." Brilliant!

2. ASSIMILATION.

Our young people are assimilating rapidly. The process begins with a vacuum, that is, they are ignorant of their roots - they have no basis for thinking, feeling, living as Jews - and by their mid-and-late teens they are thoroughly acculturated as Americans. The sense of Jewishness, if it ever did fleetingly exist at the time of Bar/Bat mitzvah, has evaporated. All that remains is a vague vestigial memory, that is perhaps stirred up for a few hours every year at Grandparents Seder table. And by the time they land on their college campus, they might not even attend any Jewish experience.

Sir Isaiah Berlin, world famous Jewish philosopher, don at Oxford, once coined an expression to define assimilationist Jews. He called them OTAG - Order of Trembling Amateur Gentiles. That cutting British wit is not applicable in America today. Our college kids are not trembling, they have nothing to fear and they are not trying to become Gentiles. They are simply ceasing to be Jewish in thought and deed. They are accepted into a permissive American society without a second thought on anybody's part. The Judaization of American culture continues to increase. Every reader of the N.Y. Times, Wasp, Black, Hispanic or Asian, is expected to know a few dozen Jewish words which creep into articles written by reporters who might think by now that these words are old Anglo-Saxon. The poor reader who doesn't understand chutzpah, shmooze, shlep, or bagel is simply bewildered. Seinfeld couldn't be the #1 TV comedy show throughout the entire U.S. today if it weren't for the fact that the Jewish accents, habits, thought patterns of the characters are increasingly familiar to people in Kansas and Arkansas.

And as the Judaization of American culture proceeds apace, so does the Americanization of Jews proceed rapidly and painlessly. No university is closed to them; no corporation or bank or brokerage or insurance company rejects them; every door is open; and handsome/beautiful American men and women fall in love and marry handsome/beautiful Jewish men/women by the scores of thousands every

year. In such a welcoming world, our young people ask “what does it mean to be Jewish, why is it so important, why bother to carry on with an ancient civilization that has no meaning for us today?” Thus - we find them at the cross-road age of 28 or 30 - having essentially shucked off their Jewish identities - not in anger or rebellion against an unknown heritage, but preferring to be with people they love who have also shucked off their (to them) meaningless Christian heritage. Two people with similiar identities - purely and simply Americans and nothing else - blend into the vast diversity of races and religions and cultures which characterize America today. They are not OTAG, they are OOA - Order of Ordinary Americans.



The
New Jewish High School

Rabbi Daniel L. Lehmann, Headmaster

Dear Rabbi Friedman,

I am glad that you and Bonnie were able to speak on Friday.

As I think Bonnie explained, the breakfast as we had initially envisioned it has been "postponed." Instead, Neal Farber will be meeting you at your hotel for breakfast. Jeff Lewis will also be joining you if he can.

If you would like, you are welcome to come out to the school after breakfast to see our building and talk with Danny and I, and learn more about what life at our school will be like.

I look forward to seeing you tomorrow.

Best regards,

Sara Heitler
Sara Heitler

P.S. I mentioned your conversation with Harold Morgan to Bonnie and Robbie, and they were both very intrigued. We look forward to exploring that option more thoroughly over the next few weeks.

Dear Sara

Dinner was very exciting.
Money raising must now take
same enthusiasm.

H. A. F.

(1) Both men came - it was very good conversation.

(2) I will come to see school in future visit.

(3) Re: Harold Morgan, don't wait 3 weeks.

They will organize some women people-power.

Call now

6/5/97

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BONNIE HAUSMAN

TO: Rabbi Herb Friedman **FAX:** 212-751-3739
FROM: Bonnie Hausman **FAX:** 617-965-7039
RE: BREAKFAST MEETING JUNE 4
DATE: June 2, 1997

Dear Herb:

We agreed that I would call you this afternoon, but it turns out that I will be away from my office this afternoon. Therefore, I am communicating via fax rather than phone, as agreed:

The breakfast at the home of Billy Marcus has been cancelled.

Instead, the two Wexner people whom you mentioned, Neal Farber and Geoff Lewis both were honored to know that you wanted to meet with them. I told them that the purpose of the meeting is to discuss how they might help to mobilize key givers in Boston on behalf of the New Jewish High School. They expect to be solicited to solicit and help to frame a strategy.

Each expressed a reservation, as follows: Neal's primary concern is whether he has the time to embrace solicitation activity for a third Boston-area Jewish organization; Geoff wanted to be sure that there was no misunderstanding about his capacity. Neal has already given voluntarily of his time, having headed up the scholarship process this year. Geoff will make a gift to the School and hopes everyone understands that he is not in the "big giver" category. He expects this meeting is not about his own gift but about how to mobilize the Wexners for the School. There was one dinner this year, but it was poorly attended.

Regarding Wednesday morning: Geoff is available only for an early morning meeting on Wednesday, and there is a slight chance (and he won't know until Tuesday) that he will have to be in court for a trial that morning. Since he thinks that event is unlikely, he has suggested an 8:00 am breakfast meeting. Neal is flexible and would like to come to the Colonnade to meet with you. Ordinarily he would invite you to his home (he works from there) but his daughter is ill. So he prefers to come to you and we hope this is acceptable.

Geoff will be at the dinner Tuesday night and will confirm his attendance then. Meanwhile, I have confirmed with Neal and you can count on his being at your hotel at 8:00 am Wednesday morning.

I look forward to seeing you and your wife at the dinner Tuesday night.

Warm regards, Bonnie

C:\DOCUMENTS\HIGH SCHOOL\NATION\FRIEDMAN.MEM

70 Neshobe Road □ Waban, MA 02168 □ Tel: (617) 965-0098 □ Fax: (617) 965-7039

The
New Jewish High School
OF GREATER BOSTON

Fax

תיכון חדש

To: Rabbi Friedman

From: Jan

Fax:

Fax: 617/736.8684

Phone:

Pages: 2, including cover

Re:

Date:

Problems? Call the high school office @ 617/736.8680

Comments:

Here are the directions.

I talked to Bonnie and she's planning on calling you
(if she hasn't already).

Shabbat Shalom,

Jan

The
New Jewish High School

OF GREATER BOSTON

Rabbi Daniel L. Lehmann, Headmaster

תיכון חדש
May 7, 1997

Dear Friends:

As you know, the New Jewish High School is holding its inaugural dinner on June 3, 1997 when we will honor Leon and Millicent Jick. We look forward to seeing many of you there. Through the generosity of the Pucker Gallery, we will raffle a magnificent work of art that night. Sue and Bernie Pucker have donated this work of art to the School in honor of and with profound friendship for Leon and Millicent Jick.

To Remember (pictured below), a mixed media creation by Samuel Bak, explores the power of the number 6: the 6th commandment "Thou Shalt Not Murder"; the 6 million Jews murdered in the Holocaust; the halfway point on the clock's face; the artist's age in 1939 when the war exploded upon his perfect world. Bak's work has many levels of meaning and the viewer's personal response and interpretation expand each piece. The Tablets are fractured but the pieces are available to be re-assembled; the size and shape of the Tablet also can serve as a tombstone; as a memorial to a world that was.



We will offer this work of art, valued at \$10,000, to only 100 purchasers of a \$100 raffle ticket on a first-come, first-served basis. The drawing will take place at the dinner on the evening of June 3. To participate in this outstanding opportunity, please detach the bottom portion of this letter with your check for \$100 per ticket. We will prepare tickets for drawing at the event. Whether or not you can join us on June 3, we hope that you will participate in this raffle to help support our school, to honor the Jicks and to have the opportunity to acquire a major work of art.

.....
I wish to purchase _____ tickets for the raffle of To Remember. Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ made out to NEW JEWISH HIGH SCHOOL, INC.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone # _____



ELLEN JAFFE MCCLAIN

Nothing transmits Jewish knowledge like day schools, but that doesn't make them the silver bullet against assimilation.

It's getting so you can't open a Jewish magazine or newspaper without finding articles breathlessly promoting Jewish day schools as the last best hope for Jewish continuity. The articles tell how Jewish parents, disgusted by their lack of knowledge, are enrolling their children in full-time Jewish programs by the thousands. MOMENT published such an article in February.

I definitely bring a bias to this issue. I teach in the public schools and regularly exhort Jewish parents to keep their children in them, to stay and fight to improve those schools rather than bailing out. Free public education was one of the means by which American Jews were able to climb into the middle class during the first half of this century. When Jewish parents give up on public schools today, it's as if they're pulling up the ladder behind them.

And I will stipulate up front that Jewish day schools are without a doubt the most comprehensive formal delivery system for knowledge of Jewish history, doctrine and ritual, synagogue skills, and Hebrew. No supplementary religious-school program can provide the depth found in a full-time course of Jewish studies.

But I don't buy day-school education as sure-fire inoculation against assimilation or disaffection with Judaism. As the MOMENT article pointed out, more than 75 percent of day schools in 1990 operated under Orthodox auspices. That means more than three out of four kids attending day school were living in Orthodox homes or had parents who wanted them in an Orthodox environment five days a week. Living in traditional homes in more insular communities, these children are already less likely to disaffiliate from Judaism than their non-Orthodox peers.

Of the 64 school sites listed in the Conservative movement's 1996 directory of Solomon Schechter schools, only four include grades 9 through 12 (and only half include grades 7 and 8); none of the 19 day schools in the Reform movement's PARDeS (Progressive Association of Reform Day Schools) program operate through grade 12.

This is significant because many sociologists and educators point to the adolescent years after bar and bat mitzvah as having the greatest impact on Jewish identity. Hebrew Union College demographer Bruce Philips cites involvement in temple youth group, having predominantly Jewish friends, and formal Jewish education of any kind through grade 12 as the three strongest predictors against intermarriage for contemporary Jewish children.

In other words, strong Jewish identity in young adults is developed by spending lots of time willingly with Jewish peers, not necessarily 30 hours a week in a day school. Good thing, too, since only a handful of non-Orthodox day schools go past 8th grade.

Most parents enrolling their children in liberal Jewish day schools sincerely want their kids to have the Jewish knowledge they didn't receive, and many schools are making laudable efforts to bring parents into their children's education. But a lot of parents hand off the task of establishing *yiddishkeit* in their children's lives, thinking that day schools will do a thorough job of instilling Jewish identity without much effort on the home front. Like their own parents, they see no reason to make Shabbat, involve themselves in study, or become active in synagogue. (One man I interviewed a few years ago was sending his sons to a Reform day school with ham and cheese sandwiches for lunch and thought it was funny when the teachers complained.)

And some parents don't even give lip service to the goal of Jewish education as a reason for sending their children to day school. They enroll their kids simply to keep them out of public school or, less cynically, because the day school has a good reputation in secular studies.

While their children's new skills and knowledge do cause many parents to get excited about Jewish ritual and learning, the Jewish community can't count on day-school instruction making a major impact at home.

"The kids who come out of a good day school experience, where the day-school's been a positive, loving force in their life, really know they're Jews; they've met friends, and they have a knowledge base to draw on," says Sherry Blumberg, professor of education at Hebrew Union College in New York.

"On the other hand ... if the family's not involved somehow in being Jewish, so there's no follow-up at home, then it's empty, it's something they've learned."

And even if day-school education were an absolute deterrent to assimilation, tuition costs guarantee that no more than a fraction of non-Orthodox children will have access to it. The reasons for the high costs are well documented, understandable—and completely irrelevant to most Jewish parents, three-fourths of whom, according to the National Jewish Population Survey of 1990, have household incomes of less than \$60,000 a year. I'll bet a lot of parents getting guilt-tripped about enrolling their kids in day school are thinking, "Bring the tuition down to what Catholic schools charge, and we'll talk."

Meanwhile, outside Jewish education circles, little attention is paid to the synagogues, the institutions that deliver religious education to the greatest number of American Jewish children. Temple-based supplementary schools (which,

deliver a *d'var Torah* (commentary on the week's portion), light Hanukkah candles, hold the baby for a brit, say kaddish, remain in a shivah household, and make public announcements.

Synagogues should keep separate seating but eliminate the mehitza, say some women, or they should keep the mehitza but insist on equal seating. Run the mehitza down the middle of the shul all the way to the Holy Ark. Get rid of balconies. "Judaism was not meant to be a spectator sport," said Bat Sheva Marcus, executive director of the Union for Traditional Judaism.

More female scholars who can argue for women's inclusion halachically. Years ago Blu Greenberg proclaimed, "Where there is a rabbinic will, there is a halachic way." At this conference she added, "Until women are the interpreters of halachah, we must generate the rabbinic will." "We need more women *poskot* [codifiers, Talmudic interpreters]," said Norma Joseph. "We need to proclaim: 'But it says that I can, and if you read it carefully, it says that I should.' Women need to know enough to say that."

More community leadership. Women should become synagogue presidents, executive directors of Jewish institutions, Hillel directors. They should get on boards, starting with Yeshiva University. Protest sexism in Jewish media. Speak out.

More creative solutions to the problem of the agunah. Recalcitrant husbands should not be permitted to enter the synagogue; if they get inside, they shouldn't be called up to the Torah. Rabbis should refuse to perform a wedding unless the man signs a prenuptial agreement clarifying the terms of divorce. Communities should replicate the bet din (religious court) convened last fall by Rabbi Emanuel Rackman, which has already freed six women.

"Don't behave as if we're begging for a favor," counseled Leah Shakdiel at the close of the conference. "When the rabbis act on behalf of women, they are not doing us a favor; they are doing what is right for Jews and for Torah. We need the rabbis because women are disempowered. But when this is done, it is the Torah that will be rescued." ❧

Letty Cottin Pogrebin's new book is Getting Over Getting Older: An Intimate Journey (Berkley, 1997).

Through my eyes to my heart and soul and through my hand

Artwork by
Michele Goren



He Is That He Is (18" x 20.5")



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lest we forget, have been the launching pad for thousands of contemporary American rabbis, cantors, educators, and communal workers) are sorely in need of improvement. But they are also where the bodies are.

Let's see Federations and foundations devote themselves to making the most of the two or four or six hours a week of Jewish instruction that, like it or not, are what most non-Orthodox kids get and to making temple membership and religious-school fees attractive and affordable to an expanding segment of the unaffiliated. A large population of Jewish teens who reach adulthood with a basic Jewish education and a desire to continue learning may just serve Jewish continuity better than a small cadre of intensely knowledgeable eighth graders. ♫

Ellen Jaffe McClain is the author of Embracing the Stranger: Intermarriage and the Future of the American Jewish Community (Basic Books, 1995).

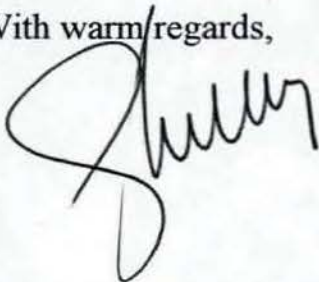
MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 20, 1997
TO: Sara Heitler
Via Fax: 617-736-8684
FROM: Shelley Wasserman
RE: HAF BIO

Dear Sara,

Rabbi Friedman asked me to send you the revisions to his biography. Thank you for inquiring about his hotel accommodations. He will be staying at The Colonade and all arrangements have been taken care of.

With warm regards,



RABBI HERBERT A. FRIEDMAN

Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman, a graduate of Yale University and the Jewish Institute of Religion, has been a visionary communal leader for over fifty years. As the executive chairman of national UJA for over twenty years, he created the UJA Young Leadership Cabinet, developed the UJA Overseas Mission, and became known as one of the most innovative thinkers on matters of Jewish communal policy. He established the Israel Education Fund which built high schools, libraries and kindergartens throughout Israel; and initiated many of the methods and ideas now in general use in fundraising throughout the world.

He settled in Israel in 1971, and helped develop the World Education Center for Progressive Judaism. Upon returning to the United States, he served as president of the American Friends of Tel-Aviv University. In 1985 he co-founded the Wexner Heritage Foundation with Mr. Leslie Wexner and served as its president for a decade. This foundation is dedicated to the education of leadership groups in Jewish communities throughout the United States, and has established its seminars thus far in 29 cities.

Rabbi Friedman has been an outspoken proponent of Jewish day schools for many years. He is a passionate advocate for intensive Jewish education and has played a significant role in propelling the current movement to establish community-based Jewish high schools throughout the country. A compelling speaker and an inspiring leader, we are most honored to have Rabbi Friedman deliver the keynote address at the inaugural dinner for the New Jewish High School of Greater Boston.

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