PERSONAL and PROFESSIONAL

MEMOIRS OF A LIFE IN COMMUNITY SERVICE

SIDNEY Z. VINCENT

Cleveland yesterday...League Park, Glenville High as student and teacher, Western Reserve University, Camp Wise, the Jewish Community Council. These are the early points of recall in the rich mosaic of recollections which stamp Sidney Z. Vincent as a hometown boy. But his autobiography, *Personal and Professional*, goes beyond reminiscence for his grandchildren to describe events which are equally part of our memories.

For three decades Sidney Vincent was at the hub of community life as a staff executive at the Jewish Community Federation. He was a key figure in coping with internal problems arising from the Jewish shift after World War II into Cleveland's eastern suburbs. He grappled with tangled civil rights issues of housing, education and fair employment, particularly in the 1960s. Combining his skills in community organization with talents as a writer and speaker, he interpreted the work of Federation to a growing audience. He was projected beyond Cleveland onto the national stage to become a leader among his colleagues and to carry out major assignments on behalf of

Personal and Professional

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Sidney Z. Vincent

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THE JEWISH COMMUNITY FEDERATION
OF CLEVELAND

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Personal and Professional

To the Women in My Life —
My wife Ruth, chief actor in my life drama,
and my sister Mae and daughter Jill,
for their lifelong cheers and hurrahs.

FOREWORD

In the fall of 1981, the Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland through a generous grant from its Endowment Fund established a publications program. Its objectives are "to document Cleveland Jewish life past and present, to record individual and community achievement, and to interpret our place in the Jewish world." The publications activity is part of Federation's broader program in archives and history—oral history, sponsorship of the Cleveland Jewish Archives at the Western Reserve Historical Society, and records management—all designed to secure our past and make it part of our community's living heritage.

Federation's Archives and History Committee, with the encouragement of the Federation Board of Trustees, selected these memoirs as its first publication. The book focuses on the important events in Jewish life between 1945-1980, as seen from the perspective of a community professional actively involved in them. During those same years, Federation came of age as it assumed leadership in Jewish affairs, which still influence our lives on the local and national level and in the world Jewish community, particularly Israel.

Personal and Professional testifies to the creative career Sidney Vincent shared with his people—with Cleveland, the American Jewish community, Israel, and world Jewry. Now executive director emeritus of the Jewish Community Federation, he served our community in a period distinguished by outstanding lay and professional leadership. His memoirs are an auspicious addition to the published record of our community, which includes *The History of the Jews of Cleveland* by Lloyd Gartner and *Merging Traditions, Jewish Life in Cleveland* by Sidney Vincent and Judah Rubinstein. The Jewish Community Federation is pleased and proud that the memoirs are its first direct venture into publishing.

The Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland
Lawrence H. Williams, President
Stanley B. Horowitz, Executive Director

A PRELIMINARY WORD

When mountain climbers are asked why they want to scale a new peak, their standard reply is, "Because it's there." Those who write their own biography open themselves to a comparable question: "Why undergo the drudgery and make a public disclosure of your private life?" The best answer I can offer is, "Because it's *not* there."

There was nothing "there," for example, to answer the questions of my older grandchildren who have begun to show some interest in what I've done with my life, just as I wish that my grandparents, none of whom I ever knew, had left some record of their doings.

And there is nothing there, at least in book form, that describes the taste and feel of Jewish community life, as reflected in the day-by-day successes and frustrations of a practitioner. I have been urged, sometimes politely and sometimes seriously, to pull together my decades of professional experience into a coherent account that might be of help to students and colleagues and lay leaders involved in Jewish affairs.

Several years ago, in the course of some writing about the Cleveland Jewish community, I searched in vain for some vivid account of what communal life was like in the early days, in order to put some flesh and blood on the skeleton of minutes and studies reporting formal actions but not human acts. What I was looking for simply wasn't there. Might not some future historian be grateful then for my story?

These were all compelling reasons for writing this book. But the real reason is closer in spirit to the answer of the mountain climber. Despite all the drudgery of preparation and execution, writing this book was profoundly, irrationally satisfying. We all have an itch to account for ourselves and, in the later years, define some meaning in our life story. To do so evokes the good feeling that flows from all creation—something that "was not there" now exists, and may be of interest to others.

Those others include the men and women who made this book possible by their guidance and their support. My chief guide and

support has been my long-term colleague, Judah Rubinstein, who devoted himself to this volume as wholeheartedly as he did to an earlier book of which we were co-authors, *Merging Traditions*. David Guralnik, chairman of the Publications sub-Committee of the Cleveland Jewish Community Federation, was not only the final authority on questions of style but was great fun throughout. The Jewish Community Federation, through its Archives Committee and its Endowment Fund Committee, is not only the overall sponsor of this book—it is really its hero, since what I have written is at least as much about life at Federation as it is about my life.

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I

Mostly Personal
1912-1951

CLEVELAND BOYHOOD

My family moved a lot in my earliest years. By the time my memory was born, I suppose at the age of three or four, I had already lived in three houses. I have no memory of the home on East 31st Street, where I was born (at home, of course, which was the custom in those days), or the one on 69th Street, even though it had the distinction of being the first family residence with inside plumbing. It was only when we moved "up" to East 71st Street that I can begin to draw on my own recollections.

Moving around was typical of immigrant families. As family fortunes improved, however slightly, there was added incentive to move a bit further east, away from the more downtown locations where nearly everybody settled when they first arrived. The best way to get ahead, in view of the meager wages most family heads earned, was through real estate. You scraped and saved and bought a "property," and as it increased in value, you sold it for a few hundred dollars more than the purchase price—enough for the tiny down payment on a newer and better house.

The 71st Street house had another economic advantage; it was a four-suiter. Every month someone from the other three families came down to our suite for a combination social hour and business transaction as they paid their rent. I didn't understand what was going on, of course, but somehow I got the impression that the house really belonged to us, and all the other families were there on our sufferance.

What ownership most meant to me was that the pear tree was ours. And what a pear tree! They don't grow that kind any more. These days, fruit trees are pathetically small things, but that pear tree was a giant. Come to think of it, a lot of other things have shrunk like that pear tree; all the houses and streets and backyards I knew as a kid have somehow turned out to be much smaller than they were then.

Standing under that tree, watching the pinkish white blossoms give way to the hard little green knobs which in turn grew into luscious yellow fruits, was as engrossing an experience as standing under giant redwoods half a century later. And our pear tree tasted a lot better, too. Not that I ever got to shinny up it, the way

the big kids did, to feast à la branch. But the pickings on the ground were good, too, if you were careful to chew around the occasional worm holes.

None of my other impressions of 71st Street is as vivid as the pear tree, except maybe Lucille. She was my secret love (secret, that is, from Lucille), but I had a lot of trouble with her family. Her kid brother was a particular nuisance, not only because he stuck around a lot, but because he was an outstanding biter. He would dig his teeth into me just because I took his ball away from him and then start yelling, "Her hit me!" Maybe it was his imaginative grammar that always brought the troops running to his rescue. Particularly his ma. I remember her as small and vivacious, with a throaty (now I suppose I would call it sexy), nonstop voice, in complete contrast to Lucille, who was always quiet and mysterious. Mrs. B. wasn't the least bit mysterious. She and my ma would hang out the washing together, Mrs. B. holding forth at a great rate, snapping the wet clothes and pinching them onto the line with a clothespin without missing a syllable. Lucille and I would run up and down the growing line of clothes, letting their wet cool slap against our faces until we were told to go away and play by ourselves. That was fine with me, until that kid brother came along to spoil things.

Just as in adult life, the memories of childhood often preserve the unhappy moments more clearly than the joyous ones. The trauma in the kindergarten, for example. One day, as a special treat, the teacher brought in some mouth watering sweets. At least, *some* of them looked mouth watering. She started around the room with two trays, and each kid could select from either one. One tray had properly gooey chocolate cake; the other had scrawny-looking cookies, without even a little icing to make them worthwhile. Every kid, of course, chose the cake, and I could tell, as the teacher approached me, that she was getting worried because there obviously wasn't enough cake to go around. When it came my turn, she asked: "Cookies" (with a bright smile) "or cake?" (worried frown). There was a look in her eyes I was to know years later under the general heading of "Family hold back." I liked the teacher and wanted to help her out, but I also

wanted that cake. The result was my first remembered moral struggle: instinct and appetite arrayed against compassion and understanding. Instinct lost, and I mumbled, "Cookies." I regret the choice to this day. Maybe if I had had the inner confidence to trust my instincts, I wouldn't have wandered off into fields like communal service. Ah, that lost cake!

Streetcars were a vivid part of that 71st Street experience, because my father hadn't yet bought our first family car. Each line had for me a distinctive personality. Euclid Avenue had the most modern cars, lower and sleeker and faster than the others; St. Clair's were almost like the "dinkies" (repair cars carrying work crews), older and tired-looking, maybe because their cowcatchers looked like an old man's beard. My favorite was the 79th crosstown, even though its cars were "fatter" than the others. I felt loyal to them because I was there the night of the celebration when the line was officially opened. After cutting through backyards from north of Lexington to St. Clair, it terminated in Gordon Park, which meant picnics and sandlot baseball games and peanuts. Later on, I took a fancy to the Wade Park line because it did such lovely zigzags—Wade Park to 66th Street, then south to Hough, west to 55th Street, south to Perkins, west to 40th Street, south to Prospect, and, finally, west again to Public Square. Imagine! It ran both north *and* south of Euclid, in contrast to dull lines like Superior that never deviated from one direction. Most interesting of all were the cars with different colors. The rarest were the black funeral cars; I still wonder how many cemeteries they could possibly have reached. But for pure romance, you couldn't beat the red "country cars." Some stuffed shirts called them interurbans, but we knew better. Those great, speedy monsters (some said they could do fifty miles an hour in the open) were meant to take you out in the country, not to another city.

We used them one summer, when Pa had a rare week's vacation and we all went out to Middlefield, where my uncle Feitel (Nathan) ran a farm for a couple of years. The country cars, those aristocrats, didn't make all the usual stops in the city, but East 71st Street was major enough to warrant one, and we hauled our suitcases and food baskets up to Euclid and waited there for the

trolley to come. What a thrill when we finally saw it swing around the curve into sight! Of course, it didn't take us all the way to Middlefield, which after all was almost forty miles away. It took us to Chardon, and there we waited for our connecting country car that went to Burton and then on to Middlefield.

The farm was several miles out in the countryside, and we got there by horse and wagon. The slick, pert, black little buggies that the Amish drove trotted smartly past our slow-moving, flat wagon, with my cousin and parents seated in front and all the rest of us and the luggage bumping along in the back. Two of the three memories I have of that week are good ones, which isn't a bad average. Best was a dog that bounced joyously all over the farm. His name was Rover, which has seemed to me ever since to be the only proper name for a dog. Then there was the sheer breathless delight of jumping from the high loft of the barn into the rottingly sweet-smelling hay below and lying there spread-eagled in its warmth for a moment before scrambling down and over to the wooden slats that made a kind of ramshackle ladder up to the loft for another free-floating leap.

The bad experience was the milk. There were a couple of miserable-looking cows out in the pasture, and my aunt, while squeezing the milk out of their udders in sharp jets that bubbled up in the pail, made lavish promises about how magnificent that warm, pure, creamy stuff would taste. She was a kind and lovely lady, but her advice was terrible. The milk tasted awful, and despite the circle of adults egging me on with grown-up encouragement about how healthy and nourishing and generally unattainable the stuff was, I simply couldn't down it. I have been heavily prejudiced against milk ever since.

As it turned out, there were some pretty distinguished people on 71st Street. The best friend of my older brother George was Milton Kane, and *his* brother, Irving Kane, became my boss and good friend when he served as president of the Jewish Community Council and of the Council of Jewish Federations, in addition to becoming one of the most distinguished Clevelanders on the international scene. Across the street and down a few houses was the Rocker family, completely intertwined even at that early date

with Cleveland Jewish history as publishers of *Die Yiddishe Velt*. Henry Rocker, then known as "the young Rocker" to distinguish him from his father, Samuel Rocker, the publisher, later became the community's elder statesman and president of the Jewish Federation and of Park Synagogue, both intergral parts of my life. There was also considerable neighborhood talk about a drama organization that was getting started on Cedar Avenue and East 73rd Street, almost in our backyard. It was called the Cleveland Play House.

But I didn't know anything about those developments, and I was perfectly content when we pulled up stakes in 1918 or 1919 and moved to Quimby Avenue, where my father and my Uncle Doc had jointly purchased an eight-suite "terrace." Now my memory comes into much sharper focus, like looking into a microscope and jiggling the knob back and forth until what is on the slide comes clearly into view. I can still tick off the names of all the neighbors in the other seven suites, some of whom stayed throughout the entire period until we left in 1924. I particularly remember the Bloch sisters in the last suite, down toward East 60th Street. They were two spinster ladies, music teachers, who seemed to spend all their time playing the piano, but who usually managed to have some cookies around when a kid came calling. They often talked a lot about a relative who had some kind of important position in the world of music, about which I knew nothing at all. Years later I wondered whether they were talking about Ernest Bloch, the world-famous composer who was then in Cleveland serving as director of the Cleveland Institute of Music.

School was, of course, by far the biggest factor in my life and, with a few exceptions, I loved it. The chief exception was always art. I was easily the worst kid in the class, which was a little surprising, since my sister and my brother are both artistically talented. Once some hot-shot art supervisor visited our class and taught us a new method of drawing by which we could instantly transform our imagination into sketches of lovely animals. She collected all the resultant efforts and commented constructively about each. Except one. Even she, supportive as she was, had to admit there was no way she could determine, from the unsightly

mess she displayed before us, what animal the artist was trying to draw. She invited the creator, whoever he was, to try to explain what he had wrought, but no one volunteered. Unfortunately, we had to sign our names on the back, and there I was, exposed!

But for the most part school went well. In those days you bought your own books, and I remember dashing off to the store the day school opened to get my first-grade reader, which was supposed to last most of the semester. The fresh smell of those hundreds of new books and the excitement of buying my own were so stimulating that I finished the whole book that night, to my teacher's surprise and disapproval. I was punished by being accelerated twice, with the result that I was always the youngest in my class. That may have been a good thing academically, but it turned out to be a social disaster. Throughout my school days the kids in my classes were older than I and, in the case of the girls, a lot more mature.

There were, however, some small triumphs along the way. The obverse of my art disaster was an incident in the sixth grade when the teacher asked for volunteers to discuss the significance of Carthage. That was my meat! I had become intrigued with Hannibal and his use of elephants; he was almost as big a hero in my eyes as some of the baseball players that we got to know because we lived so near League Park. But the teacher wouldn't call on me to recite! She called on one after another of the clods who didn't know a thing about Carthage, and I got more and more frantic, jumping up from my desk and waving my hand wildly, almost in her face, begging her to call on me . . . me . . . me! Some of the other kids were doing the same, in a mad competition for her attention, but she insisted on ignoring us and calling repeatedly on the dolts. Maybe she was having fun, teasing us. Finally, after half a dozen false starts, with all of us know-it-all kids pleading to recite, she called on me. The other bidders subsided, defeated, into their seats and I began my rigmarole about the life and times of Carthage, its checkered relations with Rome, and its final disastrous ending. It was all quite heart-breaking. I am not likely ever again to feel so warmly gratified as I was when Miss Corlett commented: "Now *that* was a recitation."

Relations with the kids outside of school were a mixed bag. For the most part my memories are happy enough. We seemed to find a lot more ways to amuse ourselves than kids do now. We were big on marbles and tops and kites. Playgrounds were unknown but we used the streets for athletic games of all kinds. Even though I was smaller than most, I managed to get along pretty well, but at least twice I got my comeuppance.

The first time was the fault of my birthday cowboy suit. It was a beauty, complete with *two* holsters and toy guns to fit. When I put it on, I felt ready to take on the whole world. After all, my father at that time owned a movie house which I patronized faithfully, so I knew all about Tom Mix and William Farnum and William S. Hart, all steely-eyed Hollywood cowboys who took on all comers with no trouble at all. So I sauntered out—tough—to challenge anyone who got in the way of law and order. That turned out to be Alvin and his brother. They took one look at my outfit and burst out laughing. I didn't like that, nohow, and let them know the horrible risks they were taking in treating a perfectly dressed he-man that way. They enthusiastically accepted the risk, and in fifteen seconds I found out that not only couldn't I handle the two of them together; either one could have done me in, as they joyously informed me, sitting respectively on my chest and my legs. I learned some invaluable lessons about caution from that cowboy suit.

The other incident was more serious. I was the only Jewish kid in a gang that got together every day, usually in Wes Bishop's backyard across the street. Mostly that fact didn't matter much, but once in a while it did. I wrote a short story later about a mock crucifixion in which I was the unwilling star actor. It took place one summer afternoon when my friends ran out of things to do. Suddenly, as they tied me to a tree branch in the traditional crucifixion pose, they weren't my friends any more. The incident was my first experience with intergroup relations, which were to play so large a role in my personal and professional life.

But the best part of Quimby Avenue was that it was only one street away from League Park, then the home of the Cleveland Indians. Most of the fans came to the game by streetcar, using

either of the two lines that intersected at the ball yard—the Wade Park line on 66th Street and the Hough line going down Lexington Avenue. There was an extra set of car tracks right outside League Park, where 'specials' would line up to take care of the homebound crowds when the game was over. Some few fans did drive, however, and that was a great boon to us. There was no parking lot near the ball park (or anywhere else, for that matter), and we kids developed a fine racket. We would stand on the curb in front of our homes and shout: "Park y' car, mister?" We simply reserved "our" space for those who promised to pay us a quarter. (Half dollar in 1920, when Cleveland won the pennant.) Everybody else got waved away. What our customers bought was not only space but insurance against the occasional letting air out of the tires of nonpayers. Rotten kids!

My school, Dunham, was directly across Lexington Avenue from the ball park, and when I got to the sixth grade, my room was on the top floor. Ball games started in those days at three o'clock, and school was over at 3:30. My seat was in the row next to the windows, and I found that if I stood up to recite I could see the scoreboard and most of left field, where Charlie Jamieson patrolled. He was the kids' favorite, mostly because in pre-game practice he would sometimes catch the ball behind his back and flip it to us in the bleachers. I was an eager stand-up reciter during that charmed half-hour. Sometimes when I was called on I was taken completely by surprise, since my attention was covertly riveted on left field.

But I got to see a lot more of the games than those sneaked glimpses. It was the custom to stop policing the gates in the seventh inning, so we would hang around outside till the cops left and then rush in for the last two innings. Even better, my older sister Betty was a schoolteacher, and one year she brought home a whole pack of baseball passes that were handed out, one to each kid, just before summer vacation, as a promotion by the ball club. Evidently she had gathered up extras from some of her fellow teachers, and the total loot was twenty-five or thirty passes—for the Yankees! That was a great prize, because you could trade a Yankee card for at least two with the Athletics or the Red Sox,

who were perennial cellar dwellers in those years. I wound up with a pass for practically every game that summer. The most fun was trading the cards. Each one had a fascinatingly distinctive color, and besides, there were lovely opportunities for bargaining: Were two Detroits worth three Chicagos? Should a St. Louis be traded even up for a Washington?

That same year the principal came in the day before Opening Day and in hushed tones announced that the four best boys in the class were going to be given an extraordinary honor. They were going to get in to the opening game! I was one of the kids selected, and it turned out that the high honor meant reporting to the ball park at eleven o'clock, getting a basketful of schedules for the year, and spending the next three or four hours passing them out to the fans as they came in. We were on duty until after the game started, without lunch; then, if any seats were available, we were allowed to watch the rest of the game without paying admission. I didn't complain. I was too awed by the glory of it.

Best of all, Ray Caldwell lived right down the street. He was the third of the twenty-game winners the year Cleveland won the pennant. (Coveleski and Bagby were the other two, of course). Since the style of living for ballplayers was far more modest in those days than now, Caldwell would walk to and from the ball park. The custom of asking for autographs wasn't yet established; at least I don't remember any of us ever asking for his signature. But we saw him, big as life! Once he even said "Hello."

Baseball also played a role in my relations with my two Uncle Abes. Abe Vincent was my father's youngest brother who until his marriage in the early twenties lived with us. We had a permanent daily bet on the outcome of the games. With more enthusiasm than judgment, I gave him eight-to-five odds on the Indians, except that the odds were even when they played the Yankees. Years later I gave him hell for taking advantage of a little kid, requiring my team to play at a pennant winning .615 clip for me just to break even! Of course we never paid off the bets or even decided how much actually was on the line, because we talked only in terms of odds, not cash.

My other Uncle Abe (Rubin), my mother's brother, was not

only a fine baseball player but also a remarkable personality who was, intellectually, probably the most decisive single influence in my life. A few early pictures that have survived from his boyhood show him to be a slim, undernourished kid who, under the stress of the hard economics of an immigrant's life, was put to work at an early age and had to go to night school to finish his education. He never attended college but somehow managed to learn enough accounting somewhere to get a job as a bookkeeper at the National Smelting Company. His rise up the ladder must have been meteoric, because by the time I became aware of such things, Uncle Abe was already a man of affairs, executive of the company, the acknowledged leader of the family, and the ultimate authority on everything.

It was a deserved reputation. A nationally recognized expert on every aspect of the aluminum industry as well as an imaginative progressive in labor relations and later a leader in the civil rights movement, he was also, despite his lack of formal education, at home in the world of literature and music. His collection of books was magnificent, spilling from his library into every room of the house, topped only by his extraordinary collection of fine records. He expressed himself on any subject with a compression and decisiveness that made him a respected leader in every setting.

Until I grew up, I was in awe of Uncle Abe Rubin. He would visit our house only occasionally, because we were much more likely to go to his far bigger and more impressive home already up on the Heights. We would gather there to inspect his annual *succah*, or for his big family seder, or whenever there were notable family events. He set the family standards. Once he came to our house with a set of Caruso records and insisted we get rid of the junky jazz that my sisters had accumulated. I still have a few of these Caruso recordings now, together with several of the splendid books that he gave on birthdays. It wasn't till I got to college that our mutual interest in books and things intellectual made it possible for me to talk with him on terms approaching equality. Until then, he was too much for me.

Except once. Late one afternoon when I had just turned sixteen and had therefore become eligible to drive, he dropped in at the

house unexpectedly and invited me to accompany him, then and there, on a trip East. He needed someone to relieve him at the wheel of the car during the night, since he meant to drive straight through to New Hampshire, where his family was vacationing.

What an adventure! There were, of course, no superhighways in those days, and we reached Syracuse just as dawn broke. He didn't get much sleep that night after all, because we talked and sang Gilbert and Sullivan and discussed world affairs for most of the ten or twelve hours we drove through the deserted villages and towns, stopping only for a midnight snack and some gas.

I was all for continuing the trip with him to the East, where I had never been, but he drove me to the railroad station, gave me money for the return home, and said he was now refreshed enough (how, I wondered) to complete the journey by himself. I fooled him a bit, however; I deserted the train at Buffalo, spent the day at Niagara Falls, and then returned to Buffalo in time to catch the steamer—the magnificent *Seeandbee*—back to Cleveland. I didn't have enough money left to buy a stateroom, so I stayed up that night too, trying to sleep in one of the chairs in the main salon. Uncle Abe became more of a human and less of a god from that time on.

The Rubin clan, made up of my mother's three brothers and three sisters, their spouses and children, were my extended family. For years the whole gang assembled on Sunday afternoons for baseball games at "Quilliams," named for the street where my Uncle Morris owned a huge empty lot in the woods. A nearby clearing became the site of our weekly picnics and family baseball games, played after lunch while the women cleaned up and *shmooised.* I was often impatient at the insistence on letting the little kids in the game even though they could barely hold a bat, but the rule was that everybody could play, even Uncle Doc, the third Rubin brother. He was some sight to see. He could occasionally make fair contact with the ball, but he insisted on his own rules. He would have nothing to do with anything so ridiculous as three strikes putting him out; he had come to bat and bat he would, strikes or no strikes. Moreover, he had absolutely no intention of wasting his time on fielding—and didn't. Also, he saw

no particular point in running after he did hit the ball. He simply stayed at bat until he had enough. Then he would lie down in the grass and make sardonic comments about everybody else.

Some of us who were totally dedicated to playing the game according to the rules were outraged, but it never helped. My Uncle Abe and Uncle Morris were the two best players of the older generation, and my cousin Geckie (George Segal) and I were the best of the younger set. When any of the four of us got to bat, the game got serious. It wasn't cricket for us to get on base simply by hitting the ball on the ground; that was too easy, given the quality of the infielders. The challenge was to sock it as high and far as you could, the only authentic hit being to drive it over the outfielder's head.

Later, the family gatherings shifted to Saturday night, and I wrote a short story called "The Pinochle Game," which reflects those long evenings of good eating, good conversation, and long analyses of the world situation, always followed by precisely three games of four-handed pinochle—for men only, except for Ruth, the only woman ever to break into that closed circle of card players.

I owe a lot to the Rubins, who provided the major environment during my growing up years. They had integrity and drive and total dedication to the work ethic. Their philosophy included a readiness for unlimited sacrifice for "the children," a distaste for anything remotely like display, and an insistence on intellectual achievement, since every Rubin must be tops in his class. My admiration is qualified only by a suspicion that life might have been a little more fun and relaxed without their strict guidance.

GROWING UP IN GLENVILLE

It doesn't seem possible that I actually lived in the Glenville area for only twelve years, from 1924 to 1936. I still think of myself as a "Glenville boy"—an expression used a lot in those years to distin-

guish us from the kids growing up in the other two areas of Jewish concentration: Kinsman and the Heights. Economically and socially, we felt a cut below those who had moved up to the Heights, whose parents had pretty much made it, and a much smaller cut above the Kinsman crowd. Their parents were mostly in the trades, or so we thought, all employees and union members. Ours tended to be "businessmen," which for the most part meant they were owners of small and struggling stores. The distinction by neighborhood did not make us really class conscious, since all of us were equally in trouble once the Depression struck. But the impact of neighborhood was real because we could go days and weeks without leaving it.

We walked. I can't remember any family, at least in our neighborhood, that had two cars, and a fair number didn't have even one. The result was that "the old man" took off with the family car in the morning, usually not to return until quite late since long hours were almost universally kept, and the family had to make do without transportation. That was hardly a handicap.

Supermarkets were of course far in the future. The three main arteries—East 105th Street, Kinsman, and East 123rd Street for the so-called "Superior Through" neighborhood—consisted of never-ending blocks of small stores of every description. There were creameries, bakeries, meat markets (mostly kosher; prime centers of social life since housewives had plenty of time to exchange views and gossip while they waited for "my next"), drug stores, tailor shops, shoe stores, furniture stores, and barber shops (often with card games going on in the back and hot discussions in the front). There was one small, rather forlorn A&P grocery store at the corner of our street and East 105th Street, but otherwise I don't remember any representatives from the big chains. The stores were small, struggling, highly personal family affairs, and their owners were themselves deeply embedded in the life of the community.

From the standpoint of the small fry, the stores were also something of a nuisance. We were on call at all times to "run to the store for me," always at the precise moment when a crucial play was coming up. And there were plenty of crucial plays. Glenville

had a deserved reputation for its ferment of literary and musical and artistic and intellectual activities. But to those of us who raced home from school, wolfed down a snack so as not to waste time getting out in the street, the big deal was the daily game. It could be almost anything. There was, thank God, no TV and even radio made little impact on us. I can remember the first time I ever heard a radio, on one of the so-called crystal sets, at a friend's home. What a thrill it was to put on the headphone and listen in disbelief to someone talking from downtown! Without wires! But the days of the Lone Ranger and other sophisticated broadcast entertainments were far in the future. We played all the usual games and some that were quite unusual.

Even the usual ones, like football and baseball, were a little unusual. Years later I drove down Greenlawn Avenue, where I had lived, and, seeing how narrow the street was and how the tree lawn really was a tree lawn, with two maple trees in front of each forty-foot lot, I marveled over how in the world we had been able to flail away at the ball. The fact was that we all became expert at hitting to dead center field because if we swung with a natural rhythm, we pulled the ball and ran the risk of breaking a window. That happened often—with a horrifying tinkle of shattering glass followed a moment later by the banshee wails of the outraged housewife.

Football presented its own difficulties. A favorite trick of the quarterback, if pressed too hard, was to retreat behind one of the trees on the tree lawn and jockey around it until the frustrated defense gave up. The result was a stalemate. The quarterback stayed on the other side of the tree, sometimes leaning on it, until pursued or pursuer, out of sheer boredom, renewed the chase.

We were also big on various improvisations that I don't see anymore. We invented a kind of hockey played on roller skates, using croquet mallets and a croquet ball for the puck. It was fun until the croquet mallets were smashed to smithereens when the skaters got too enthusiastic about hacking away at the ball. And kids don't play "catty" any more. We made the tools ourselves, fashioning a cigar-like piece of wood with two sharpened ends, plus a thin block of wood for a bat. You tapped the "catty" on the

pointed end so that it rebounded into the air and then you socked it down the street before it fell back to the ground. The length of the hit determined whether you got a single, double, triple, or home run. The defense could make an out either by catching the catty on the fly or kicking it backward before it came to a stop. It was really an awful game; you took big chances when you tried to stop the progress of that sharp wooden "cigar."

But life in Glenville certainly wasn't all fun and games. For most of us, certainly for me, by far the two dominating influences were the Jewish Center (later named Park Synagogue after it moved to the Heights) taking up the entire block from Grantwood to Drexel on East 105th Street, and Glenville High School, between Everton and Englewood on Parkwood Drive, a winding street just east of and more or less parallel to 105th Street.

I had started going to the Jewish Center while we still lived on Quimby Avenue, thinking nothing at all of taking two long streetcar rides, complete with transfer, to get there. No one told us in those days that kids either had to be bused or else could commandeer their mothers to chauffeur them. I doubt whether any other Jewish institution in Cleveland history played so central a role in a neighborhood as the Jewish Center did in the period between the two world wars, with the possible exception of the Council Educational Alliance House on Kinsman and East 135th Street. At any rate, the big red brick building housing the Jewish Center was far more than a synagogue. It had one of the best swimming pools in town; its basketball court and other gym facilities attracted huge crowds since so few other facilities were available; it housed the Cleveland Hebrew Schools, which were then at the peak of their influence; its Sunday morning lecture series, at a time when lectures played a central role in the intellectual life of the community, attracted crowds of Jews and non-Jews; the social life of the entire community revolved around the many facilities it offered; its library was a central meeting place as well as an intellectual resource.

Most crucial of all was its dominating figure, Rabbi Solomon Goldman. Most of us kids who went there found it difficult to distinguish between him and God, except that Rabbi Goldman

was so much closer and warmer. He had the custom of informally meeting with each incoming confirmation class, calling out the name of each student, and identifying each of us with our families—almost all of whom he knew personally. There the Great Man sat, with the class register before him, puffing away on a cigar and charming all of us by his informal manner and his lively topical comments—he, the eminent scholar and the model for all of us! One of the kids wasn't present, and someone explained it was because he was laid up with a broken leg suffered when he fell chasing a fly ball. And what was the response of the eminent scholar? He puffed once on his cigar and then inquired, "But did he catch the ball?" Divinity graciously deigning to be human!

How we hung on his Wednesday afternoon lectures, particularly when he got to interpreting the Book of Jeremiah. We had been told by friends in earlier classes that this was the high point of the year's lectures, and that we could expect the rabbi to break into tears while describing the lonely prophet comforting his people at the time of the destruction of the Temple, not gloating (as we guiltily acknowledged we would) that his warnings had turned out to be only too true. Instead, now that the evil day had come, how nobly he offered solace and hope. What a presentation! For our class, the rabbi didn't quite weep, but he did choke up a couple of times, which was very gratifying, and the girls felt free to do a little crying on their own. The boys settled for lumps in the throat and the determination to shape up better Jewishly, thereby proving to both Jeremiah and to Rabbi Goldman that we were indeed worthy of so rich a heritage.

I admired him so greatly that I coveted being named valedictorian of the class—by him. As it turned out, I got both that honor and also my first elected office when I was chosen class president. That was surprising, since I was both the youngest and smallest member of a class of a hundred kids who were confirmed that year.

I really wasn't ready for the honors. I remember two particularly awkward moments. The first was at a night for the parents, when I found to my horror that I was to introduce the Rabbi. No

one had warned me that I was to have such a heavy responsibility. I still remember my panic when the Rabbi murmured to me after dinner, "Aren't you going to introduce me?" How do you introduce God? I hadn't the faintest notion of what I was supposed to say. I still don't know what I got out.

The other occasion had to do with the confirmation ceremony itself. Each of the kids being confirmed had some lines to speak—mostly just a sentence or two—but I was allowed more time. I broke with custom by writing my own speech, but Rabbi Goldman called me into his office and dictated an additional paragraph. I didn't care much for the help, even though he patted me on the back, assuring me I was permitted more of my own wording than most of my predecessors had had. I wanted to do my own thing. I had carefully planned to spring on the audience a first-class word I had just learned—"superannuated"—which maybe would show the congregation that the Rabbi wasn't the only scholar around. But I got my comeuppance at confirmation when somehow the word "fulfill" came out "fulfull." And emphasized, too! I remember the agony of debating whether I should go back and correct the ludicrous mispronunciation or simply go on with the talk. I went on, but half of me was still itching to make the correction while the other half marched on with the rest of the talk. A curious schizophrenia. I have had a couple of other embarrassing moments on stage, but that was one of the worst. Fulfull!

I stayed on after confirmation through the high school and college departments, which were conducted on an astonishingly high level. The faculty included Myron (Mike) Guren, the principal, a totally devoted and loving layman; Leonard Levy, for many years City of Cleveland treasurer and at the time a young man not long out of Harvard and a real intellectual; and Dr. Albert Pfeffer, a profound student of the tradition. What I learned from my teachers there helped shape my later life, although I didn't know it at the time. Dr. Pfeffer in particular was a tremendous storehouse of Jewish knowledge but no pedagogue. He had a distinctive habit of slurring the *s* sound, and the cruel kids, amused by the strange sounds he produced, drove him half mad with smart

comments every time he turned around to write on the blackboard. He had so much to offer, and we were shamelessly undisciplined. Later on, when I became principal of the high school department, and came to know and respect him for his broad knowledge, I felt guilty and penitent.

As is always the case with students, I learned at least as much from my peers as from my teachers. Two in particular stand out because they became lifelong friends.

Saul Stillman was two classes ahead of me both at the Jewish Center and in public school. He was and remains as close to a role model, to use the term fancied by social workers, as I have ever had. Perennial valedictorian, scholarship winner at Harvard, enthusiastic sportsman, brilliant speaker and debater, inspiring volunteer teacher for half a century, he has been anything but a cloistered intellectual. He brought to everything he undertook (and he seemed to undertake everything) a boundless energy and cheerfulness, a rollicking sense of fun, and an equal devotion to hard work and hard play that captivated everybody. That wasn't easy for a Republican (County Party Chairman at that) in an overwhelmingly Democratic environment, but Saul did it.

Armond Cohen, later to serve for half a century as the rabbi of the Jewish Center and then Park Synagogue, was already as a high school student clearly destined for a career in the rabbinate. In later life, we sometimes had differing views about the relationship of the organized community and the synagogue, and I must have irritated him by sending him letters of sharp dissent from some of his High Holy Day sermons. But he bore with me patiently through the years.

Mike Guren has called the three of us the proudest products of his teaching days at the Jewish Center, but I really don't deserve to be included with Saul and Armond, who have both devoted a lifetime of service to the synagogue. I won't, however, yield to them in the fondness of my memories of those old days of the Rabbi Goldman era on Grantwood Avenue and East 105th Street.

Not all of my Jewish education came from the Jewish Center. At one point, my mother hired a *melamed*, an old man with a long

beard who lived down the street, to teach me Hebrew. He taught me how to read but nothing else. We simply went through the letters and vowels mechanically until I could rattle away at a pretty good rate without ever knowing what the words meant. A little later, I went to the Talmud Torah, housed in the Jewish Center but a completely independent operation. I had the good luck to have as my teacher Yonina Friedland, wife of the director of the school and one of the real personalities of the time, A. H. Friedland, better known as "Ches Aleph." Aviva, their daughter, was also a student in the class so I got to know her parents pretty well, since Friedland often visited the class, not as superintendent but as father and husband. Ches Aleph was an outstanding educator, way ahead of his time, author of both sophisticated Hebrew poetry and a series of books for beginners (*Sepurim Yofim*, or *Pleasant Stories*), attractive little tales written with both artistic and pedagogical skill.

But the experience at the Jewish Center was basic. If all the rest of my life has been deeply involved in Jewish affairs, it was as much the product of experiences at the Jewish Center as anything else. Or possibly the Jewish Center was simply the most obvious Jewish influence in a total environment that resonated with a fundamental Jewish rhythm. On Jewish holidays, for example, the entire neighborhood closed down. A trip at any time down East 105th Street past the unending store windows and the little synagogues dotted along the way at almost every street corner was a journey into Yiddishkeit.

Even what wasn't strictly Jewish somehow took on a Jewish flavor. Solomon's Delicatessen, for example, at the corner of Massie Avenue and East 105th Street, was in no precise sense Jewish, but try telling that to Jews and non-Jews alike who swarmed into the place for the corned beef and rye bread and pumpernickel that were defined as Jewish staples. The Union Trust at the corner of Pasadena and 105th Street went broke when the banks closed in 1933, and the whole neighborhood suffered together at the loss of this "Jewish" branch of the big bank. Not only the paper rags man (whose musical cry sounded more like "papuhrecks") spoke Yiddish; so did the bread man, the

fruit and vegetable man, and the iceman, all of whom drove their horse-and-wagons in the twenties and their old jalopies in the thirties up and down the streets off 105th, hawking their wares. The iceman was particularly welcome to us kids in the summer because we would hop on the tail board of the wagon while he was delivering the ice and pick off little hunks that came loose when he chopped off the twenty-five or fifty or seventy-five pound oblong pieces. On the other hand, street games sometimes had to be called off because the field was made unplayable by unwelcome gifts from the horses.

The other institution that shaped life in Glenville was the high school. And what a high school Glenville was! Most of us half a century later have stronger ties and fonder memories of it than of the universities we later attended. The building itself wasn't much. In the mid-twenties, Collinwood High School, further east, was just being built, and Glenville still served the entire northeast area, with a student body of more than 2,000, far more than the building could properly accommodate. (By contrast, when I returned there as a teacher in the thirties, enrollment was less than 900). As a result, we were jammed together, with some classes even being held on the stairway going up to the third floor. I had two classes in "portables," separate corrugated metal structures on the Englewood side of the building, not much bigger than the voting booths that used to be hauled around the city for use on election day. One kid was appointed in winter to go out before class and shake up the coal stove to keep us warm.

But who cared about a little crowding? The students were extraordinary and produced at least as many musicians and authors and scientists and Nobel Prize winners as Central High School had produced a generation earlier. As a teacher, a decade later, I found that the median I.Q. (or PLR, as we then called it) was 117, by far the highest in the city, and our graduates were alleged to have made the second-best academic record at Harvard of any school in the country. Certainly the scholastic competition was fierce.

The tone of the school was set by the Big Three: Principal Hiram H. Cully and Assistant Principals Harry M. Towne and Elsie C. Davies. Each was a strong and distinctive personality.

Cully was the only principal the school had ever had up to that time, having been appointed in the period when Glenville was still a separate township. It got incorporated into Cleveland and therefore the Cleveland Public School System shortly after the turn of the century. He was close to retirement during my student days but still vigorous, full of old-time morality and pep talks, replete with advice to students to follow the high standards set by Benny Friedman, who had just won All-American honors as the Michigan University quarterback, or by Rudy Rosenthal, who had just been graduated with high honors from the Jewish Institute of Religion. Cully lived in the neighborhood, as many of the faculty did, and survived into his nineties as a symbol of the glory of Glenville and its seeming ability to accommodate to sweeping ethnic changes, as the population shifted from Wasps to Jewish to blacks.

Towne, much better known as "HMT," was the most famous character in the school. He came from Maine, and had an exaggerated New England accent that some of the kids and many of the immigrant parents found hard to follow. He prized his reputation as a strict disciplinarian but a "square shooter." Tall and lean, with folds around his mouth which gave him a particularly severe appearance, he would each morning confront the cowering lineup of sinful students, guilty of such heinous crimes as tardiness or smoking a cigarette, skipping a class or walking out of the building without the required permit. He would stand there, awesome, turned half away from each culprit, rarely looking anyone in the eye, demanding an explanation in a peremptory tone that suggested that he had heard every possible excuse and discounted all of them in advance. The punishment was assignment of "tenth periods," an extra forty-five minutes after school, over which he personally presided in an atmosphere of deadly silence. There was nevertheless a tendency in the school to canonize him as the soul of integrity and uncompromisingly high ideals, so that graduates were prone, after HMT was no longer a threat to them, to speak glowingly about how well he built character. When I became his colleague, I had doubts about whether he deserved all the kudos. An arch conservative, he had little understanding of the students and their problems, and I have often wondered how he would

have made out in the next generation, with its dramatic changes and challenges, for which he had no sympathy at all.

The third member of the triumvirate, Miss Davies, was also a New Englander, daughter of a minister and brought up in the same rigid mold of absolute discipline as Harry Towne. But she had also acquired a fine cultural background and an extraordinary ability to encourage creativity in her students. Despite her duties as assistant principal and dean of girls, she taught one class of selected students in English, and no one who had her as a teacher will ever forget her. She made Thomas Hardy's death in 1928 a personal loss for all of us; Edmund Burke may have been a dry as dust political figure to most students, but in her class his speech on American independence became a flaming pronouncement and a masterpiece of logic. For weeks we wrote daily observation themes trying to meet her standards of precise perception and careful choice of words. Her classroom was really a sophisticated literary workshop.

It was a common practice in those days to buy whole sets of works, usually from door-to-door salesmen, by way of providing cultural sustenance for the family. My folks had once bought a complete set of Mark Twain, twenty volumes in all, and by the time I reached high school I'd read them all—even the topical and outdated *Christian Science*—and thought then, as I do now, that *Huckleberry Finn* was one of the great masterpieces of all time. I had also gone through practically all of Dickens and a raft of sea stories and Viking yarns. Not that all of my reading was literary; I enjoyed the Dick Porter series just as much, particularly when he played right field in the early volumes. The library was a big part of my life, and literature became and remained a major interest. But my reading had always been on a hit or miss basis, and so were my "writings," such as they were.

Not, however, after I came under the influence of Elsie Davies. She would have nothing to do with mindless, undisciplined scribbling. What are you trying to say? Why don't you compress your thought? Have you made any telling points? Is your writing vivid? Have you said what is in your mind clearly and forcefully? She probed—and God bless her for it.

Many years later, in her late eighties, she had outlived all her generation. Her brother and sister were both dead; there was no one to take care of her. She lived in a home for old folks in Wauseon, near Toledo. Ruth and I went out to visit her and took her to lunch. She had great trouble with her ill-fitting teeth, her memory was beginning to fail, and she was now skin and bones. All the wonderful insight and drive were now directed to where she might eat next and whether she could manage her food. In our national addiction to sloganeering and false optimism, we commonly describe old age as "The Golden Years." Too often, as in the case of Elsie Davies, the description is bitterly ironic.

She was largely responsible for my decision to choose some form of literary work as my career. And maybe it was her training in concise writing and speaking that led to my being elected president of my class, a post with enough responsibilities during my last three semesters that some of the awkwardness I had felt at the Jewish Center wore off as I found myself frequently in front of audiences.

With a very good scholastic record, I thought of following Saul Stillman's example and applying upon graduation for a scholarship to Harvard, so I enrolled in the scholarship training class that the faculty ran for seniors. My class graduated in mid-year and since in those days colleges only enrolled students in the fall, I had planned to stay on for tutoring during the spring in hope of being admitted to Harvard and getting some kind of student aid in September, 1929.

But things changed almost overnight. There was a girl in my class in tenth grade geometry who matched my accomplishments, such as they were, in every respect. The two of us were certainly the two best students in Miss Davies' picked English class. She was elected treasurer of the class at the same time I was elected president; her scholastic record was in general as good as mine; if I wrote for the weekly newspaper, she wrote for the annual, and so it went. Not only that. She was fun and interesting and looked splendid when she turned around in geometry to exchange long distance looks. Maybe I knew even then that I was going to marry her one day.

But now there was more immediate business at hand. Ruth suddenly announced that she was enrolling in Western Reserve's College for Women (later Flora Stone Mather College) immediately after graduation from high school, since Reserve had broken precedent by admitting a few mid-year graduates. If she enrolled early, that meant I would still be hanging around high school while she went on to college and the sophisticated life. How could I bear being upstaged that way? I couldn't. After a brief consultation with my parents, in which I pointed out that enrolling immediately would allow me to graduate from college a full year early, I too enrolled and found myself the week after graduation no longer a big shot class president but a lowly freshman at Western Reserve, even a sub-freshman, since there were only a dozen or so of us who entered at that unlikely time of year.

So ended my Glenville experience—for the time being. I would be back again eight years later, this time as a member of the faculty, but the shaping days of my life had been completed. I would forever be "a Glenville boy."

COLLEGE DAYS

College was a big letdown after Glenville.

For a while, the excitement of change to a more adult and sophisticated setting was enough: being called for the first time in my life "Mister" Vincent; finishing the school day on Monday, Wednesday and Friday at eleven o'clock in the morning without any need for hall passes and permits; choosing courses by leafing through lovely catalogues with exciting listings like "Psychology 105," "Anthropology 204," "Astronomy 301." Big stuff!

I was picked up many mornings by another Glenville graduate who had matriculated in January—William J. (Willie) Kraus, later to become one of the city's well-known lawyers after distinguished service in the army where he attained the rank of colonel. But in 1929 Willie's chief claim to fame was that he had invested

fifteen dollars in a very old and battered Model T Ford, sans brakes, sans lights, sans horn, sans everything. We didn't care. Willie tended to be a little on the late side, and all my life I have suffered from a compulsion to be on time or, preferably, early for appointments. We made quite a couple, wildly careening around corners while he insisted there was plenty of time to make the eight o'clock class because it never started promptly anyway, with me savagely and hopelessly upbraiding him and prophesying that we would either be late or dead, at the same time mightily enjoying the exuberance of our mad dash to early morning learning.

But the romance of being "in college" didn't last long. English at Adelbert College was a joke after the high standards at Glenville. There were only a dozen or so of us entering at midyear and I was the only one who had any interest in freshman English. 1929 was also the last year for compulsory Bible class and chapel. (Western Reserve was originally a church-established school and was just shedding its sectarian affiliations.) A pervasive religious stratification at the University didn't make things any easier either. There was an obvious quota on the number of Jewish students accepted into the Medical School; in startling contrast to the present situation on campus, there was not a single Jewish member of the faculty after Professor Rogoff, who was close to many of us as adviser to the Student Zionist Organization, left Cleveland. Both Dean Trautman and my German teacher, Hugo Polt, though pleasant enough to me, made it clear that they were sympathetic to the new Germany just emerging under Hitler.

Finances were also a struggle. There was little student aid available after the stock market collapse of 1929. During the Depression that followed, meeting the annual $300 tuition fee was a problem. I won a number of prizes and worked at the family furniture store, drawing a big salary of fifteen dollars a week. So I scrimped through, with the help of some deferred payments toward the end of my college career.

Meanwhile life on campus wasn't all bad. I was feature editor of the *Weekly*, the college newspaper, and co-editor of a literary magazine, *Quest*, that actually survived through three or four numbers. It carried the first longish poem of any merit I ever

wrote—a piece called "Goodwin Lowrie," written in the style of my then favorite, Robert Frost, with an air of tired sophistication particularly appealing to a naive nineteen-year old. It also won me the poetry prize for that year, so that Goodwin was mighty helpful in seeing me through my junior year.

Some members of the faculty were fun. In my junior year two young graduates of Harvard joined the English faculty, William Rogers and William Powell (Pete) Jones, and both became good friends—particularly Jones, who remains a friend to this day. (Rogers died at an early age of cancer.) Clarence Bill was a colorful campus figure. He brought to his teaching of the classics a passion for his subject matter and a warmth toward students not typical of the faculty in those days. I took three years of Greek from him, and the small first-year class dwindled year by year until there were only four of us hacking away at Homer and Plato at the end. My attitude toward Bill was ambivalent. I enjoyed his classes no end and admired his closeness to the students. He was the only one who regularly invited us to his home. But I was turned off by his admiration for Mussolini and the way he quite seriously repeated the current cliché: "After all, he made the trains run on time."

But best of all was James Holly Hanford. I got into his graduate seminar on Milton, his specialty, Hanford then being perhaps the outstanding authority on the poet. The class was run informally, as it should have been, since I was probably the only one who was not already a college teacher. Hanford would often show up for class still sweated up and breathless from his tennis match and still wearing tennis shoes. Or he would put aside the agenda for the day to pull out his lute and sing seventeenth century lyrics to us in his not particularly melodious voice. It was the best class I ever had, even though I would gladly have dropped out of it or dropped through the floor when I read my first paper, on some unremembered aspect of the work of Cervantes as a near contemporary of Milton. I began my paper with some such idiotic expression as: "Fifteen years after Shakespeare breathed his last . . ." The perennial pipe almost dropped out of Hanford's mouth. He banged his fist on the desk and shouted out, "Who in

hell uses expressions like 'breathed his last?' Can't you say he died?" If only *I* could have died! All praise to the criticisms of Elsie Davies and Holly Hanford; a cliché had to get up pretty early in the morning to have any chance with that pair.

Not all my learning during my college years took place on the campus. My major non-academic educator was my activity in Avukah, the student Zionist organization. Its dominant figure was Zalman Abramov, who later became deputy speaker of the Knesset in Israel, a co-chairman of the World Jewish Congress, president of the American-Israel Friendship League, and leader in a host of other responsible positions. It was perfectly apparent even then that he was destined for a brilliant career. Born in Russia, his parents migrated to Palestine after the first World War and either bought or built one of the early houses in Tel Aviv, at 2 Bar Kochba Street. (How many letters I have addressed there; how many times climbed up its four flights of stairs.) Some member of the Abramov family has lived there ever since.

Zalman came to Cleveland for his education because his aunt lived there, and in those days travelling back and forth between Palestine and America was so expensive and time-consuming that most students came to the University and stayed put until graduation. As a result, Zalman was in Cleveland for almost seven uninterrupted years, getting his bachelor's, master's and law degrees. We became fast friends—a friendship that persists to this day. He was absolutely tireless. Even though he carried a heavy academic load and often taught Hebrew seven days a week to support himself, he seemed to have the time and the energy to nourish every kind of Zionist activity. He wrote sophisticated syllabi that we used in our weekly Avukah meetings, held throughout the year, and insisted on a level of study and excellence that brought larger and larger turnouts to our meetings. Our success points up a fact of student life generally: to succeed, an organization dealing with young people must demand much and offer much. We soon outgrew the homes of members, where we met the first year or so. Our core group was a half dozen outstanding fellows and the girls soon rallied around us and we grew and grew.

I suppose Avukah was my fraternity. The social life of the cam-

pus was completely dominated by the Greek letter fraternities and sororities, but I never had much taste for them. After attending one "smoker," I was never in a fraternity house again. We didn't run any dances or engage in formal athletics, mainstays of the fraternities, but we had plenty of parties, plenty of fun, and some completely wacky baseball games at the farm in Geneva that one of our members, Julie Flock, made available to us. (Geneva was at that time the center of a settlement of Jewish farmers who themselves displayed something of the pioneering, back-to-the-land Zionist spirit.)

A couple of years after Zalman's arrival, his brother Moshe, later a major industrialist in Israel and in England, joined him. He was a totally different type. Zalman was always perfectly controlled and correct and quite formal in his relationships until he was sure of your friendship. Moshe as a young man was volatile and fun-loving but equally dedicated to Zionism. One night we had an Avukah affair at Carmel Hall on Parkwood Drive. Moshe, who was then still learning English, called it "Carmel Hell"—with some justice, in view of the broken-down condition of the building. Some time during that wild evening, he went on a rampage and in sheer fun hurled rickety chairs and other dilapidated pieces of furniture out the window. But he was a devoted student. We were both broke, so we exchanged lessons; I taught him English poetry and the language in general and he gave me Hebrew lessons.

We attracted the cream of Jewish student intellectuals to our meetings. Probably the keenest mind was that of Dave Miller, the only person I have ever known who even as a youth always spoke not only in perfect sentences but in immaculate paragraphs, cooly and profoundly analyzing the most complex situations. He was almost totally lacking in animal spirits, to the point where he often seemed a disembodied mind, but he added a flavor of unsparing seriousness and uncompromising integrity to our discussions and to our study. He later volunteered during the Spanish Civil War and a more unlikely candidate for soldiering could hardly be imagined. All intellect, all dedication, he couldn't cope with the brutality of what he found and returned to America shat-

tered in spirit. Except for his one novel, *The Chain and the Link*, he never fulfilled his early promise.

We had the cream of adult Zionists as speakers from time to time. Ezra Shapiro, later to become international head of the Keren Hayesod (the worldwide fundraising organization for Israel) after a fine Cleveland career as city law director, community leader, and outstanding lawyer, was our guest upon his return from his first trip to Palestine. Such trips were not then lightly undertaken, and we not only hung on his report about his experiences but heard him sing the pioneer songs he had learned there. (He had a lovely singing voice.) Ches Aleph Friedland also addressed us a number of times. I particularly remember one evening when he put aside his assigned subject and became directly involved in our discussion. That was the night Dave Miller announced his resignation on a philosophical point that I no longer remember. The whole situation highly intrigued Friedland because, as he informed us, it reminded him of his own youth, when nice points of ideology were life and death matters in the newly born Zionist movement.

I served my term as president of the organization and in 1931 won a scholarship for a two-week stay at the Avukah summer camp near Lake George. It created all kinds of "firsts" for me. First direct working contact with a national organization; first taste of the intellectual climate of the top eastern universities (most of the other campers were from Harvard and the New York universities); first trip to Boston and New York; first (and only) hitchhiking experience. It was also my first real taste of living in the midst of nature. I was enthralled with the Adirondacks and thought of them as mighty mountains. One night there was a full moon shining on the rippling lake, with the cliffs on the opposite shore vaguely outlined—magnificent! My life had been bounded by city vistas, and for the first time, climbing up and down the wild hills during the little free time they gave us, I felt at firsthand the pull of nature that I had experienced only vicariously from favorite authors like Wordsworth and Thoreau.

My two greatest satisfactions from the trip were being dubbed "Babe Ruth" because I was easily the best baseball player there,

most of the other campers being expert only in "stick ball" played by New York kids, and meeting Meyer Levin, already a well-known and respected novelist. When camp ended, "Yank" from Detroit and I hitchhiked first to New York and then all the long weary way home to Cleveland. I came to know the dreariness of YMCA lodgings, at least in the small towns, along the way. Yank and I parted swearing eternal friendship; we never saw each other again.

I got so caught up in Zionist work that I began to put aside a few dollars whenever I could with the aim of going to Palestine to spy out the land and possibly settle there, on the urging of my friends the Abramovs. Luckily or otherwise, the $400 I had saved up went down the drain when the banks closed in 1933. So did my trip of exploration. I did, however, become secretary of the Zionist district.

My college career ended on a sour note. I graduated in 1932 and went back for my master's degree, which I completed the following year. I spent almost all that year in the library at the university, free of most classroom responsibilities. It was a stimulating year but when it ended, in the very depths of the Depression, there were simply no jobs available. What a thrill it was, then, to get a call from Hanford during the summer of 1933 inviting me to come see him. He urged me to come back to school to work for my doctorate. When I protested lack of money, he waved the problem aside, saying that it would be solved by my taking on some teaching duties at Adelbert College. Would I be interested? What a question! I wouldn't be interested, I assured him, I would be wildly enthusiastic. To get a job *and* a doctorate. Surely this was heaven.

"Fine," he instructed me, "just slip over to Foster's office and tell him about our interview and he'll make room for you on the teaching schedule for the fall." Things were getting better and better. "Foster" was Professor Finley Foster, the head of the undergraduate English department, just as Hanford was the head of the graduate department. I had never had anything but A's in my concentrated major in English throughout my years as an undergraduate and graduate, had won all the English prizes available,

and had been a pretty flashy student in Foster's own classes. Obviously, he would be delighted by the good news.

I burst into Foster's office, with difficulty keeping my voice normal, to share my joy—and his. He heard me out without comment and then, for an eternity, said nothing at all. Then he said, "What's the matter with Hanford? He knows as well as I do that the trustees would never approve a Jewish name for teaching in the humanities—and certainly not in English."

It was the voice of doom. I went back to Hanford to report, as briefly as I could because the whole affair was so hurtful, and immediately got up to leave. "Oh for God's sake," he said, "sit down." He tried to comfort me, suggesting that this was not really the last word. But it was. I never heard from Hanford again and it was years before I could bring myself to go back to the campus.

For half a century, I didn't know whether what I had heard that day represented Foster's own attitude or whether he was accurately reflecting the position of the university at the time. Or both. And then, out of the blue, in 1980, long after the major characters in that little drama had passed on, the events of the summer of 1933 suddenly exploded into vivid life.

I was chatting with some fellow members of the Rowfant Club, a literary club, when Dave Guralnik, who had been a few years behind me at Reserve, casually asked, "Say, you knew Finley Foster, didn't you?"

Did I know Finley Foster! But why in the world would his name come up now, so many decades later, I asked. It turned out that another old student, Irwin Blacker, whom I dimly remembered, had had a somewhat similar experience in the thirties. He had taken his bachelor's and master's degrees, had completed all requirements for the doctorate and had submitted his ideas about a dissertation, only to be advised not to proceed with it. He was astonished—and went to Foster for guidance. Foster's blunt advice was to drop the whole thing. No Jew, he said, and certainly not a second generation Jew, could possibly master the language and the culture well enough to warrant the department's granting him its definitive recognition of literary competence and performance.

Evidently Blacker accepted the verdict as I had done (what else could we do?) and went on to a fine career as a creative writer and teacher. But unlike me, he meant to pursue the matter again—all these years later. He was now retired, and with his new-found leisure he had written the present dean of the graduate English Department, recounting his experience and requesting that he again be considered a candidate for the Ph.D. degree. He requested, however, that he be excused from the residency requirements and the comprehensive examinations because he had successfully met both those standards long ago. As for the dissertation, he would expect his submission to be judged on its merits, but he saw no reason for repeating the other two procedures, in which he had already demonstrated his competence.

All this put the dean and the university in a tough spot. The normal university procedures were clear: the statute of limitations, so to speak, had long since run out, and after so long a lapse of time applicants for degrees had to start over from scratch. But the reason for the original turndown, if proved, made this case disturbingly different, particularly in view of the fact that the university had come full circle since those medieval days. Jews were now on the faculty, in the administration, on the Board of Trustees. I myself was an example of how things had changed, since I had served for years on the university's Board of Overseers.

There was a readiness and even an eagerness on the university's part to make an exception in order to rectify an old wrong. But was there indeed an old wrong to right? Could the university simply accept Blacker's story as an accurate depiction of how things had once worked? Was there any independent and objective evidence that Blacker's complaint truly reflected what had happened? It was in search of an answer to that question that Dr. P. K. Saha, the dean newly appointed to his post, had consulted his friend Guralnik, eliciting any information he might have. And here was Guralnik turning to me, all these years later!

I was overwhelmed. It's not often that one's past comes so powerfully and even usefully to life. I told Dave that I had written up my experience at the time at the request of my Uncle Abe, who

had intended to take the case up with university authorities. (I don't know whether he ever did.) I can still remember his advice: "Don't preach in your summary. Just put down the facts." The whole incident had been so painful that I had filed away the report with some early literary efforts and had not looked at it for many years. I wasn't even sure if I could find it, or how valuable it might turn out to be, but I promised Dave (and subsequently, Professor Saha, who called me) that I would try to locate it.

The next night I went searching in the remote corners of the basement and in an old breadbox, I found it among ancient teaching roll books, youthful report cards, and odds and ends of college memorabilia. It turned out to be "a dramatic sketch in five scenes" entitled "We're Very Sorry." The paper itself was now brittle with age and the ink was faded, but the message was powerful. I sat reading it, reliving my youth, enthralled. I had obviously written it in the full heat of the events, and the words of Foster and Hanford and Elbert Benton, then dean of the graduate school, came across with blazing authenticity.

The poison of the atmosphere of those times, which warped my own thinking just as much as others', comes across even more sharply in the attitudes of good guys like Benton than from Foster. At one point Benton remarked to me:

> Now about the question of race. Frankly, I have never encouraged any Hebrew before who asked me about prospects for college teaching. I thought the chances were too much against them. In your case, I think it's a little different. In the first place, your name isn't Jewish. And then your appearance isn't unmistakably Jewish. And your actions are such that we all would welcome you here.
>
> You know, there are two types of Jews: one objectionable and one that we can accept. Now from all that I've seen and heard of you I think that there would be no objection to *you* personally at all.
>
> Understand what I am saying. Your Jewishness will be a handicap. In Germany, it would be more of a handicap. But we have not gone as far as Germany in these ways . . . and I don't think we will. As a matter of fact, what's going on in Germany would redound to your advantage, if anything. It might create sympathy.

> There will be some degree of feeling against you, and it will be a handicap. But in your case, I don't think it will be an unsurmountable one.

A few days later, Guralnik, the dean, and I reviewed the document at lunch. What a way to recapture one's youth—to read almost fifty years later your own passionate words written when you were twenty. I grieved for my own hurt and the dreary state of the world's affairs. At the same time, I rejoiced that what I had written would play its part in rectifying an old injustice, since the request to waive the requirements for the doctorate was finally approved.

But it wouldn't have been much comfort in 1933 to be told that half a century later the experience would turn out to have some usefulness. The hard fact was that my college days were over and I had to face the reality of a dreary career outlook. There were few jobs available, particularly for one who had so inadvisedly dedicated himself to literature and to Zionism—neither likely to produce practical results in 1933.

FIRST JOB

The person who finally landed me a job after months of scrambling was one Winifred Shanks. I never met her and I am sure she never heard of me but that's how things sometimes went in those crazy Depression days. I was called in as a substitute for her when she broke her hip, and some months later, she retired. That did it! I had a permanent job!

Not that I hadn't tried—plenty—before then to land one. After the Foster fiasco, I knew that academia wasn't for me. Nothing looked promising in the writing line either, so there was nothing to do but fall back on schoolteaching. I had throughout my college days enrolled in education courses as an "extra"—"Philosophy of Education," "History of Education," "Methods in Education." They were all pretty much alike, for the most part vapid courses without much content, certainly to those of us who hadn't

yet been in charge of a classroom. I took them in a patronizing mood. Why not? They were a fall-back insurance if none of the really good things in life panned out.

Well, they clearly hadn't panned out, and it was time to get serious about a job. But it was 1933, and there were no jobs. I was, however, given lots of fine advice: "Put your best foot forward. See everybody. It doesn't do any harm to look. Don't be afraid to tell them about your record at school. Talk up." I did all those things. I even, for the first and last time, wore my Phi Beta Kappa key and tried to sit during interviews so that it couldn't be missed. I hauled along my glittering references. Hanford had sent me an overblown, wildly laudatory letter informing whoever was concerned that my country of origin was "heavenly," which probably led to an understandable reaction of "to hell with him then." One education course I had taken was invaluable—practice teaching, at Fairmount Junior High School, known by the kids there as "Paramount Junior High School" because Jesse Owens had graduated shortly before as the brightest star of a series of brilliant track teams and was already on his way to his incredible triumphs at the 1936 Olympics in Germany. An even more distinguished graduate was Bob Hope, then an unknown. Miss Gillespie, my critic teacher, had turned two classes over to me completely the second day of my stay there and had written me a recommendation as glowing as Hanford's.

Nothing helped. No jobs available. Would you care to try a little substituting meanwhile?

It was the only time in my life that I have ever looked for a job. The whole experience was so distasteful that it left me uneasy ever after in the role of interviewer of job applicants. The relation is strained and artificial; the interviewer sits godlike in judgment, dispensing or refusing favors. The interviewee sniffs the atmosphere, seizing on the smallest cues to determine whether he is pleasing or displeasing his potential boss. At least, that was the desperate situation in the early thirties when a job—almost any job—was a prize so precious that sometimes even integrity and self-respect didn't seem too high a price to pay.

Possibly I had done better than I thought during my interviews

at the Board of Education because, after all, I was the one who got the call that October morning to go out to Audubon Junior High School to replace Miss Shanks. Maybe the Great Powers downtown chose me for that particular long-term assignment because of my interviews. Or maybe I simply happened to be next on the list that morning.

In any case, I was projected instantly into the middle of things as soon as I reached the school. I was an hour or so late, for the only time in my teaching career, because I had been called after eight o'clock and had to take the streetcar across town and then walk up the long hill from East 93rd to East Boulevard, where the school was located. Wayne Smith was the principal. He greeted me in the no-nonsense fashion proper for a man who was not only a junior high school principal but also the chairman of the county American Legion. "Make the kids behave," was his succinct advice. "Show 'em who's boss!"

It was good advice in some of the classes. The students were divided into sections according to their PLRs (probable learning rates). My first class was the 8A-1s . . . still little kids, bright-eyed, well-dressed, eager and creative. Great! But forty-five minutes later, the bell rang and in marched the 8A-16s, the lowest of the low, with dismal PLRs. They were what my new colleague and later good friend, Sam Goldstein, called "bozos," big and tough and undisciplined, and not the least bit interested in learning. Moreover, I was barely twenty-one, only a few years older than the students.

There were no jobs for them, so they tended to stay on in school, persumably because their parents didn't want them hanging around all day. Many of them were in some ways more sophisticated than I. Just up the street, at Woodland Avenue and East 110th Street, was 'the bloody corner,' so designated by the press because during Prohibition, which was then just ending, rival gangs of bootleggers frequently shot it out there. Their sons and daughters were well represented in my class and knew a thing or two about life in the raw that I still haven't learned.

One kid particularly sticks in my memory, Michael K. He was the biggest and probably the oldest in the class and certainly the

toughest—and therefore the acknowledged leader. He had a habit of letting loose with ear-shattering horse laughs whenever the fancy took him, to the huge and disrupting delight of everyone else. I tried to ignore him, I tried to charm him, I tried intimate chats after class. Nothing worked. One day when he bellowed out at a particularly inappropriate time, deriding a struggling classmate who had been unable to come up with the answer to a perfectly simple question, my patience wore out. I turned on him and in a cold fury informed him: "You will not do that again, Michael—ever!" He specialized in sneering. He treated me to an exceptionally fine sneer and asked "Why won't I? You gonna send me to the principal?" And with that, he stood up—all nine feet of him—to let me know he was ready for combat.

Fortunately, I had no time to think. I thrust my face up within a quarter-inch of his and in a controlled but passionate spasm of anger let him have it: "You will sit down," I hissed. "Now!"

For a moment we were eyeball to eyeball—and then he sat down. I really don't know why; it could just as easily, I suppose, have gone the other way. If he had bashed me, I would have stayed bashed. But he didn't. Maybe he was simply astonished that this mild and soft-spoken easy mark could suddenly lash out so violently. Anyway, I had no more trouble from him, and we even got to be friends. Poor guy! Everything was completely stacked against him—heredity, environment, uninspired companions—I suspect Michael K. has long since passed out of the scene.

I can't say that I ever enjoyed the 8A-16s the way I did the 8A-1s; there simply wasn't the same kind of diversity and challenge in them, at least for me. But it was a great learning experience, and I certainly ran the gamut of teaching challenges during my years at Audubon. As a matter of fact, there is a real difference between the "bad actors" of those days and what we have now. Of course there were discipline problems, but there wasn't the vicious and brutal confrontation of student and teacher so common today. Since, basically, each appreciated the other's role, problems primarily concerned individual kids and individual situations rather than class warfare—the rampant rebellion and distrust and

cynicism that have so largely overtaken the big city school systems.

During my first few days the kids would sometimes break into gales of laughter before I said a single word. Evidently the sheer contrast between their old and (so I was given to understand) plump and conservative regular teacher and "the substitute"—a slim, callow youth who obviously flouted all the rules—was simply too much for them. But that reaction soon passed and I became an accepted member of the faculty, particularly after I made my mark with the Gumps and the Gabbles.

That was the name of a five-minute "spot" sponsored by the English department broadcast during homeroom period, aimed at improving the grammar of the students. Each week some little point of grammar ("he doesn't," *not* "he don't"; "between you and me," *not* "between you and I") was worked into an incident in the rivalry between the impeccable Gumps and the illiterate Gabbles. Each teacher took turns trying to write the weekly episode. The aim was to convert the students, who presumably were mostly Gabbles, into correct and docile Gumps. The broadcasts were almost without exception ghastly bores, and the homeroom teachers on whom the incidents were inflicted paid almost no attention to them. I jazzed things up. Somehow the Gabbles turned out in my racy episode to be really no different *from* (not, heaven forbid, different *than*) the Gumps; as a matter of fact, in my version they were a hell of a lot more fun. I was immediately given the assignment of writing the episodes every week, and as I got more and more interested in the characters and fleshed out a whole family of Gumps and Gabbles, complete with first names like Sebastian and Giuseppe, the kids grew interested in their shenanigans. After a while, the teachers began demanding advance information about where the two families were headed next. (I sent them on wild excursions to all kinds of exotic places.) It became a sort of combination travelogue and school soap opera.

By way of reward, I was given the direction of dramatics, which entitled me to long sessions after school without the burden of any extra pay. I loved it, except that it was hard to find plays for junior high school kids—so I wrote them myself. The tradition was to have an operetta once a year, and these were pretty stilted affairs.

I couldn't see wasting time on them, so in successive years I wrote crazy fantasies with titles like "Simply Impossible" and "Mutiny on the Aftermath," followed by a musical adaptation of *Tom Sawyer*. I couldn't do the music, of course, so I wrote words to well-known songs, got a wonderful home ec. teacher, a music teacher, and the leader of the band and orchestra to cooperate, and we had some lively evenings. Principal Smith was mightily pleased that all the performances were complete sell-outs. (The secret, of course, was to involve so many kids that we had almost a full house from the parents and cousins and aunts alone.) My only regret was that I really had wanted to do *Huck Finn* because it was so obviously the real Mark Twain masterpiece, but I had to settle for *Tom Sawyer* because it was easier to dramatize. I could think of no way to capture on stage the brooding sense of the river that holds together the scattered incidents of *Huck*. Neither has anyone else, to my knowledge; all the Huck films have been sentimentalized, thin, totally inauthentic adaptations.

As is so often the case, I went with dizzying speed from no job at all to lots of jobs. It's when you don't need them that the jobs come looking for you. I landed a job teaching night school at Collinwood High School, and it turned out to be, if not the most creative of my teaching jobs, then the most loving. In age my students ranged from high school dropouts trying belatedly to pick up a few credits for graduation to two old ladies in their seventies who cared not at all about credits. There were a couple of no-nonsense men of the world types who wanted to better their skills in speaking, a scattering of firebrands aflame with resentment against the social injustice created by the Depression, and a diverse sampling of all kinds of characters with all kinds of motivations, some of them seeking only a cheap means of entertainment two evenings a week. There was no apparent common cement, but they grew into a cohesive group, laughing easily at each other's mistakes and swapping stories about family problems and achievements. There was no set curriculum, so I improvised as I went along, emphasizing lots of speaking and simple writing, and letting formal grammar and high literature take care of themselves.

I had for years also been teaching at the Jewish Center on Sun-

day morning as principal of the high school and college department. Classes met in an old house on Grantwood Avenue, connected with the synagogue itself only by a fire escape. On winter mornings I tried to get there early enough to allow time for shaking up the furnace, but the student body needed no shaking up. Some of the most active leaders of the Jewish and general communities a generation later were among my students, including Albert and Ruth Ratner (Miller), Ted Bonda, Julie Paris, Roz Zehman (Wolf) and Zelda Winograd (Milner). If only I could claim credit for their later accomplishments!

For a short time, I taught Saturday morning as well at the Euclid Avenue Temple (now Fairmount Temple) where for years Nate Brilliant and Libby Braverman ran the liveliest school system in town. My stay with them was brief, however; I simply couldn't keep up that seven-day-a-week grind.

One of the big drives behind all that activity was to accumulate enough wealth to get married. Ruth and I had been going together since high school, and at the end of 1934 we had amassed such a fortune that we not only married, we actually blew ourselves to an airplane trip. In those days it was quite an adventure. No one could get over the sheer wonder of our arriving in Detroit before those who drove us out to the airport could get home!

Everyone agreed that the wedding in the Jewish Center sanctuary had been a notable affair, although my own recollections are a bit dim. I remember best taking pictures that morning; none of your modern action pictures of the service itself. It was one of the earliest weddings performed by the newly appointed rabbi, Armond E. Cohen. The highlight of the ceremony was Ruth's venerable grandfather suddenly stepping forward and delivering a brief but dramatic homily in Yiddish in honor of the occasion, on the theme of "Shalom."

We weren't wealthy enough to afford a place of our own so we began married life by moving in with my folks. By summer we had saved up enough to rent a furnished apartment, on East 96th Street between Euclid and Carnegie, which has long since been replaced by one of the many buildings of the Cleveland Clinic. When my father suffered his first heart attack in 1935, the eco-

nomic squeeze was so great that we moved back for a year to help out. We finally bought our own place on Colwyn Road, better known as East 152 Street as it got closer to Kinsman.

What an adventure the purchase of that property was! We had no intention of buying; we went out in response to a "for rent" ad. The man who showed us through was the mayor of Shaker Heights, William Van Aken, after whom a major thoroughfare in the town was later named. He was the type of salesman perfectly suited for me—low key, given to understatement, seemingly almost uninterested in the transaction. He allowed as how the house belonged to his secretary and mumbled that he could see no sense in our shelling out fifty dollars a month in rent when for the same payment, taking into consideration that as landlords we would get an income from the downstairs suite, we could actually own the house. The reasoning was impeccable; the question was whether we had the down payment. We scraped it together—I think it was $500—and we were landlords! Shades of my immigrant forerunners! Like them, we had achieved that central part of the American dream—home ownership.

CAMP WISE

The open part of my calendar was now the summer, but Joe Rose and Leon Weil together fixed that. The entire Rose family (three fellows and three girls) was talented, handsome, vital—and into everything. Joe was particularly charming, the first Freudian in our circle, a free spirit who exuded an aura of daring and novelty and yet was totally dedicated to community responsibilities. He practically commanded me, soon after I had settled down in a teaching career, to devote my summers to working at Camp Wise, the communal camp located at that time about five miles east of Painesville, on Lake Erie. At his prompting, I went to see the president of Camp Wise, Leon Weil, who engaged me on the spot as boys' worker.

It seemed like a good if somewhat insane deal all around. The camp got my services at a price they could afford during the Depression—nothing. I got bed and board for the summer; and Ruth, who of course was working (as secretary to Herbert Buckman, then the Commissioner of Public Hall and Stadium), became a welcome guest on weekends, or whenever she could make it out to camp. So, as Leon pointed out in his dry, sardonic manner, I was really being richly rewarded in view of the immense savings I could effect during the summer. Moreover, from the camp standpoint hiring me was taking quite a chance. Since I had never so much as seen any camp for children, I hadn't the foggiest notion of how it should operate.

Joe and Leon were prepared to deal with my ignorance. The camp was largely run by volunteers, which explained why my interview and instant hiring were by a layman. Activities during the off season were in the hands of a remarkable organization known as the Camp Wise Crew, made up of those who had served as volunteer leaders in previous years. What a crew they were! During the winter they ran a ten-week institute for those who wished to volunteer their services for the coming summer, teaching camp philosophy, skills, ways of handling kids, and mounting a fine social program for good measure. The instructors were mostly camp alumni, supplemented from time to time by faculty members from the School of Applied Social Science, who for the most part also volunteered their services. The result was a marvelous combination of hard work and sheer fun—always a winning trick. Dorothy Wahl and Dave Apple and Elmer Louis and literally dozens of others who later distinguished themselves in teaching and social service and community work brought imagination and zest and discipline to the sessions. The leaders-to-be responded with almost perfect attendance and high enthusiasm.

Unlike the permanent staff that came out for the entire summer, the leaders served for only a single trip of two weeks. They were selected by the Crew after rigorous examination to determine how well they met the institute's high standards—for voluntary positions! Maybe nostalgia distorts my memory, and the organization was less remarkable than I remember it. But I

don't really believe that. So many of us learned what creativity and what fun there could be in communal service. So many communal leaders began their careers of distinguished service at Camp Wise.

Camp Wise had its weak points. In the late thirties, Industrial Rayon Corporation built its factory directly across the road. It permanently cut off all hiking toward the east, the only open direction, and destroyed any illusion of a rural setting. When the wind was from the east, you could smell the factory as well as see it. Structurally, too, Camp Wise was a far cry from modern ideas of what a camp should be. It consisted of four large wooden cottages, each containing four living units surrounding a recreation hall and a kitchen, all constructed in a style more appropriate for a commercial resort than a kids' camp dedicated to roughing it in the unspoiled outdoors. In addition, there were four tents for the older boys and three for the older girls, all erected on cement slabs. Each contained ten cots. Leaders slept on mattresses, but the kids had straw ticks, excellent for young bedwetters but a nuisance to empty and refill every two weeks for each of the five camp trips. The lake was beautiful for sunsets and general viewing but rotten for swimming. It was already quite polluted, and much of the time the waves were too violent to permit any kind of swimming instruction. Often we had to call off the regular swim period, even in sunny weather.

The problems were not only physical. In the early years two of the large cottages were given over for use by mothers and babies, which complicated schedule-making and programming, particularly when some mamas came out to camp not only with their babies but with older children. Inevitably, they tried to keep tabs on their kids, embarrassing them and bringing on occasional homesick upsets in other campers.

We shared the property with Camp Henry Baker, just across a ravine formed by a little creek. Baker was the summer camp of the Council Educational Alliance, eventually to become the Jewish Community Center in 1948. There was a good deal of cooperation between the two camps, but also considerable rivalry. Baker's staff was far more professional in their approach than ours since

they were trained social workers who were for the most part year-round employees of the Council. We were a hit-or-miss gang, thrown together each year, of teachers and odds and ends of talent, some still college students, recruited pretty much as I had been. The difference showed up in programming.

During my first couple of years we used the "five day activity" system, with kids choosing twice during their two-week trip from a smorgasbord of possible offerings (dramatics, campcraft, handcraft, exploring, etc.) largely reflecting the skills and the interests of the leaders of the particular trip. The Henry Baker people were patronizing about such lack of sophistication. They ran their camp on the "project" principle, they informed us. Each tent or cottage developed a central idea (build a treehouse, develop a kibbutz, create a nature trail, construct an Indian village, etc.) aimed at uniting the group. Though in the process they taught all kinds of skills, the really important objective, they informed us, was to realize well-defined (and certainly frequently defined) social and personal achievement goals. Relationships, self-understanding—*that* was the ticket.

We argued nightly, when leaders of both camps got together, over what seemed to be our differing approaches. The Wise defense rested on the superiority of vigorous practice over stuffy theory. As the years went on, the differences between us eroded, until finally the two camps were merged. As is so often the case, we all overestimated the importance of technique. The genius of camp lay elsewhere.

Much of it, at least as far as Camp Wise was concerned, revolved around its director, Albert (Spunk) Kinoy. A physical education teacher in a New York high school who earlier had been an employee of the local Council Educational Alliance, he was a perfect choice to head the camp. He was in his mid-forties in 1935 when I first met him, short, husky, with wisps of the little hair left to him floating in the breeze, forever puffing comfortingly on his pipe. Spunk was the classic liberal, in the best sense of that now suspect term. He never really got much involved in programming, conceiving his job to be encouraging and backing up and developing the members of his staff responsible for the actual

work, applauding their successes and gently helping them to evaluate and learn from their failures. He created an atmosphere of complete confidence in our efforts so that, although he almost never made demands on us, we were ready to knock ourselves out to justify his trust. All of us, following his example, developed an intense closeness and got to know and share one another's problems in a way more like a family relationship than a working relationship. His older son, Arthur, now a professor of constitutional law at Rutgers University and a nationally known legal authority, came with him for two summers and developed, at the age of seventeen, into one of our most imaginative leaders. His other son, Ernest, was too young to be a leader and spent his summers at another camp. It was a loss to us, since he has since become one of the nation's most creative writers for television. Spunk's wife, Sarah Jane, ran her own camp in the East, but occasionally she too visited us and also became part of the camp family.

How to capture the spirit of those days? The two hundred campers each two-week trip (one thousand for the summer) were mostly from poor families, a good many of them paying nothing at all. We on the staff were terribly conscious of emerging from an earlier stage of camp history, when the objective was primarily to provide two weeks of fresh air and good food, with a program emphasizing sports. We took all that for granted, but we were after "higher" objectives. Baseball, for example, was not quite a necessary evil, but it also was not to be an important concern. Developing the personality and exploring the world of the outdoors and learning to "relate" were more vital goals, as was a new but passionate emphasis on Jewish commitment. The positive results of our work, when things went right, were demonstrated in the contrast between the raggedy lines of kids at initial registration, many of them teary-eyed and homesick, and the gang of knowledgeable camp veterans two weeks later, lustily singing camp songs and shouting vows of eternal friendship. In an astonishing number of cases, those predictions really came true.

During my first summer at camp I was thrown abruptly into responsibilities despite my lack of experience. Spunk was always ten days late in arriving because the New York schools let out that

long after camp opened. Moreover, that first year he came down with gall bladder trouble that knocked him out for long stretches during the summer. The major responsibility devolved on my colleague on the girls' side of the campus, Dorothy Wahl. She was a dynamo, inspiring leaders, supervising the staff, looking after the kitchen, comforting the kids, breaking me in, and generally running herself ragged until she would simply collapse for a day or two before coming back strong as ever. Her assistant, and later the top camp person, Lil Berkowitz, was a musician and, among her many other contributions, helped raise our level of musical expression from unmelodious shoutings of cheap music to some really fine singing that drew heavily on Jewish tradition and American folk songs. Alfred (Bud) Schlesinger was first a leader, then our swimming instructor, then our head boys' worker. He demonstrated what should be obvious—that competence in a skill does not necessarily guarantee ability to impart the skill to others. We had magnificent, almost professional swimmers who were terrible at teaching the kids. Bud was a good swimmer though hardly a champion. But his ability to understand kids, to work patiently with them, to tease them into ducking their heads under water was infinitely more valuable than the flashy speed demonstrations of the champs. It helped me to understand why so many great athletes turn out to be poor managers or coaches, while many who barely made it in their playing careers often do a fine job of bringing out the best in others.

My own responsibilities were bounded only by my energy. Beyond my major duties in programming and supervision, I was usually the storyteller at the Friday night services in the Council Ring. I can't imagine a more inspiring setting for storytelling. The kids dressed up (which means having showered and changed to reasonably clean clothing) and were somewhat settled down by the Shabbos services. The twilight and the gathering night usually brought a cooling breeze early in the summer or a crackling Council fire in the late summer trips; either set a perfect mood for spinning yarns. My background in literature stood me well, and I found I didn't have to patronize the campers. My tales came from Jewish tradition, in stories like "If Not Higher" by I. L. Peretz; or

in dramatic yarns like "Zodomirsky's Duel" by Dumas, or Robert Louis Stevenson's "The Suicide Club," or Stockton's "The Lady and the Tiger." Years later I would use them again as bedtime stories for my grandsons. I never had much use for fairy stories or sweet good night tales. My aim for both campers and grandchildren was to provide a vivid story, preferably winding up with some question to brood about. It may have been bad psychology to stimulate my listeners instead of singing a lullaby, but the subsequent discussions before they settled into sleep were good for my soul. And maybe theirs too.

Occasionally Lil wasn't around to lead the singing, and I filled in with my one contribution—a simple little Israeli song called "Shmor." It had only three words for the kids to remember: "Shmor shimru achim," meaning "On guard, fellows." It was the admonition, as I dramatically explained, of Jewish watchmen guarding new settlements in Eretz Yisroel. The song had other verses, but they consisted of humming or whistling the tune without words. Then came the climax. The last verse was "sung" silently till the final explosive burst of "Shmor!" This was supposed to erupt in unison but usually someone got in a beat early—or late. That always brought down the house. I became so identified with my one-song repertoire that I was frequently known seriously by the kids and jestingly by the leaders as "Shmor."

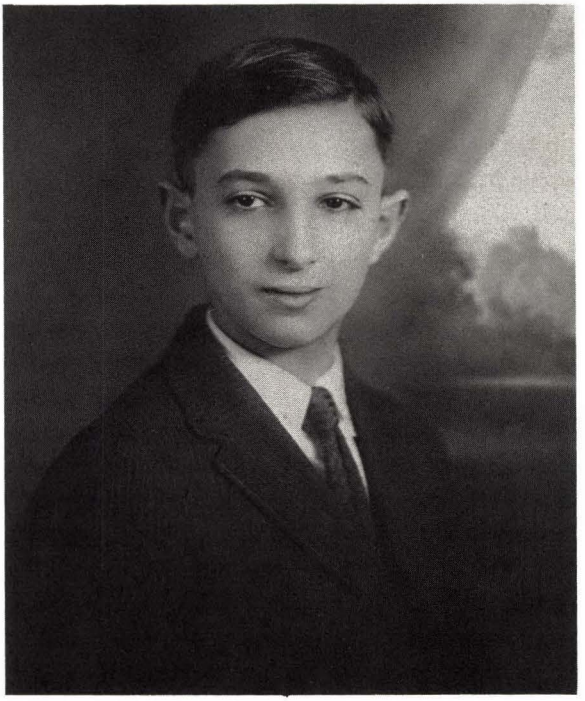
On a higher (or lower) musical note, I also had starring roles in our Leaders Night operetta—if that is the right word for what we produced. It was performed the last Sunday night of each trip and was always a more or less garbled version of a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta. (We more accurately referred to it as a "Garber and Solomon" presentation.) Over the years, we alternated among *Trial By Jury*, *The Mikado*, *Pinafore*, and *Pirates of Penzance*. I built up quite a repertory of lead roles and, except for Bud Schlesinger, whose voice was even worse than mine, developed into one of the outstanding monotones of the performances. But the kids loved it and so did the leaders, even though they came to the few rehearsals so exhausted that they had to call on new reserves of energy to get through the session.

Besides, rehearsal time cut into "cliffing." Camp Wise was right

on Lake Erie, with a cliff rising perhaps thirty feet above the beach. At night, after the kids were asleep and when there were no meetings, the leaders would wander off in couples to highly private spots along the cliff, being careful to take camp blankets with them. The aim, I presume, was to meditate on the rolling breakers below. My responsibility was to cut short those meditations at midnight. Armed with a flashlight aimed mostly at the sky and accompanied for protection by another staff member, I would approach the cliff area, but not too close. When various lumps moved and divided into two separate bodies, we would cough discreetly and observe into the darkness that bedtime had come. We always rounded up the leaders as the day's final staff duty. We relied on the bed count to ensure that the leaders had enough sleep to face up to the demanding schedule with the kids the next day. But I would hate to guarantee that they all stayed put after we on the staff went to bed.

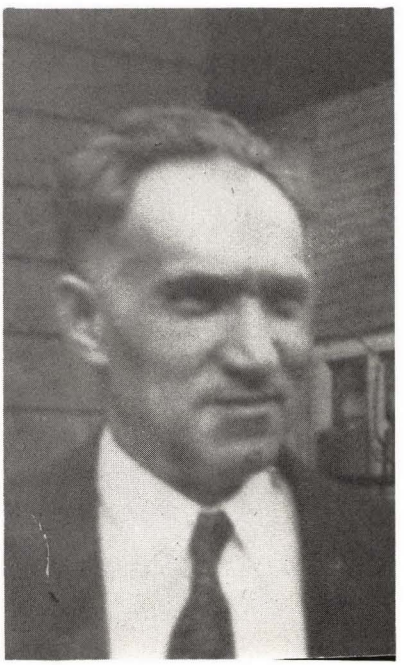
No account of Camp Wise during the four decades of its stay at the Painesville location would be complete without mention of the two personalities who anchored the entire period. One was the caretaker, George Jackson. Tall, lean, all muscle, with a corncob pipe forever dangling from his mouth, absolutely unperturbable, he gloried in the legend that "George can do anything." We never found any blueprints for the water or sewage or electricity systems; evidently they existed only in George's mind. God knows what would have happened if at any time during those decades he had had to be replaced. He hauled everything, patched everything, redesigned everything, while cheerfully agreeing that he was a master painter, carpenter, electrician, plumber, or what not. Nothing stumped him.

One year, two of us were in the mothers' cottage, getting things ready for camp opening the next day, when a couple of rocks bigger than grapefruit came smashing through the roof and landed a few yards from us. We were horrified but George wasn't. He came walking up from the beach, where he had been blasting rocks to clear the bathing area, surveyed the damage, scratched his head, puffed on his pipe, and repeated his favorite comment on all the world's happenings: "Gol dang dern."

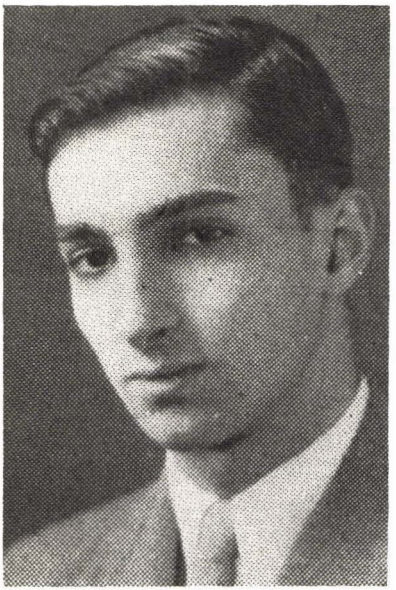


Confirmand at The Jewish Center (now Park Synagogue) on E. 105 Street, 1926

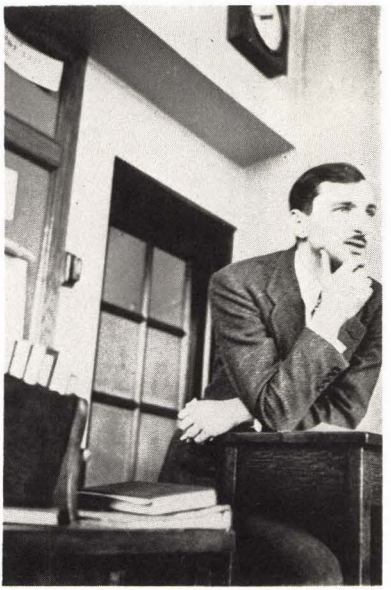




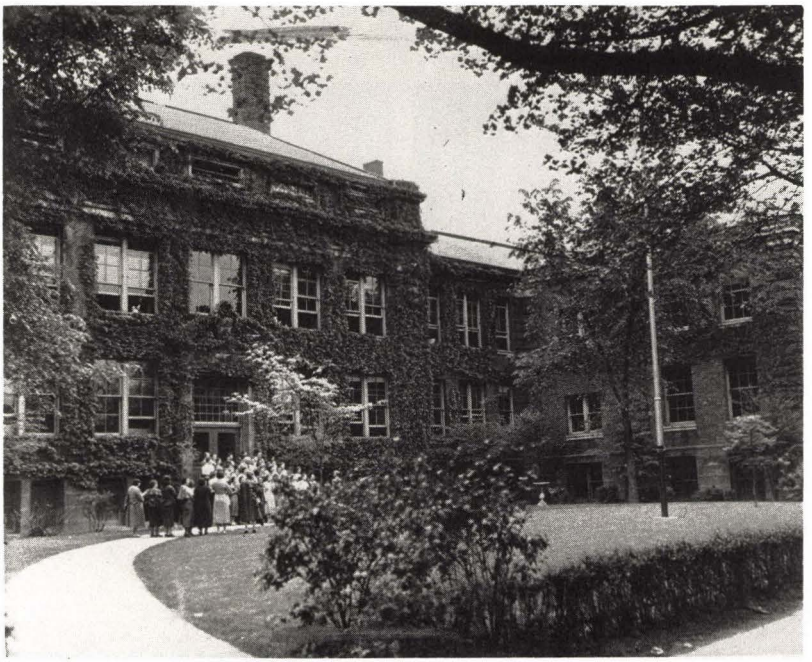
The parents, Gertrude and Jacob Vincent



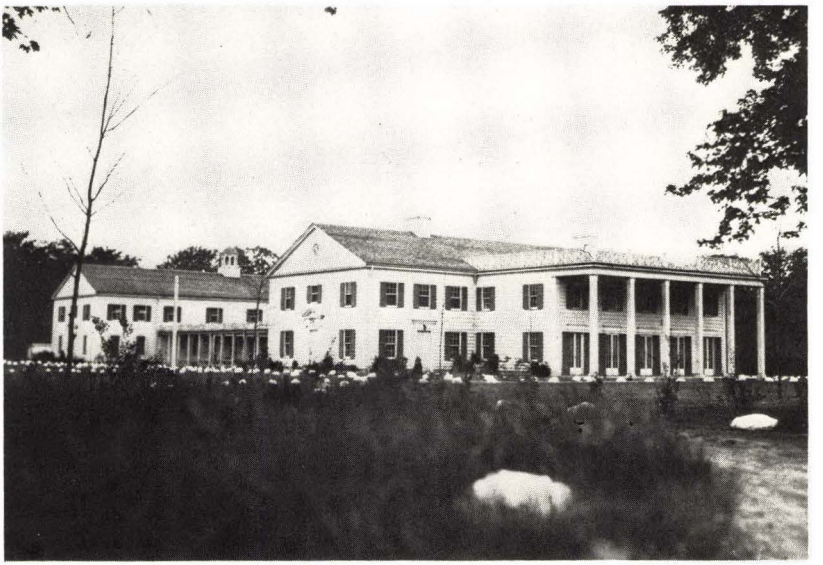
*College Senior, 1932 (*The Nihon, *Western Reserve University Yearbook, 1933)*



Teaching Days at Glenville, 1941



Glenville High School, 810 Parkwood Drive, 1936



Camp Wise, "The Home of Happiness," 1940. (Photograph courtesy of Cleveland Jewish Archives, Western Reserve Historical Society.)



Counselors and Staff, Camp Wise, 1940. Seated, *second row center, Albert Kinoy;* back row, *third left, the author.*

The Parent State, 1952. Sidney, Ruth, Jill, Norman.





The Grandparent State, 1978. The original four, spouses, and five grandchildren.

He did get his comeuppance once, however. One of the attractive features of camp was its medical department. In addition to a full-time nurse, we also had, until the war changed things, a live-in doctor, usually a former leader who had just completed his residency at a hospital and welcomed a summer relaxing at camp before going into private practice.

A succession of men who later became distinguished physicians served in the post, but at camp their prime objective was fun. One summer, Dr. Zoltan Klein was our physician. A relatively short and slight fellow, he had been a member of the wrestling team at Western Reserve University. Somehow, he and George got to talking about wrestling skills, and George allowed as how none of them there college fellows with their vague theories would have much show against the natural skill and sheer strength that he represented. Zoltan thought otherwise, so just for the hell of it, they put on an impromptu wrestling match. George was on his back in nothing flat. He absolutely couldn't believe it. He tried again, with the same results. You could see a lifetime of conviction tottering. Evidently there *was* something, after all, to that shadowy world of sophisticated learning. But the only comment he made was, "Gol dang dern."

The other significant figure was Hugo Mahrer—Uncle Hugo to everybody. He had been associated with the camp for many years before my time, having served it in every conceivable capacity. He demonstrated classically what a volunteer can mean to community service. He held a responsible position in town, but almost every weekend and many evenings, often with his wife Rose, he would rush out to camp, where we would unmercifully exploit his tremendous skills and knowledge of camp-craft and nature lore. Nor was that all. He was probably the only man whose judgment on maintenance problems George Jackson really respected, so that Hugo for many years served as a kind of overseer to the physical well-being and upgrading of every aspect of camp. Moreover, he had a marvelous way with kids both as a leader of groups and as a friend to those loners who had difficulty relating to anyone else.

Although Hugo best exemplified the spirit of volunteerism

which was the distinctive contribution of camp, hundreds of young people from every walk of life had their first experience in community leadership at Camp Wise. Standards were high. It was a privilege to be selected as a leader, even though you were not paid. The Depression helped, of course, since we had our pick of young talent because jobs were almost impossible to find. So why not a summer at camp? As for the affluent, a tradition of serving at camp had become so deeply established that "the best" young people eagerly volunteered along with the sons and daughters of the working man and the little businessman. The result was a fine mix of the Glenville, Kinsman, and Heights crowds, in vivid contrast to the more common tendency of the country club set and "the masses"—to use the descriptive terms of the day—to go their own ways.

Each year camp ended abruptly. Spunk was due back in New York the next day, so the trustees instituted the pleasant custom of an annual meeting to honor the staff, held at the Oakwood Club on the night camp closed. What an occasion that annual meeting was! In the morning we were still workers, dressed in our shorts and *shmattes*, frantically bidding the kids goodbye while closing up camp, often after an all-night bust-up. Then a mad dash back into town, with the girls on the staff rushing off to their hairdresser appointments. That night, we all reassembled for dinner at what seemed the most posh of environments—a country club. Decked out in our best duds, hardly recognizing each other, we were wined and dined. Each member of the staff gave a brief account of the work we had been responsible for during the summer—reports that we somehow knocked out in those frantic last days. The board listened with the greatest of good will. And what a board! William C. (Bill) Treuhaft, the first professional at camp, years before, served as treasurer; Leon Weil and George Hays were the presidents during my time; Ruth Newman was the long-term registrar; Dr. Oscar Markey was our in-town medical consultant. The list of outstanding community personalities went on and on.

The next day it was all over, and we were back to "real" work. But the friendships forged during those summer months have

worn well over the years. Some of my closest friends I first met at camp, and hardly a week passes, forty years later, without some reminiscence about the good days at Camp Wise.

TEACHING AT GLENVILLE

"You can't go home again" is usually solid advice, but my experience in returning to Glenville was an exception to the rule. I got a call in the summer of 1938 informing me that I had been transferred from Audubon Junior High School to Glenville Senior High School at the request of the head of the English department at Glenville, Laura V. Edwards. What a joy! Miss Edwards had been second only to Elsie Davies, her close friend, as a major influence during my student days, and I was sure she would be the same guide and inspiration as a colleague. She was. So were the rest of the faculty, not very much changed in the decade since I had graduated and, as far as I could tell, pleased at the return of the native.

The biggest change was at the top. A new school board had recently been elected, strongly oriented toward labor, and Clayton R. Wise, a conservative, had been demoted from assistant superintendent to principal of Glenville. Edna Studebaker was the new assistant principal, replacing Elsie Davies the same year I arrived. We became close friends. She was as much of a WASP as her predecessor, but with a difference. Where Miss Davies was a New Englander through and through, with the general outlook expected of a clergyman's daughter raised in an environment of severe discipline, Edna Studebaker was hearty and outgoing and enthusiastic, reflecting the optimism and the general get-on-with-it spirit of her thriving midwestern family centered in New Carlisle, Ohio—a branch of the same Studebaker family that produced the motor car. She was in constant conflict with her fellow administrators. Both Clayton Wise and Harry M. Towne, who was still assistant principal, were big on discipline in the narrow

sense of that term, whereas Edna had total faith in the perfectibility of man and student if they were encouraged to explore their own resources and capabilities.

In that conviction, she could count on the support of only a minority of the faculty. There was Nell Rosebaugh, Latin teacher, who brought to the classics a verve and a driving enthusiasm and a sheer love of young people as infectious as her perennial smile and great good humor. There was Flavius David, history teacher, who in better times would have starred in academia. He made the events of the past come alive while at the same time brilliantly illuminating the present and nurturing each student's potential.

Still, we were a rather limited group of liberals. Most of the faculty was conservative both in their outlook on events and in their approach to the student body. Several were queer characters. One poor old maid in the English department was pathetically outclassed by her classes. She lectured them endlessly with such gems as advising the girls to make sure they put down a protective newspaper before daring to sit on a boy's lap. In her zeal for teaching good habits, she stressed—to these brilliant high school students—the crucial importance of making sure that all t's were crossed and all periods and commas carefully positioned on the line. One year one of my best students, perfectly at home in the worlds of Hemingway and Faulkner and Thomas Wolfe, confessed to me that he had been flunked by Miss W the year before. I was astounded. How come? Amazingly, he said he deserved to fail, according to her standards. He had saved, for example, a spelling test on which he had wound up with a grade of minus 14, despite the fact that every word was spelled correctly. Five points were deducted for each of the twenty words because he had consistently put the dot required after each number to the right rather than to the left of the longitudinal blue line. He had made several equally horrifying errors, like failing to make the bottom loop of the *j* properly, all of which led to his final negative grade. The illiterate!

The patience of the students and their parents was unending. In effect, the teacher could do no wrong. Not even the sadist in one of the science fields or the hopeless buffoon who made a mockery of his history classes.

The student body was amazing. It's tempting to run over the names of nationally and internationally famous graduates in almost every field. From the students of my own classes, I could compile a formidable list: in psychiatry, Willard Gaylin, author of a number of bestsellers in his field; in business, Robert Charpie, reputed to be the most highly paid corporate executive in the country; in films, Jack Weston, now a Hollywood star; in academia, Albert Feuerwerker, head of the Department of Oriental Studies at Michigan. The list could be multiplied almost indefinitely—authors, musicians, distinguished lawyers, doctors, and scientists. The most dramatic symbol of their accomplishments was the announcement in 1977, within a single week, of the appointment of three of them to posts as United States ambassadors—Milton Wolf to Austria, Patricia Byrne to Mali (and later to Burma), and Marvin Weissman to Costa Rica (and later to Bolivia).

For me, the job was sheer delight. I was soon given highly selected classes in senior English, and we examined modern American and British literature as if we were seminar students in a college. Best of all was an elective, an informal, creative class that, for want of a more precise description, I called either "speech" or "radio." I was put in charge of the school public address system and of all assemblies and commencements, and my special class ground out many original programs aimed at amusing and informing the entire student body, with everything from satiric parodies of the mass media to serious analyses of current events. Later, when I began to spend part of my time downtown at the school radio station, WBOE, a good part of the school system listened in on our programs.

War had broken out in Europe and was growing more menacing at home. I felt it part of my responsibility to do what I could to contribute to an understanding of the passionate events that were engulfing us. Sometimes my enthusiasm got me into trouble. My classes, after considerable research, worked up a dramatic script analyzing Fascism and its threat to America—*before* we entered the war. The hard hitting show, written under the influence of Orson Welles and Norman Corwin, attacked Hitler and all his works without inhibition. It seems ridiculous now, but there were

objections. Was it right to be so controversial? Hadn't we taken sides too vigorously? Was it our role to enter into such matters? Such questions were not raised by students. They loved the performance. So did a number of visitors whom I had invited to observe how maturely young people could deal with serious problems.

Things came to a head when we received an invitation from another high school to put on our show there, since reports had reached them of what an impact we had made. Principal Wise informed me that we could not accept the invitation. He was particularly put out because a reporter from the *Cleveland Press* had been to one of our dramatizations and his account was all over the front page, featuring one of my students, a highly vocal refugee from Germany who was full of firsthand horror stories. Such publicity, in the principal's view, was not proper. Too controversial.

I demurred. I was prepared for the consequences if I accepted the invitation and told Wise that we would have to let "downtown" decide between us. He backed down, and we went. He was for the most part quite friendly to me, and in general a mild-mannered fellow, not inclined to make a fuss over anything as unimportant as a hot-blooded young teacher unable to control his enthusiasms. He had perfect confidence that age would teach me more caution.

Pearl Harbor changed everything. I was sure I would soon be drafted, so I enrolled in a refresher course for math teachers on the assumption that completion of the course would help me obtain a commission, for a post in meteorology. I don't think I ever worked so hard. Everybody else in the course was a math teacher, and I had had only high school algebra and geometry. My final exam in that course is the only test paper I ever saved. As it turned out, although I received in due time a 1-A classification, I was never drafted. I don't know why. I suppose it was a combination of being a father, past thirty, and presumably in a valuable occupation and a responsible post.

Jill was born in 1940, and I haven't recovered from the miracle of fatherhood (or grandfatherhood either, for that matter) yet. She was born in the early morning, and I staggered into school

after an all-night vigil, unshaven and rumpled, to tell Wise what had happened. I remember saying to him, "It still doesn't seem real to me." And his response: "You'll be surprised how quickly it will become the most vivid reality in your life." Quite right.

There was another memorable exchange when our son Norman was born in 1947. When Dr. Joe Gross (a delightful Camp Wise doctor from the old days) wheeled him out of the delivery room, he announced, "You have a son." I was so sure that it would be another daughter that my penetrating question was: "Boy or girl?" It seems only appropriate, as a consequence, that my first four grandchildren were all boys, and it wasn't until Andrea came along, in 1978, that I finally had a granddaughter.

War intensified my responsibilities tremendously. We were forever running bond drives, overseeing the distribution of ration books, putting on news programs, and reaching out into the community with all sorts of programs. My radio class was instrumental in helping form the Glenville Area Community Council, which was, except for one in the Tremont area, the first neighborhood cooperative effort to be organized in Cleveland.

Some of the effects of the war were, of course, tragic. Almost the first fatality reported was one of my best students, Stanley Rubinstein, a young man with so much to offer. In addition to individual tragedies, the effect on our black kids was dismaying. The relationships at Glenville across religious and racial lines had always been solid. Blacks and Orientals, even *after* Pearl Harbor, were elected to high office, though the student body was overwhelmingly Jewish. The good feelings were reciprocated; the Christian kids knew the Jewish holidays and stayed out of school just as faithfully as the Jewish kids did. But the war introduced evil reality into their lives. Black students left our free and accepting environment to go into a segregated army in training camps in the deep South, where they were exposed for the first time to the brutality of apartheid American style. I particularly remember one young man coming back from that experience to visit, not long after graduation. He had been a fine student, carefree and relaxed, but he returned bitter and cynical, juggling a machine gun bullet all the time he talked to me, alternately showing flashes

of old-time confidence and exhibiting a new wariness and a distaste for all of whitey's works. His burgeoning hostility was a harbinger of things to come in our national life.

It was also during the war that I developed some important activities outside of Glenville, particularly my long association with the school radio station, WBOE. It had been founded by Dr. William Levenson, later to serve in troubled times as superintendent of schools. He often invited me and my classes down for special broadcasts. His successor, Ed Helman, became one of my dearest friends. Ed was not only an extraordinary teacher and able administrator but probably the most profoundly spiritual person I have ever known. As he quietly confided to me, he was very likely the only person in his highly sophisticated circle of friends who believed in God in the traditional, revealed sense. The statement came only reluctantly and after a couple of drinks, since Ed did not easily speak of his beliefs. A man of the modern world, with rare insight into life and literature, he was totally committed religiously without a trace of the vulgar and cocksure forms of fundamentalism. Never married, he was worshipped not only by his students but almost en masse by the unmarried ladies at the station. No wonder. Attractive, beautifully groomed, with perfect manners, a musical voice, splendid intelligence, and a fine sense of humor, he was a perfect catch. But no one caught him. He was to me as a teacher what Spunk Kinoy had been at camp—forever encouraging, forever inspiring. Gradually, I devoted more and more of my time to working downtown at the station. I became director of high school social studies broadcasts and author of many scripts for English classes.

After the war Ed was sent to Germany by the State Department to consult with educational authorities there about methods of democratizing their school systems. I had lunch with him the week he came back, and he was obviously in pain. He left me to enter the hospital, where he died the next day of a massive heart attack.

I had one final creative fling before leaving the school system. In 1946 Cleveland celebrated its sesquicentennial, and I was excused from classes at Glenville half a day for several months to

write and direct an appropriate student music extravaganza, together with J. B. Cameron of West High School. It was to be prepared for the national meeting of the Music Educators of America, held that year in Cleveland in honor of our civic birthday. It was some project! After months of preparation, we put the show on for three nights, with each high school in the city producing one historic episode in the life of the city from a script I wrote. Our cast, running into the thousands, was so huge that we used Music Hall as the staging area. The performance itself was given in Public Hall, with turnaway crowds of almost ten thousand each night.

It was my last hurrah as an educator. For reasons I shall describe, I left teaching, my first vocational love, forever in 1946. But Glenville didn't leave me. Decades later, at one of the many class reunions to which I was invited, I summarized my feelings about the school with the hope and expectation that they reflected what these now middle-aged former students were also feeling:

> Yesterday, in order to get in the mood for this wallowing in nostalgia, I left work early and drove out to Parkwood Drive. I hadn't been in that neighborhood for years, and I didn't know until I got there, between Everton and Englewood Avenues, that the ugly old red-brick building that we all loved isn't there any more. There is nothing there any more. Just a wasteland. Across the street, they have put up a new and beautiful building, but the sign in front doesn't say Glenville; it says Franklin Delano Roosevelt Junior High School.
>
> My first reaction, looking at that wasteland, was anger. How could they do that to us? All those beautiful memories destroyed forever. But after a bit, I stopped feeling bad, because standing there brooding, I realized that what was beautiful about Glenville wasn't the bricks and the mortar. As a matter of fact, the building was really rather crummy. What brings us together tonight is a kind of magic that has nothing to do with anything concrete—anything that can be physically represented. Rather, it has to do with people, with relationships, with experience.
>
> If it wasn't anything to do with the building as such, what was it then? I really can't answer that question satisfactorily because I can't pin down precisely what the magic was. It was partly, I sup-

pose, the warm relationship between students and faculty. Unlike the tragic situation we hear about so much today, we weren't enemies; we were and we remain, as this night testifies, close friends. Even more important, there was a welding relationship among you—the relationship of student to student. You knew how to live with one another, across racial lines, across religious lines, across class lines. It also had something to do with your respect for learning, your respect for quality, and it had something to do with wanting to make a better world, as so many of you have done in your life work.

But finally, there is mystery. Like almost everything in life that is worthwhile, there is no answer to what finally brought us so close together that three decades later we have this magnificent turnout for a class reunion, mounted with the kind of imagination we have witnessed tonight.

So, speaking with the authority vested in me by nobody at all, but hoping that I reflect the feelings of my faculty colleagues tonight, who hobbled down here to be with you for this reunion, we thank you profoundly . . . and we bless you. And the best blessing that I can ask for all of you is that for the rest of your lives you experience the same kind of creativity and the same kind of fun that you enjoyed during your three years at Glenville.

FROM TEACHING TO COMMUNITY SERVICE

It wasn't easy to leave teaching; it took me more than a year to make up my mind. And for better or for worse, I probably would have stayed put if not for the stubborn pressures of Ezra Shapiro and Harry Barron.

One day in the spring of 1945, I got a call from Ezra urging me to see him on "a matter of importance to you and to the community." It wasn't much of a secret what we would be discussing, since Ezra was the president of the Jewish Community Council, and its executive, Harry Barron, had already sounded me out on the possibility of joining him professionally. The negotiations had almost come to an end at that preliminary conversation. Harry had

set a time for our meeting, and we both reacted typically to the appointment. I was early for it and he was late, though it was at his office. I fiddled impatiently for a while, wondering what I was doing there at all, and finally decided to wait five more minutes and then tell his secretary (later, my secretary), Ann Winston, that as a teacher I had become so compulsively prompt that there was no possibility of my adjusting to the more informal time schedule of community workers. One minute before the deadline Harry came clattering in, hurried and apologetic, and so completely broke down my studied coolness by his warmth and urgent persuasion that I was ready for Ezra's invitation.

Maybe I would have made the change under any circumstances, because it wouldn't have been easy to turn down an invitation from Ezra. He had a brilliant career in both the general and the Jewish community. He had gone into private law practice with great success and culminated his civic career by being appointed head of the city's Community Relations Board, a volunteer post. His Jewish background was superb. A fluent Hebraist, profoundly rooted in Yiddishkeit, he had served as president of the local Zionist district and was already a ranking figure nationally and internationally in the movement. Eventually, he was elected president of the Keren Hayesod and spent the rest of his life in Israel in that prestigious post.

Because of the difference in our ages (which somehow became much less significant as the years went on), I was not originally part of his intimate circle, which included Max Kohrman, Charlie Auerbach, Ches Aleph Friedland, Suggs Garber, and Sig Braverman, among others. They represented, together with (a bit later) Cantor Saul Meisels and Sara Halperin, one of the two power centers of Zionist and indeed of Jewish life in the community. The other revolved around Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver, whose prestige and brilliant oratory were unmatched. But Ezra was as close as the community came to producing a "voice of the people." He had tremendous popular appeal, and for that reason was viewed in some quarters as demagogic and potentially dangerous.

How many of the confrontations of those days appear unnecessary and shallow in the light of all that happened: the conflict

between Silver and Shapiro, between Silver and Brickner, between "German Jews" and "East European" Jews, between local supporters of the Joint Distribution Committee and the United Palestine Appeal. By way of example, one of the vignettes I recall with pleasure dates from the opening of Fairmount Temple. Rabbi Barnett Brickner, venerated by his congregation for his infectious warmth as much as for his devoted leadership, and Rebecca, his ebullient wife and colleague, were the hosts. As I arrived at the reception, I saw the two of them strolling down the corridor in animated and obviously friendly exchange with Rabbi and Mrs. Abba Hillel Silver. It was still another strained relationship eased by time. As a matter of fact, almost all of the bitter disputes were resolved in time by the principals themselves, as the pressure of world events made it clear that the differences were not really that crucial, and were more often personal than philosophical.

I was at that time close to the Shapiro sector. While still in college, I was called on a number of times to represent the viewpoint of youth in various community gatherings, one of which sticks in the memory because it was so embarrassing. Friedland, one of Shapiro's close co-workers, ran a Friday luncheon club downtown in the basement below the Hippodrome Theatre. There he would with unfailing brilliance and wry humor review the highlights of the week's happenings from a Jewish point of view. Then some speaker would talk on a subject of Zionist or general Jewish interest. There was a kind of communal *shammes* —or man of all work—in town at that time whose job was to promote various Zionist activities. His name was Isaac Carmel, red-haired, short, good-tempered, a kind of presence that floated here and there, more or less overseeing and promoting whatever programs and activities needed help. He was a type common in those days in Zionist circles. Many major Zionist personalities had such "man of all work" satellites. We bumped into each other one day, and Carmel asked me to give the talk the next week at the Friday luncheon club. (I suppose someone had just canceled out.) I protested; what in the world would I talk about to that prestigious gathering?

He waved my question aside. "You'll find *something* to talk about," he reassured me. "Don't you study something at school?"

"Sure," I responded, "but it hasn't anything to do with the Friday meetings."

"So what is it?"

I hesitated—and then came clean. "Poetry."

He shrugged his shoulders. "Nu, so speak on poetry."

Came Friday, and while the elite of the community was digging away at the food, Friedland, as always the chairman, leaned down to me.

"So, what are you going to be talking about?"

"Uh—Robinson Jeffers."

"Robinson Jeffers!" Friedland exclaimed. "A very talented poet, but what in the world has he got to do with us here?"

I didn't know. I only knew that my deepest desires at that moment were to obliterate Carmel and then sink through the floor—preferably in that order. But Carmel, wisely, was not present, and the floor was unyielding, so a few minutes later I was staggering through my talk. I had painstakingly put together what I had thought was a subtle and impressive analysis of Jeffers' unusual poetic style. But now, in a desperate last minute effort to be relevant to my audience, I went off on a different tack, trying to convince my perplexed listeners (and myself at the same time) that since Jeffers viewed the universe as hopeless, and human endeavor as insignificant and futile, he constituted a profound challenge to the continuity of our Jewish communal work. If we didn't offer our young people valid and inspiring programs like Zionist activities, I proclaimed, they would succumb to the hopeless philosophy of the poet, because just listen please to how magical are his long and sweeping lines. . . . Or something like that.

Most of my other contacts with Friedland and Shapiro were more constructive and comfortable, and evidently I had made a favorable impression, because here was Ezra informing me and Ruth, who accompanied me to the interview, that I had an obligation and an opportunity to make a real contribution to the functioning of the community by breaking out of the no doubt valuable but highly circumscribed life of a high school teacher and

coming to work for the Jewish Community Council. He was very persuasive. Moreover, he suggested that I try it for the summer, and we could all then judge how it might work out. A great idea! I did, and enjoyed it hugely. In September, when school was about to start again, I told Harry and Ezra that I was enthralled with the work, was most grateful to them, and was going back to teaching! They were aghast. What kind of logic was that? I agreed that it was totally irrational. How could I sensibly explain that despite the wider vistas and the increased pay, I felt professionally qualified for teaching, whereas I had never even had so much as a single course in sociology and didn't feel justified in throwing my lot in the sketchy field of communal service.

That should have ended things. But Harry wouldn't let me go completely. He arranged for me to report to the Council every day for that school year at four o'clock—after I had spent the mornings at Glenville and the afternoons at the Board of Education, working at the radio station and getting ready for the city's sesquicentennial celebration. It was some year!

I had two major assignments at the Community Council. One was to write a weekly radio program, which we called "Inside Story"—thirteen weekly segments on Sunday afternoon (prime time). It was unusual for a radio station to invest money and talent in the production of a local dramatic show, written by someone outside the station. I suspect the motivation wasn't just good civic feeling. The station was having problems renewing its license. Its owner was in trouble for allegedly slanting the news and needed to demonstrate the station's commitment to public service. And we happened to be handy. At any rate, there we were every Sunday at 12:45, putting on a show using professional talent under professional direction. My job was to knock out the scripts, on various problems of human relations, since the series was jointly sponsored by the city's Community Relations Board and the station itself. The first shows came fairly easily, but after a while it was a chore, particularly in view of all my other assignments. I finally asked for help, and a few of the scripts were written by others, including Jo Sinclair (Ruth Seid), who had just won the Harper prize for her novel, *Wasteland.*

My other big responsibility that year was the Jewish Arts Festival, a major annual event the Jewish Community Council sponsored in the forties. I also got caught up more and more in the general work of the agency as the year went along, and when the summer of 1946 came, I again went on full-time. I finally found the courage in August to tell Mark Schinnerer, the deputy superintendent of schools, with whom I had worked quite closely over the years, that I would not be returning to teaching. I had been his anchor man on a weekly radio program imitating one of the popular shows of that era, "Information Please," and maybe, since he was the quiz master, he didn't want to lose a regular from the cast. He offered me a couple of other posts, but it was too late. From now on, I was in community work.

The exodus of talented and dedicated teachers from their profession was devastatingly common. Of five classmates who trained together, I was the last to drop out. Probably the greatest loss was Dave Sindell, a top leader of Avukah as a youth, just as he became a top community leader as an adult. He had a brilliant but brief career as a teacher at West Tech but left to go into law. It is a sad commentary on our society that its rewards of money and prestige are too meager to retain many fine and enthusiastic teachers in their profession.

THE JEWISH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Community work was a complete change of pace from teaching. That became clear even before I officially started on the job. In May of 1945, while I was still teaching, Harry Barron invited me to go with him to Cincinnati for the semi-annual meeting of executives of national and local community relations organizations. I was so green that I insisted on paying my own way until Harry quietly pointed out that I would shortly go broke that way, not to mention that using my own money was a gross violation of professional ethics.

I had been used to the slow rhythm of teachers' meetings and the humdrum tempo of pedagogical exchanges. I suppose that later events like the turmoil over desegregation and violence and teachers' strikes picked up the pace dramatically, but in my teaching days, professional meetings were deadly. Suffocatingly polite, dull, and small-visioned.

Not the pow-wows of these fellows. There were no set speeches at the conference but instead, a series of racy reports on anti-Semitic incidents and how to handle them; impassioned presentations of new ways to get at discrimination in employment and housing and public accommodations; confidential "inside" accounts of the horrors just being authoritatively reported about the concentration camps. (The war in Europe had ended only the month before.) The place was bursting with ideas. S. Andhil (Sol) Feinberg of the American Jewish Committee was urging the "silent treatment" as the best method for dealing with American racists like Gerald L. K. Smith, drying up their support by ignoring them and thus depriving them of life-giving publicity. Others hotly pushed for merciless exposure. Dave Petegorsky and Alexander Pekelis, both of the American Jewish Congress, outlined their new and exciting ideas about social action, urging that we turn upside down the traditional notion that prejudices must be overcome before discrimination can be alleviated. Instead, their program was to forget about prejudice and deal directly with discrimination through appropriate legislation. Both had brilliantly seminal minds and were powerful speakers and pursuaders who profoundly influenced social thought not only in the Jewish community but in America. Both were to die tragic deaths, Pekelis in an airplane crash the following year and Petegorsky from cancer some years later. Frank Trager and Leo Shapiro of the Anti-Defamation League spoke directly to my interests as a former educator by spelling out ideas about intercultural education, which was just beginning to take hold as an organized movement.

The directors of local Community Relations Councils were equally bubbly. Maurie Fagan was the director in Philadelphia and set high standards that the rest of the group tried to follow.

He had created the Fellowship Commission, a central organization of racial, religious and ethnic groups that soon became so successful that Maurie dropped out of the Jewish communal field to devote himself completely to its work. Isaac Franck was then in Detroit (later in Brooklyn and for many years in Washington), scholarly, philosophical, deeply committed Jewishly. Bob Segal was in Boston—formerly a newspaper man, peppery, impatient, dynamic, and creative. Lil Friedberg was in Pittsburgh—the perfect lady, putting up patiently with the violent exchanges and disagreements among her more youthful male colleagues and then speaking quietly of her various undertakings. Sam Scheiner in Minneapolis, uninterested in theory but a dynamo of energy on projects, entertained us during meetings with stories of his talented young hometown friend Hubert Humphrey and after hours with his professional jazz playing on the piano.

Enriching the whole informal give and take was one of the most talented and congenial staffs of any organization—the National Community Relations Advisory Council. The executive director was Isaiah Minkoff, older than the rest of us, a veteran of the revolutionary struggles in Russia, a tough fighter for the causes he believed in but an utterly devoted and warm friend. Arnie Aronson, his right-hand man, was a master strategist, quiet, self-effacing, never seeking the personal credit that he so richly deserved as one of the most prolific contributors to the civil rights movement. Walter Lurie, thoughtful, thorough, standing somewhat apart from the uninhibited arguments was a master of cool debate; Samuel (Red) Spiegler, the public relations director, was completely unlike the usual stereotype of that position. Calm, inclined to understatement, he spoke toward the end of the debates when it was time to sum things up concisely and effectively.

No teachers' meetings were ever like these passionate exchanges. The talk raged on about politics and economics and social conditions with little regard for politeness or amenities, but when someone really had something to offer, he was given total attention—just as he was exuberantly ridiculed if he tried to showboat.

As the years went on and I came to know my colleagues (and

the situations) better, I inevitably lost some of my original virginal enthusiasm. When I became head of the professional organization I tried to impose a little order; the informality and spontaneity that so intrigued me at the start later seemed to run too much toward improvisation and shallow judgments. I pushed for the discipline of prepared papers and more organized debates rather than the constant hurly-burly of those early days of the new profession. But there was no mistaking the camaraderie and the high level of dedication and the fine minds that were as quick in subtle debate as they were in the late-night poker games.

All in all, it was a fine time to break into the field of Jewish communal service. The awesome responsibilities engendered by the Holocaust shook the American Jewish community out of its lethargy and created new tasks and opportunities for a generation of professionals toughened first by the Depression and then by the war. I was lucky enough to become deeply involved immediately in two of the movements that gripped the imagination of the Jewish community at that time: providing leadership for the early phases of the civil rights movement and meeting the challenge of Jewish culture and education. (A third, even more absorbing and demanding responsibility, the whole complex of activities in relation to Israel, came later.)

CIVIL RIGHTS CAMPAIGNS

Civil rights activities in the early years, following World War II, mostly meant FEP (Fair Employment Practices) legislation. For me, that involved close association with the Community Relations Board, created by act of City Council in 1945, the year I joined the staff of the Jewish Community Council. It was the first intergroup agency in the country to be established as a direct function of city government. The executive director was Frank Baldau, who came to the post on the recommendation of my uncle, Abe Rubin, for whom Frank had worked during the war on

problems of employee relations at the National Smelting plant. It was therefore natural for the two of us to work closely together, with constant help from Harry Barron and a newcomer to town who quickly became a key leader—Charles Lucas. Charley was the newly appointed director of the local chapter of the NAACP. He too was an escapee from education, having come to Cleveland from downstate, where he had been a school principal.

We were agreed that Brotherhood Weeks and exchanges in pulpits and goodwill meetings were totally inadequate to deal with the rugged human relations problems that began to surface violently after the war ended. Even creating a better "climate of opinion" (one of the catch phrases of the day) proved unproductive. That became clear when we asked the management of a leading department store to put on one colored salesperson (no one used the term "black" then)—just one! and station her on a top floor, where she would hardly be visible. Even that ridiculously modest step toward integration was unacceptable. "Our customers won't have it," we were told. An inner ring suburban school superintendent, requested to open his hiring to Negroes, responded, "We're not ready for that yet." The first month I was on the job, Charley and I were asked not to come back by the owner of a downtown restaurant we had dropped into for lunch.

Nor were the problems limited to color. Jews were effectively blocked from buying homes in the so-called Club District of Shaker Heights, east of Warrensville Center Road, through clever use of the Van Sweringen restrictions. There were other fairly substantial islands of exclusion, notably in the Forest Hills area of Cleveland Heights, north of Mayfield Road. Jobs were also erratically closed to Jews. They faced nothing like the discrimination confronting blacks but there were numerous blatant examples of exclusion both in initial employment and even more in promotion. No one in those days thought much about discrimination against women and older people; that was still in the future.

We mapped out strategy for legislation on both the city and state fronts. Sometimes the campaigns got in each other's way. The city fathers were fond of telling us that enacting FEP was a

state responsibility since Cleveland could hardly be expected to place restrictions on its business sector when the suburbs would have no such complications. On the other hand, the legislators in Columbus, particularly those from downstate, were fond of advising us that *they* had no problem (which usually meant they had no resident blacks or Jews), so why should they do Cleveland's work for it? We were all green as grass, as was everybody else throughout the country, and not always adept in overcoming such roadblocks. But gradually we began to pick up speed. I enlisted the help of the national agencies, who came through splendidly. The American Jewish Congress supplied us with first-rate legal draftsmanship in what was then a virginal field; the American Jewish Committee lent us staff members to do field work under our direction throughout the state, particularly in the 1949 campaign; the Anti-Defamation League supplied us with much campaign material.

But the coordination and day-by-day leadership, quite properly, had to be local. We began to build up quite a following. A troika for operations gradually emerged in our three offices (Jewish Community Council, NAACP, Community Relations Board) but grand strategy was planned in the Schofield Building, where Dr. D. R. Sharpe, the executive director of the Cleveland Baptist Association, had his office. What a supercharged little guy D.R. was! He had been a student and disciple of Dr. Walter Rauschenbusch, the philosopher and founder of the Social Gospel movement within Protestantism, and was fearless and at times brash in his determination to stamp out injustice. He was short and thin, but a giant in action—absolutely indefatigable and unfailingly cheerful. Almost totally deaf, he kept his hearing aid turned to such a high level that it occasionally drowned out conversation by its high pitched whistling, and he sometimes went on making speeches while we conferred sotto voce, at the same time nodding in agreement with what he was saying. We were his boys and we loved him.

Joining the inner circle much of the time were Chester Gray, then an important executive in the state administration and later one of the key figures in civil rights enforcement; Roosevelt

Dickey, assistant director of the Community Relations Board, a quiet, steady, reliable colleague, who later became one of the founding members of the Ohio Civil Rights Commission; and Sam Weisberg, who took over all the logistical chores and much of the fundraising. Charley became our front man and lobbyist and I became the general strategist. We made quite a team.

On the local front, we organized on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis, planning well publicized hearings, conducting interviews with the papers, and building up a good working relationship with the mayor, Thomas Burke. We generated so much neighborhood activity and pressure on councilmen (except those on the West Side, where we never made much progress) that by 1948 we were seriously hoping to pass a local Fair Employment Practices ordinance.

But we were, temporarily, outmaneuvered. The Chamber of Commerce suddenly announced that it would sponsor a voluntary plan to promote fair employment practices. It was an unbeatable gambit. We had met with representatives of the Chamber a number of times, seeking their cooperation, and had been politely enough received, particularly by Bill Ong, a top executive with American Steel and Wire, who headed the Chamber's Committee on Racial Relations. But now Ong pulled the rug out from under us, in the most friendly and (to us) hateful way. He had a smile I shall never forget. It was more like a grimace, calling for a joyous response, but then disappearing instantly with no residue of good feeling, leaving its victim with a beginning grin suddenly responding to nothing at all. How much more American it would be, he argued, to allow business to do the job itself without compulsion, rather than to seek to impose behavior by decree. We mustered all kinds of counter arguments, of course. We were not trying to impose anything, we said. All we were asking for was equality of opportunity. There is always room for education, we agreed, but society has some responsibility, if efforts at education fail, to protect its citizens from discrimination. And so on.

Our counter arguments didn't work. City Council was only too happy to postpone the legislation indefinitely to give the Chamber a chance to demonstrate whether its plan would fly. And I

must say the Chamber really tried. They put a full-time staff to work and provided a generous budget. In the "demonstration year" that followed, they made earnest attempts to work with recalcitrant employers and invited cooperation, at least formally, from everybody, including us.

But their plan didn't work. In one of the more dramatic moments in Cleveland's legislative history, one Monday night in January, 1950, representatives of the Chamber of Commerce joined with representatives of our overall organization, now named the Cleveland Committee for FEP, to ask City Council to expand the mandate of the Community Relations Board by providing it with enforcement powers to combat discrimination in employment. It was an unprecedented development. Nowhere up to that time had business officially joined with community groups in asking for legislation with enforcement powers. It was not an individual liberal businessman petitioning; it was organized business as a whole.

The joint appearance was the climax of intensive negotiations during a long weekend of meetings before the decisive Monday night. We met for hours with representatives of the Chamber, hammering out the proposed legislation in a give-and-take manner. City Council was relieved that controversy was now out of the issue and, as old-time councilman Herman Finkle remarked, "If you two agree, why should we here hesitate?" It was our first major victory.

The state took longer. That was a surprise because we had built up such high hopes after the 1948 election. Harry Truman's astonishing victory swept a number of Ohio Democrats into office riding on his coattails. As a consequence, the legislature shifted from a Republican to a Democratic majority. Since our political strength lay with the Democrats, we were mightily encouraged. For good measure, Frank Lausche, a Democrat, was elected governor, so we really thought we had a fine chance to win.

Our state campaign was far more intensive and exciting than the city campaign. We built up a formal organization, the Ohio Committee for Fair Employment Practices (later, the Ohio Committee for Civil Rights) with chapters throughout the state.

And we had first-rate turnouts at our many meetings in Columbus during the legislative season.

Every city of any size—and many of the smaller ones like Oberlin, where there was an active college chapter—had its own affiliated organization, each entitled to designate a vice-president. Ted Berry, city councilman and later mayor of Cincinnati, served for much of the period as our chairman but the direction of the state campaign remained with us in Cleveland. I would knock out weekly bulletins on campaign developments from information supplied by Charley Lucas upon his return each Thursday from Columbus, and Sam Weisberg had them artistically duplicated and sent out all over the state. Toward the end of each week we held our bull sessions in D.R.'s office and mapped out the next steps in the campaign. Financing came from an imaginative "Pass the Buck" campaign, with modest donations of "bucks" from all over the state and, in larger amounts, from labor. On the expense side, we ran a pretty tight ship, with only two full-time employees. Ben Goldman of Springfield was state director; he later astounded everyone by being elected judge of Common Pleas Court in his conservative home town, although he was both Jewish and an acknowledged liberal. Our secretary and general girl Friday was Donna Bender, a brilliant Oberlin graduate who had visited our offices on a field trip and spent the summer learning typing and shorthand to equip herself for FEP responsibilities. Idealism ran high in our campaigns.

Some of the experiences in Columbus were unforgettable. One legislator, asked to explain his opposition, offered the simplest possible response: "We got enough laws." When asked, "Then what are you doing here?" his retort was logical: "To see that we don't get any more." He voted "no" so regularly that it came as a surprise when he voted "aye" on a motion to adjourn.

Another incident demonstrated how weak are appeals to reason. We mounted elaborate testimony at committee hearings, no doubt frequently amassing far more evidence than the legislators could use. Sometimes we played into our opponents' hands by keeping hearings going to present every possible argument when forcing the issue more quickly would have been wiser. We always

put a heavy emphasis on religious testimony, bringing in top figures from almost every important communion to demonstrate that those who had religious commitments were morally obligated to support the legislation. We were aiming primarily at the rural representatives, who often were heavily involved in their church affairs. One legislator listened carefully to all the top religious figures and then, after weeks of such exposure, delivered himself of his reason for turning us down. Opposition was a requirement, he said, dictated by John 10:10: "I am come so they might have life and have it more abundantly." No one could figure out the relevance of that quotation to the political situation at hand, but it became a cliché among us in irreverent or exhausted moments to turn down each other's simplest requests by pronouncing "John 10:10." It saved all the trouble of rational explanation.

The best rejoinder to our Bible quoting opponent was furnished not by a religious personality but by Thurgood Marshall, then of the NAACP national office, who came to testify for us one day. He didn't confine himself exclusively to logical argument, though he was masterful at that too. He simply moved over, big man that he was, and towered majestically over the legislator while delivering himself of some down-to-earth arguments adapted to the psychology of a small town bigot, spoken in a lingo lightly spiced with satiric "darky" overtones, even though Thurgood Marshall at all other times spoke impeccable English.

Some of the opposition was far more sophisticated. The toughest was a small group of veteran senators from Cincinnati who carried tremendous prestige in the legislature and were masters of legislative maneuver. They were adamantly and cleverly opposed to us. Nevertheless, after months of painful attention to all the ins and outs of legislative procedures, we felt we were prepared to deal with them. We got through the various committees, always by close votes, and then came the day when House Bill 106 actually came to the floor. I shall never forget the unbearable suspense of following the roll call that day. After all those months of preparation, with dozens of trips to Columbus in every sort of weather conditions—one of which wound up in a ditch one icy

night driving home—and after all the conferences with representatives, we were at last at the moment of truth. In those days sixty-seven votes were needed to pass legislation in the House. There was no electric "scoreboard" in the legislature then and we lived and died with each shouted "aye" and "nay," checking the responses against forecasts in our previously prepared score sheets. Against all protocol, the jammed galleries broke into wild applause when we wound up with seventy-one votes—four more than we needed for passage.

We were high when we drove home that night, with D.R. leading the boisterous singing and all of us making plans for follow-up victories in the fields of housing and public accommodations now that we were a shoo-in for passage in employment. Alas, we had counted our chickens long before they were hatched. We needed seventeen votes in the Senate, which we thought on the basis of careful analysis would be easy. But on the crucial vote, we got only fifteen when two Democratic senators who were pledged to us deserted without warning. We were out-maneuvered again; the opposition no doubt had them in the bag all along.

It would be ten years before the legislation actually passed, in 1959, quickly followed by other legislative victories. But 1949 was not a complete defeat. We had welded an organization that stood up well over the years and I have no doubt that the campaigns we waged, like similar ones throughout the country, laid the basis for the dramatic civil rights breakthroughs that followed in the next decade.

HOUSING PROBLEMS

Sometimes the work required more direct action than the slow process of legislation. Tempers ran high during the early attempts to break out of the inner-city ghetto; occasionally the situation became explosive. One of the most dramatic confrontations was in the extreme southeast corner of the city, when the first black bought a house on Walden Avenue, off Lee Road. The largely

ethnic neighborhood was outraged, particularly when attempts to buy the house back (at a profit!) failed. Every night protest meetings erupted spontaneously on the street. Sometimes the complaints were bitter: "Why do they want to go where they're not wanted?" More often they were prefaced by disclaimers about prejudice: "Why, I grew up among them and played with them just like anybody else, but. . . ." Always there were prophecies that prices would tumble, life savings would be liquidated and in the resultant panic, all standards would go to hell. So fixed were such convictions that even the popular Mayor Thomas Burke found himself booed unmercifully when he addressed a neighborhood meeting at one of the churches, pleading for restraint.

The following excerpt from a memorandum I wrote at the time (July, 1952) gives some of the flavor of those excited meetings:

MAYOR: My fellow Americans . . . . (PROLONGED BOOS) If you want me to leave, I'll be glad to. (DIMINISHING BOOS) I am not unsympathetic with your situation, but I should like to pose one question: What would you do if you were mayor and had sworn to enforce the law?

VOICE: *You* take him for your neighbor.

MAYOR: That's not an answer.

VOICE: In Georgia it is.

MAYOR: If you say "get out" to this man, he can say "get out" to you. If I can make him move, I can make you move. Would you move if I asked you to?

VOICE: If I wasn't wanted here, I would. (APPLAUSE)

MAYOR: What would you do if you were mayor?

VOICE: Stop being a mayor. Be a man! (APPLAUSE) There are many ways to skin a cat. Get him out.

The same team that ran the legislative campaigns provided most of the leadership working for acceptance of new neighbors. We tried to ensure adequate police protection, to advise the daring newcomers sympathetically but realistically and provide them with moral support, to muster whatever liberal resources could be found in the neighborhood, and to secure the active backing of the media. We never initiated neighborhood change; we opposed

both "block busting" and discrimination. We argued for the inevitability of change and the good sense of accepting it gracefully. The neighborhoods where resistance was most fierce were the ones that most quickly converted from all white to all black. The gloomy predictions of instant change and panic made for self-fulfilling prophecies.

In areas like the Heights, on the other hand, integration was more gradual and peaceful. Resistance in the more Jewish neighborhoods, though often deep, was almost never violent, and it was vastly easier to locate those who were on the side of the angels. Perhaps the most dramatic case was when Dr. Kenneth Clement, a well-known black surgeon who was for a time the closest associate of Mayor Carl Stokes, moved into University Heights. Always foresighted and highly organized, Clement called on us to enlist our help *before* moving in—a most unusual precaution. He would be the first black homeowner in the area and no one knew what might happen. One of our first contacts was with Julius (Julie) Kravitz, who lived almost directly across the street. Julie became a key figure in an intensive activity that began by identifying each neighbor as potential friend or opponent. Then teams were set up to work on a "one-on-one" basis with recalcitrant neighbors to disarm them, and with friendly neighbors to solicit their active support. The teams also helped combat wild rumors, and welcomed the newcomers to the point where they were deluged with cakes and invitations. What a tragic irony that Julie, who throughout his life devoted himself, among other good deeds, so cheerfully and constructively to heading off violence, was himself years later the victim of a cruel and senseless homicide.

Both the Jewish Community Council and later the Jewish Community Federation backed up our efforts vigorously and energetically. But of course not all individuals were supportive. Our work was occasionally strongly resented. Sometimes I personally was given far more credit (or blame) than I deserved, since those who are prejudiced see dark and powerful conspiracies everywhere. The president of the Federation was once strongly urged by a well-known and influential figure in the general community to fire me because I had allegedly integrated a building on Euclid

and 79th Street. I made an appointment with my critic on the naive assumption that I could at least correct his understanding of the facts if I could not convert him. But I hardly got a chance to say anything. Instead, I was treated to a passionate denunciation that lasted for thirty-five minutes as timed by the electric clock over the excited speaker's head. The rambling monologue featured fulsome praise for the conservative philosopher and novelist Ayn Rand, plus a detailed description of all the speaker had already done and could do for the blacks if they only understood their role better.

In a way, the visit did some good after all, though I certainly never converted my critic. Evidently he so exhausted himself and got such relief in the process that he wound up informing me fairly quietly that my intentions were no doubt decent enough but my judgment was abominably awry. But I had better comfort than that. I was told that Max Simon, who was then the president of Federation and totally dedicated to human rights, had listened to the complaint against me and had quietly responded, "Maybe if Sidney had not worked for desegregation, I would have been interested in firing him, but not if he did what you accuse him of."

COMMUNITY RELATIONS WORK

Civil rights were not our only concern. Even in legislation we had other interests. The immigration laws were of particular concern, with the McCarran-Walter Act reflecting our national tendency toward xenophobia through its perpetuation of the so-called national origins system. I had the pleasure of persuading Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver to testify for liberalization of the law and then drafting his testimony, which he used almost as I had put it together.

Working with Rabbi Silver was an experience. He was of course an absolutely brilliant orator, but what is perhaps less well known, he was also a magnificent listener. It is not a common

combination. He did not suffer fools gladly, but if you had something to say and were organized well enough not to waste his time, you had his full attention. He would turn those penetrating eyes on you so powerfully that his concentration was almost palpable; it was a creative act to explain to him the intricacies of some legislative proposal that he had not had time to study for himself. He was also invaluable in our civil rights work as well as in a variety of communal undertakings. I particularly remember going with him to break the good news to Nat Howard, the former editor of the *Cleveland News*, that he was the first winner of our Spencer Irwin Award, given in memory of the *Plain Dealer* foreign news editor. The award was a trip to Israel. Eisenhower and Stevenson had just been nominated for the presidency and during the luncheon chitchat, I was the Stevenson supporter in the face of two such formidable Republicans. Both men were far more sensitive to Stevenson's weaknesses than I, enthralled as I was by his power over words, and maybe I was more sensitive to Eisenhower's weaknesses than they were. Or more likely, Silver was as always the political realist. No minds were changed at that luncheon, but the table talk was elegant.

I spent a lot of time, much of it quite uselessly, in dealing with "incidents." The memory of Father Coughlin and his vicious anti-Semitic broadcasts was still vivid and the legacy of the Hitler period lay so heavily on us that we were more exercised than perhaps we should have been over the antics of petty bigots and racketeers of prejudice. Before 1945 much of the work in the field was the responsibility of the so-called League for Human Rights, a "front" organization, formally non-sectarian but primarily designed to protect the Jewish community. Throughout its history it was under the direction of as tough a warrior as I have ever met—Grace Meyette. She had some of the dedication and determination and drive of a Golda Meir without her charm and warmth and tremendous vision. Originally the League had been organized to conduct the boycott of Nazi goods but later its mandate was expanded to combat anti-Semitism in general. It went out of existence with the formation of the Council's Community Relations Committee (CRC) in 1945, in accordance with the new determi-

nation to discard the front groups that the Jewish community of an earlier day, still defensive and apologetic, had felt it necessary to create. Such fronts were psychologically in the tradition of *shtatlonis* in the old country—the system whereby the key decisions of the community were made by an elite that operated quietly behind the scenes. The distorted logic of the times was that it was best to have a non-Jew like Meyette pleading a Jewish cause, just as in FEP work we began with the assumption that we had to have a white lobbyist to speak for essentially black interests. It was only belatedly, and out of financial necessity, that we assigned our own Charles Lucas to lobbying duties. His splendid record totally demolished our defensive assumptions. The time had now come for more democratic and direct action and the League's functions were turned over to the newly formed CRC. A place was found for Grace as assistant director of the Community Relations Board, but by this time she was unwell and sat in her office chain smoking, lost in memories of earlier days when she ran her own agency and "told it like it was" to the whole tribe of bigots, whom she gloried in fighting.

Much of my time was spent on school problems. Here at last I was on my own home ground. I probably appeared to some of the school superintendents as either a nuisance or a radical with my pleadings for more emphasis on intergroup understanding, but in light of later developments, with the courts castigating the schools for their rigid conservatism, my work in retrospect seems reasonable to the point of being timid.

Soon after leaving teaching, I was invited by Cleveland Superintendent of Schools Charles Lake to address a meeting of principals. He introduced me in his dry manner, in only partly humorous fashion: "Our employees in this auditorium are being paid an average of about $50 a day. They're missing half a day to come down here and listen to you, so it costs us about $25 a head. There are a hundred of them here. You got anything to say that's worth $2500 to us?" There's nothing like a warm introduction to make a fellow feel right at home!

Many of the school problems had to do with church-state rela-

tionships. Particularly in the outer suburbs, the schools tended to be church oriented, and they had difficulty adjusting to the sudden influx of Jewish students, who were sensitive about a Christian emphasis in the classroom. The problems became particularly evident during the Christmas season, when some of the Jewish students and more of their parents felt uncomfortable with the crèches and religious hymns so prevalent at that time of year. On the other hand, the early settlers felt "they" were depriving the children of their Christmas—and besides, what was so wrong about singing great music like "Silent Night?"

My initial reaction was to urge a seasonal celebration, observing both Christmas and Hanukkah in a predominantly cultural way and playing down the religious element of both holidays. Working with a group of teachers, I developed a manual on appropriate materials and methods of conducting joint celebrations. It was widely distributed both locally and nationally.

But it turned out to be a losing proposition. There was a big national conference in the late forties on such seasonal celebrations, and I was invited to be a participant, since the work in Cleveland had received national attention. The high point of that conference, which was really my debut on the national scene, was my debate with Leo Pfeffer. He was then a leading staff member of the American Jewish Congress' legal department and was soon to become its director. He was, and still is, an outstanding authority in the country on problems of church-state relationships, the author of definitive volumes on that subject, and perhaps the major pleader before the United States Supreme Court of crucial test cases on that issue.

The conference soon boiled down to a confrontation between the two of us. I made a fervent plea for continuing and expanding experiments with joint Christmas-Hanukkah celebrations and Leo demanded their complete elimination. It was a case of David versus Goliath—the youthful and unknown newcomer from Cleveland against the veteran giant. Only in this case Goliath won, overwhelmingly. With much patience and even good will, Leo demolished my arguments. If you play down the religious

element of the holidays, he argued, you distort them; if you present them with integrity as religious events, they have no legitimate place in the public schools.

I had to acknowledge the cogency of the argument. I had been invited by Boyd Purvis, the highly cooperative principal at that time of Roxboro Junior High School, to observe what he proudly described as a model seder, presumably presented as a result of the program I had been advocating. It turned out to be a well-intentioned monstrosity. The seder was conducted with a hushed reverence more fitting for a Good Friday service. The experience had already raised doubts in my mind about the appropriateness of religious observances in the public schools.

The conference had no doubts. It voted overwhelmingly against joint celebrations. I had the embarrassing duty, on returning to Cleveland, of visiting the school systems and in effect saying, "Signals over."

But the trip was far from a total loss; actually, it was a tremendous learning experience. I was to return to the national arena many times for debates on various issues, but now I was armed with a far better understanding of the forces at play within the community as a whole. Some of those debates were again with Leo, who became one of my dear friends. With his bald head and thick glasses and somewhat spluttering speech it was not always evident at first that this was a rare spirit—encyclopedic in his knowledge, rapier-like in his logic, a formidable opponent but a generous antagonist, delighting in a joint search for truth. No wonder, after his brilliant career with the American Jewish Congress, that he became an overwhelmingly popular professor at Long Island University.

Throughout my professional career, concerns and activities relating to Israel were central to community activity. But in the early days, those concerns absorbed less of my professional energy. Part of the reason was that before the merger with Federation Harry Barron played a far more major role in that area than I; partly it was because problems in the Mideast were not yet as dominant as they later became.

Before the establishment of Israel in 1948 the United Nations

and Great Britain were the major actors in the Mideast drama. The American influence was not yet as decisive as it was to become, so there was less emphasis on work with Congress and the White House. Those were the days of successive British "white papers" and innumerable international missions of enquiry, culminating finally in England's handing back its mandate over Palestine to the United Nations and washing its hands of the entire situation. The drama was stark and the situation volatile.

Mass meetings were frequent in those days, most of them protesting British cruelty in closing the gates of immigration into Palestine to the tragic refugees from Hitler's concentration camps on the absurd assumption that the "absorptive capacity" of the land had been reached. I particularly remember a jammed "Save the United Nations" meeting we sponsored at Music Hall, expressing community indignation that the mandatory promise to make Palestine a homeland for the Jewish people had not been kept, and calling on the United Nations to redeem that old pledge. Those were the days when the United Nations was still the hope of the Western world. More particularly, it was the organization that had to validate the establishment of a Jewish state. The emergence of new nations was not yet a common experience, nor was our playing a role on the world stage yet as commonplace as it later became. Events had the extra magic created by distance in those days before jet planes and satellite communications and TV made everything into instant and familiar happenings. Also, a major share of the day-to-day work of molding public opinion and directing political action was assumed by the various Zionist organizations rather than by the organized local Jewish community, as became the case when the men's Zionist organizations declined.

But there was still plenty of responsibility and excitement. It's almost impossible to recapture the heady sense of history being made in that remarkable year of 1948, when the State of Israel was first proclaimed. It was a watershed event for the organized Jewish communities, now faced by the staggering challenges of worldwide responsibility that have engrossed them ever since.

The later television scripts and propaganda pieces that have

tried to recreate the atmosphere of those days of decision seem thin, either hopelessly inadequate or falsely romantic. The reality is that most of us were scared stiff about the possible consequences of statehood. The Arab opposition seemed so overwhelming and their forces so formidable that we feared that all the slow constructive work of the past generations and our hopes for the future would be drowned in one savage blood bath. Even so totally dedicated and fervent a Zionist as Ezra Shapiro shared the anxious hope that in view of dire warnings of disaster, from America and other Western nations, Ben Gurion would delay the proclamation of the state until the situation calmed down a bit.

He didn't, and when he so fearlessly announced the creation of Israel on that memorable May day, the mood changed instantly. The most emotion-packed meeting I have ever attended took place almost spontaneously the night the state was proclaimed, under the sponsorship of our Jewish Community Council. It was held at The Temple on East 105th Street, with no time for much planning or even advance notice, except for bulletins on the radio and many telephone calls. It was announced for eight o'clock, but we had to close the doors at 7:30 because the place was already packed. It was the only community meeting in my time that began *before*, and considerably before, its announced starting time. I hardly remember the details of that meeting, which involved many speakers, much singing, and high emotion. But I do remember, when the meeting was over, the dancing on Ansel Road, with additional *horas* spilling over onto East 105th Street.

And no wonder! All these decades later I have still not recovered from the magic of living at a time when there actually is a Jewish state. So much of my youth was spent in movements dedicated to achieving the more modest goal of a "homeland," with few of us really believing that we would live to see even that accomplished. I still cluck at the matter-of-fact acceptance of the existence of the State of Israel by a generation that never knew of proposals for partition and commissions of inquiry and all the ghastly rigmarole of the years before 1948. Despite all the tragedies and disappointments still to come, Ben Gurion's May 15 dec-

laration of independence was the spectacular high point of Jewish history in our time. Among other effects, it reshaped Jewish communal service everywhere.

INTERNAL RELATIONS

Another crucial part of the work of the Council was our internal relations department, which dealt with such matters as Jewish culture, community organization, and promoting and enforcing certain kinds of community disciplines.

The most satisfying work was on the cultural front, where I had the major responsibility in the early years, before turning over much of the work to a new member of our expanded staff, Sophie Nehamkin. We ran four Jewish Arts Festivals, aimed at bringing to the community each year the best in Jewish drama and music and dance. Typically, they were one-night performances either at Severance Hall or Music Hall, featuring some nationally known singer or chorus or instrumentalist—or all three—in a program of Jewish content. Usually there was also a dramatization, sometimes in the form of a cantata. The biggest success was "What is Torah?" done in the hopeful days when such presentations as "Ballad for Americans" and "The Lonesome Train" were popular in the general community.

The two key figures in mounting the Arts Festivals were Cantor Saul Meisels and Phil Steinberg. Saul was the tireless arts impresario. With a rare combination of high artistic standards and a talent for judicious *shnorring*, he knew everybody in the arts world and shamelessly bullied them into coming to Cleveland, often for modest fees. He was unsparing in his devotion to detail, attending—or more often calling—dozens of meetings, big and little, without complaint. Phil was the promoter and general manager, fumigating the administrative meetings with his inevitable cigars and making up for it by his unruffled optimism in the

face of all difficulties. We nearly always sold out the house—quite an undertaking in itself—and managed for the most part to put on a creditable show.

Even more remarkable was the work of the Yiddish Cultural Committee. Here too, there was a presiding duo, this time made up of Sara Halperin and Aaron Resnick. Short, plump, her red hair turning gray, Sara was the perfect model of qualities needed to keep a Jewish organization lively and creative. Her home was a perpetual open house for anyone concerned with Jewish causes, Jewish culture in general and Yiddish culture in particular. Her husband Moe, one-half of the architectural firm of Braverman and Halperin, matched Sara in his dedication to all good causes but had a sly, quiet, impish wit that was a perfect foil for Sara's serious and indefatigable dedication. He had a rare and authentically Jewish knack for deflating life's tragedies with a kind of Sholom Aleichem humor. Once I remember him sighing, "Ay, how lovely the Depression was! A man had time to do a little reading and a little painting; no one bothered him!" His partner, Sig Braverman, and his wife Libby formed another couple who were always leaders in community activities, particularly cultural ones. Sig's humor, unlike Moe's, was sharp, sophisticated and penetrating; he was the best deflater of pretense and pomposity I have ever met. Aaron Resnick was the philosopher and speech-maker of the Yiddish Cultural Committee and sometimes of the Jewish Community Council as a whole. He never missed a meeting and could be counted on to speak up on every issue, usually in Yiddish as a matter of principle, although he was perfectly at home in English.

With such devoted lay backing, the Committee was able to mount many projects designed to promote Yiddish culture. The brothers Phil Nashkin and Sam Neshkin had as much fun starring in the plays of the revived Yiddish theater as they did in confusing the community with variant spellings of their own family name. The Committee also put on a series of evenings honoring distinguished stars of Yiddish literature—Sholom Aleichem, Abraham Reisen and David Pinski, both of whom appeared in person, H. Leivick, and others. Maurice Samuel, certainly one of the outstanding orators and intellects of the generation, was guest

speaker on the night devoted to Sholom Aleichem and, as he remarked, for one of the few times in his life made a formal speech in Yiddish.

The Yiddish Cultural Committee also indirectly caused the greatest internal controversy during the life of the Jewish Community Council. One of the active constituents of the Committee was the Jewish People's Fraternal Order, represented by their president, Abraham Eleff. Eleff spoke an elegant Yiddish and quite good English; he was a faithful member of the Committee and turned out the membership of his organization in satisfying numbers at the various community events. But the Cold War had begun and, largely at the insistence of the American Jewish Committee, a national demand arose to expel the JPFO from overall Jewish communal organizations on the charge that it was a creature of the Communist Party, subject to its discipline and not genuinely dedicated to Jewish goals. There was turmoil in the Council. On the one hand, a patient examination of the facts indicated that nationally and organizationally the charges were probably valid; on the other hand, in Cleveland both Eleff and the organization as a whole had behaved properly and constructively. What to do? The issue dragged on for months because of a reluctance to yield to the intolerant spirit of the times and a desire to judge the case on its local merits. This summary of the two opposing points of view, written at the time, reflects the difficulty of arriving at a decision:

> Mr. Eleff expressed his organization's great pride in the program of the Jewish Community Council and referred to the JPFO's record of support unmarred by any breach of discipline. He deplored the possible expulsion of his group as delivering a severe blow to the unity of the Jewish community which the JCC ought to prize highly. He concluded with a plea that the JCC not yield to the 'reactionary influences of McCarthyism' and that it should continue to function as the representative of all points of view in the community.
>
> Mr. Resnick traced the history of activity in the JPFO throughout the period since the establishment of the Jewish Community Council and concluded that its shifting position on a great many

> questions was the best indication that it was not a bona fide Jewish organization but was completely controlled by another organization whose chief concern was not with Jewish life. He referred by way of illustration to the changing attitudes of the JPFO toward President Roosevelt and toward Germany during the years of the German-Russian pact, and concluded that membership in the Jewish Community Council must be limited to those organizations whose orientation is toward Jewish life.

The result was probably inevitable: the JPFO and the dignified Mr. Eleff were excluded from the Council.

Other attempts to achieve order and discipline in Jewish life had happier results. There was unseemly competition in the forties among the *mohelim* (ritual circumcisers). After many meetings with them featuring colorful mutual recriminations, we were able to work out a code of business practices, including advertising procedures, that restored dignity to the profession. Some cemetery associations and some funeral directors engaged in practices that were felt to be out of line with Jewish tradition; again, after many meetings, we were able to work out an agreed code of practices. We established an Arbitration and Conciliation Court, presided over for years with great joy and devotion, as well as considerable officiousness, by Charles Auerbach, where disputes involving specifically Jewish issues, not merely Jewish individuals, could be tried without resort to the public courts.

By far the most interesting problem in this area, with the most lasting results, had to do with the kosher meat trade. During the war and immediately thereafter it was a mess. The shortage of meat, vividly remembered by all those who treasured the red stamps in the wartime ration books, increased the temptation to sell as kosher substantial amounts of meat that had not gone through the proper ritual procedures. Matters became scandalously public when one of the unions resorted to strong-arm tactics, including several bombings that were eagerly played up by the press.

On almost my first day on the job, after I finally left teaching permanently, I was collared by the beloved Julius Schweid, then the treasurer of the Jewish Community Council and a venerable

and sweet-natured old gentleman who exemplified the best in traditional Judaism. "The most important job you have," he instructed me, "is to bring some order into the kosher trade. Get to it."

For two years thereafter I devoted so much of my working time to the problem that Sig Braverman gleefully dubbed me "the Kashruth Kid." There were at that time sixty-seven kosher butcher shops in town, the vast majority of them little storefronts strung thickly along East 105th Street, "Superior Through," and the Kinsman area. Many of them were run by wholly committed Orthodox butchers who needed no supervision, although many of them could have used a lot of help in making their premises more modern and less pungent. But some of the proprietors, particularly the younger ones, had drifted into the trade without any real commitment and certainly needed supervision. Our remedy was to draw up a Code of Regulations and ask the butchers to sign a written agreement to abide by it and to agree that their premises were open at all times to inspection by the community. The community in return would pay for the inspectors and administer the program. The rabbis would be responsible for determining religious disputes that might arise.

The resistance was monumental. One of the butchers, who later became a totally committed advocate of the inspection system, threatened that he would lock himself into his freezer before he would submit to such persecution, the kind, he insisted, he had run away from in Russia. Others pledged equally firm and eternal resistance. But one by one they signed up, as the community put pressure on them through their customers. What emerged was a Kashruth Board, still in existence more than thirty years later, unique in the country in its method of communal financing and in the joint cooperation of rabbis, butchers, slaughterers and union officials.

Some of my most exotic memories are of my biweekly meetings with three old men who were appointed as the team of inspectors. Mr. Lamden must have been close to eighty at the time, but he took my arm and helped me across the street as we went from shop to shop in the early, contentious days; Mr. Goldman was

peppy and radiated good cheer and good will; Mr. Rosen was the tough inspector, putting up with no nonsense from the butchers. His colorful English was a joy to hear. "Mr. S.," he confided to me once in reference to a butcher who was cross-eyed, with a huge nose and a stentorian voice free of all inhibition, "Mr. S. is a *very attraction boy*!" It was a perfect description. And rarely in my community work have I heard more passionate debates, conducted in English, Yiddish, and a mixture of both, than in the long sessions of the Kashruth Board, as all sections of the industry debated and amended a Code of Regulations that has stood up well all these years in the face of a bewildering variety of problems.

All in all, my six years at the Jewish Community Council were crowded and richly satisfying. I had the good fortune of working with a fine teacher, Harry Barron, who gave me my head completely, and under three remarkable presidents. I have already described the first, Ezra Shapiro. Jerome Curtis, who succeeded him, was universally admired for his absolute integrity and total devotion to communal work. I had known him—or more precisely, mostly about him—since my childhood, because Jerry had been a youth leader in almost every worthwhile cause. As an adult, he made good on his early promise by leadership on both the local and the national scene. It was a major loss to the community when almost overnight he dropped out of everything, some years later.

The last president of the Jewish Community Council was Irving Kane. With the exception of Rabbi Silver, he was in his time probably the best known Cleveland community leader throughout the world. Irving is one of the most complicated and fascinating personalities I have ever met, a man of intriguing paradoxes. As president of the Council he was the zealous proponent of liberal and unpopular causes, a passionate defender of the little guy. He took a particular joy in eloquently translating Aaron Resnick's Yiddish speeches into English. At the same time, Irv drove a Jaguar and obviously had a taste for the good things in life. He was an extraordinarily brilliant speaker, who exuded charm and self-confidence and informality from the platform, but he suf-

fered the tortures of hell before giving a major address. Usually, and it seemed to the rest of us, needlessly, he worried every presentation down to the last comma. He was the warmest and most faithful of friends but he could be devastating in his quips. Detesting cliches and loving new twists of language, his humor sometimes took on a cutting edge—but if it did, he berated himself immediately and worried whether he had hurt anyone's feelings. He was probably president of more important organizations than any other Clevelander—head of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council, the Council of Jewish Federations, and the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee, and honorary vice-chairman of the American Joint Distribution Committee, among many other major offices. But those distinctions never kept him from accepting responsibilities and assignments that were not glamorous. Until slowed down by health problems, he was a charming figure at almost every local, national and international gathering and it was a joy to work with him.

During my six years with the Community Council it grew from a one-man outfit to a staff of five full-time professionals with greatly expanded operations and responsibilities. But its very success made it inevitable that it could not continue in the form we knew. As Council constantly expanded its mandate, questions inevitably arose as to whether it was duplicating the work of the Jewish Welfare Federation. That there was a conflict became clear soon after I joined the staff, during the country-wide debate over a proposal known as National Advisory Budgeting. Basically, the controversy had to do with how to apportion equitably the funds raised in the annual campaigns between what was then the United Palestine Appeal and the Joint Distribution Committee, responsible for aiding refugees in the rest of the world. To over-simplify matters, the Jewish Community Council favored a larger share for the UPA, and the Welfare Federation was more oriented to the JDC. But the important point from a community organization perspective was that decisions about such matters rested with the Federation, and the attempt by the Council to make its views and its influence felt raised questions as to whether the community needed two such overall organizations.

The problem was further highlighted shortly thereafter when the Group Work Study involved the entire community in its long study process. Its recommendations led to the formation in 1948 of the present Jewish Community Center by merging the Council Educational Alliance, the Jewish Young Adult Bureau, Camp Wise and the Cultural Department of the Jewish Community Council. Some of the Council leadership had had mixed feelings about giving up this important part of the Council's work and in exchange wanted to play an active role in determining major questions about how the community should be organized. But again, historically and traditionally, planning was a responsibility of the Federation.

Even more important than these individual issues were basic changes taking place in both communal structures. Henry Zucker had become the executive director of the Welfare Federation in 1948, succeeding Samuel Goldhamer, who had served almost from the creation of the Federation at the turn of the century. Henry brought so much new vitality into the Federation, with a vast broadening of its interests and mandate, that the traditional view that the Council stood for democratic procedures in contrast to the Federation, which was conservative and limited to fiscal interests, no longer made sense. Moreover, with the loss of its cultural department, the Council was deprived of one important aspect of its work and began to look with more favor on the possibility of merger.

Nevertheless, it took four years for a committee composed of ten representatives of Federation and ten representatives of Council to agree on a plan acceptable to both sides. Even then, it barely went through. At the key meeting of the Community Council, with a two-thirds vote for merger required by its constitution, the vote was eighty-two to forty, with a shift of a single vote meaning the proposition would be defeated. There were many prophecies of doom and suggestions that the fine work of the Council would disappear when it was "swallowed up by the money-oriented Federation." The fears expressed that night were not totally dissipated for many years, and were definitively ended only at the time of the Six Day War in 1967, when the immense

outpouring of support for Israel by all sections of the community under Federation leadership made such divisions completely anachronistic.

And so the Jewish Welfare Federation and the Jewish Community Council merged in 1951, forming the present Jewish Community Federation. Even the name was a matter of dispute. At the last moment merger negotiations threatened to break down unless the name of the new organization, tentatively defined as the Jewish Welfare Federation and Council, would be changed to the Jewish Community Federation. The change was effected and the merger was accomplished. It was the beginning of a new and dynamic era for the community. It was also the beginning of a far more varied and creative career for me.

II

Mostly Professional
1951-1981

LIFE AT FEDERATION: THE LEADERSHIP

Any merger creates initial difficulties, and the merger in 1951 of the Jewish Community Council and the Jewish Welfare Federation to form the new Jewish Community Federation was no exception. The joint committee had struggled for years with broad questions of philosophy and organization before arriving at an agreement. Now it was time to put the blueprints that had been so laboriously worked out into day-by-day practical operation.

Not surprisingly, there were problems. Most of us from Council had been primarily oriented to the field of community relations and had little experience in fund-raising; the Federation had the raising of funds and planning as its central functions. No doubt my new colleagues had reservations about their sudden involvement with community relations work, which by its nature was controversial and likely to create internal tensions. Their reservations were matched by our concern about the possible inhibiting effect of fund-raising on our work.

By this time, there were only three full-time members left on the Council staff, and shortly after the merger Leonard Goldhammer, in charge of public relations, left for California. Harry Barron, Council's executive director, faced the classic dilemma of a Number One man finding himself overnight a Number Two man in a new operation, since the merger provided that Henry Zucker, the director of Federation, would head the new agency. Harry stayed on in Cleveland for several years and then left to become director of the New Orleans Federation, and subsequently the National Foundation for Jewish Culture.

That left me the sole survivor of the old regime, and I suppose that I too might have wandered off except for the extraordinary patience of Henry Zucker. I had known Hank most of my life. When we were growing up, he lived on Ostend Avenue, only a few doors away from my cousins, the Segals, whom I often visited. Those were days when neighborhoods were neighborhoods and you knew the kids on the street (and even their relatives) intimately, playing ball with them, walking to and from school, and generally sharing the close-knit life that prevailed before the automobile and increased affluence made it possible to find satisfac-

tions far beyond the neighborhoods. Later we were together in college at Western Reserve, graduating in the same class. Since we both majored in English, we shared many of the same classes. Both his wife Harriet and his sister-in-law Marion had been splendid leaders during my days at Camp Wise, so our professional relationship was founded on an unusually broad personal base.

But more than close prior contacts was involved in our relationship, which developed into a combination dubbed by some observers, both local and national, "the Cleveland one-two punch." I had the good luck in working with Hank for so many years, and later with Phil Bernstein, to be associated with two of the outstanding Jewish communal workers of the mid-century. At one point, eight of the ten largest federations in the country were headed by members of what came to be known as "Zucker's Alumni Association," or by those who had had extensive training or experience in Cleveland. When critical surveys were undertaken leading to the reconstruction of the European communities after the war, the reorganization of the Joint Distribution Committee and the Council of Jewish Federations, and the establishment of a training school in Israel for fund-raisers, Hank was chosen to conduct the studies. His was one of the voices that really counted at national forums; he was forever spinning off innovative ideas, particularly in the field of endowment funding.

It took some years for us to learn how to work together most effectively because our styles were different. Our desks, for example. His was always in perfect order with never a stray scrap of paper left overnight. Mine was not quite the total jumble of my new colleague in charge of public relations, Sol (Jim) Jaffe, but it was always in comfortable disarray. By his own description, Hank was "result oriented," and I had a weakness for the theoretical. He tended to get restless when we wandered too far from what he would frequently refer to as "the bottom line"; I would linger lovingly over "implications." Even our platform styles were contrasts: Hank was best in arguing crisp, logical, tight cases, while I acquired enough facility for more literary and theoretical presentations to earn a reputation as the "orator" of the staff.

I would prefer to think that we were complements rather than opposites. Despite what I have written, Hank certainly was first-rate at assessing communal problems and future directions, and I was not totally lacking in the practical skills of making things happen, so that any assessment that he was the "doer" and I the "thinker" is wrong on both counts. Maybe there is no more point in seeking an explanation of why things click in a working relationship than in a marriage. To borrow a phrase from another field, possibly the chemistry was right. In any case, by the time I was made executive director of Federation in 1965 and Hank became executive vice-president, we had worked out a method of operation that enabled us, without spelling anything out formally, to divide the professional tasks between us, with little need for consultation. Each was then free to do what he enjoyed most.

Evidently the system worked, because I have been asked over and over, "How do you account for Cleveland's outstanding record as a Jewish community?" There seems to be little question about the accuracy of that assessment. Cleveland's fund-raising on a per capita basis annually ranked first or second nationally, with only Detroit a close competitor; its production of outstanding professionals to serve elsewhere was matched on the lay level by its provision of more presidents of national organizations than any other city, not excepting New York; its agencies enjoyed fine reputations; its record of responsiveness to all sorts of appeals was remarkable. In the words of the current local brag, "The lies we tell about ourselves have turned out to be true!"

How come? The city as a whole declined during the same period to the point where it became the butt of jokes by standup comedians deriding it as the only big city in the country to suffer fiscal default. I have on various occasions offered esoteric explanations. Maybe, I have publicly mused, the disarray in the political community made for greater involvement in Jewish communal work, which was conducted on a more efficient and more satisfying level. Maybe the almost unique Cleveland pattern of continuing to cluster in new and more affluent neighborhoods, all of them contiguous, rather than decentralizing and scattering as is the normal case elsewhere provided a kind of "critical mass" that en-

couraged communal solidarity. Maybe the fact that Cleveland is a heavily industrialized city put it in an advantageous position during the period of post-war prosperity, just as now in the post-industrial age it suffers more than the rest. Maybe the extraordinary stability of its rabbis and professionals, so many of whom served in the same post for decades, or for a lifetime, created loyalty and a sense of rootedness and responsibility. Maybe. Maybe. But I really don't know how to explain Cleveland's amazing record better than to point to its outstanding leaders. Leadership may be a result rather than a cause of success. Or both. In any case, Hank Zucker was a leading contributor to high community performance.

Hank, however, would be the first to say that there have been many others. During my career at Federation I served under eleven presidents, and by any standard they have been a remarkable group of vivid personalities. The first two following the merger illustrated contrasting styles of leadership, both crucial to the running of the community: the mediator leader and the aggressive leader.

Henry Rocker, the first, fitted admirably into the mediator mold—precisely the quality then needed to avoid the touchiness likely to follow any merger. Soft-spoken, gentle, universally respected, he exuded good will and compromise, in the creative sense of that term. In the waning years of the Depression, he had hired me as the editor of an experimental English section of the *Yiddishe Velt* in a last attempt to increase interest in the paper his father had founded, now threatened by the dwindling of the immigrant generation. (It didn't help. The shape of things to come was best expressed in the valedictory comment of Bob Herwald, the last editor of the Yiddish paper, when he decided to throw in the towel: "Television has a better future than Yiddish.") Henry would close his eyes, during even so minor a negotiation as hiring me, puff reflectively on his cigar, and make it clear by the way he conducted the business at hand that two gentlemen, or two highly responsible factions, were of course going to negotiate in a civilized fashion. Of the presidents who followed, Max Simon and Lloyd Schwenger were also in this mold, forever bringing dissi-

dent groups together with unlimited patience, always emphasizing the positive and what could practically be accomplished with a minimum of confrontation.

Max Freedman, the second president after the merger, illustrated the aggressive approach. Dynamic, forthright, often impatient, he tended to divide the world into two groups, those with 'character' (he pronounced it 'kurructer') and those without, with some tendency to relegate to the second category all those who disagreed with him. He had little taste for the long drawn-out process of committee action; he put his confidence in the boys who really counted getting together and making things happen. (A gentler version of the same attitude was illustrated by Leonard Ratner, perhaps the leading lay figure of the entire period, even though he never served as president. He once expressed his attitude toward professionals and their concern with process this way, in his warm and gentle voice and inimitable accent: "I like the way you fellers talk. . . . It's wonderful to listen to how you discuss everything. All very nice. The only thing is, if we depended just on you and the way you do things, we would never put up a building and we would never get anything done.") Max Freedman had heart, to use another of his expressions. He was completely open to those in need, including organizations like Telshe Yeshiva whose strict Orthodox philosophy would hardly seem calculated to appeal to him. And yet, when the Yeshiva was in desperate financial circumstances because of a fire, he led the community effort to pull it out of a hole.

David N. Myers was also in the mold of presidents who dealt directly and forcefully with problems, not only in Federation but in his own tremendous dedication to Menorah Park. Projects that Dave was interested in got his complete dedication; he was at his best in "making things happen."

Obviously, both qualities are essential: the power and the drive needed to initiate new projects and meet overwhelming responsibilities, and the lubrication so crucial in an operation that depends for success upon consensus. We became so conscious of the need for both and talked about them so often as twin obligations that with the passing years it became difficult to categorize the

later presidents as clearly belonging to one or the other type. They consciously accepted both responsibilities. Maurice Saltzman, Morton Mandel, and Albert Ratner succeeded one another in the seventies, for example, and though all were forceful leaders, heading major corporations built from nothing by the sheer force of their own or their families' personal drive and imagination, which often make for impatience and aggressiveness, yet each in his own distinctive way was a master at attracting and involving others and harmonizing raw tempers so that the community could get on with its business.

Leo Neumark, M. E. (Mike) Glass, and Lawrence H. (Larry) Williams are even harder to categorize. Leo, among many other contributions, became famous for being in effect the community timekeeper; when he set a meeting for eight o'clock and adjournment for ten o'clock, you could set your watch by it. Mike Glass, with his extraordinary sensitivity to personal relationships, so endeared himself to the staff that on his retirement from the presidency, we elected him an honorary staff member. He had his own desk at Federation during his presidency and put in about the same hours as all the rest of us. Even after his retirement he continued to watch over everyone with loving care.

My own career was most intertwined with that of Larry Williams. He came up, as I did, through the Community Relations Committee, had been active in the Jewish Community Council, and "went national" about the same time I did when he became chairman of the Large City Budgeting Conference. Of all our presidents, he probably had the most sheer fun at the job.

All in all, what a crew! The best I can do by way of explaining Cleveland's record of accomplishment is to point to its leadership—and to the fact that so many others could have served as well. But I know that really is no answer. Every city has rare personalities and outstanding leaders, and it would require a more subtle researcher than I to determine why and how each community develops its own distinctive personality, and why now this one and now that assumes more than its fair share of leadership. What a subject for a doctoral thesis!

For me, the merger meant that nothing was changed and every-

thing was changed. On the one hand, I remained in charge of the work in community relations, where I continued to be free to operate as I had in the past. But I was now part of an organization whose core function was fund-raising, a field in which I had had almost no experience except for serving as chairman of the Social Service Division for one year. I must have been an occasional trial to my colleagues, since my first reactions to the new setting were no doubt defensive. I sometimes stressed the importance of the segment of work I was engaged in without fully understanding just how it fit into the overall community picture. And maybe my colleagues had some learning to do, too, about what "involvement" and "democracy" meant to us who had come over from the Community Council.

Not all the problems of accommodating to new conditions took place on the professional level. There were sticky situations involving laymen as well. One of the most dramatic, not long after merger, was a confrontation between two powerful personalities who symbolized the two original agencies: Ezra Shapiro from the Jewish Community Council and Max Freedman from the Jewish Welfare Federation.

Ezra, deeply immersed in the work of the Bureau of Jewish Education, had led its fund-raising drive to finance a new building on Taylor Road. The campaign fell short of its goal by some $35,000, a significant sum at the time, and the Bureau sought help from Federation in making up the deficit. The Executive Committee turned down the request on the basis that Federation policy had always been to make individual agencies responsible for their own capital needs. But at a subsequent meeting of the Board of Trustees where emotions ran high and speeches ran long, the action of the Executive Committee was reversed, and the Bureau was granted the requested relief.

Reversal of an Executive Committee decision was almost unprecedented in Federation history. Max Freedman, the president, was livid. He had little regard for the objectivity traditionally observed by chairmen in conducting meetings and had spoken vehemently from the chair against the motion to override the Executive Committee. Ezra, undaunted, had been eloquently out-

spoken in defense of the motion to go over the head of both the Executive Committee and the president.

What really lent passion to the debate was more than the specifics of the proposal to advance some funds to the Bureau, or even the clash of two highly forceful personalities. Actually at issue were the still undigested and unreconciled views involved in the merger negotiations some years earlier. From the standpoint of the leaders of the old Welfare Federation, the Jewish Community Council leadership had acted in the irresponsible fashion that had made them reluctant to merge in the first place. The Board of Trustees meeting, they charged, had clearly been "rigged" in advance to achieve the result desired by what they claimed was really a minority group. How could mutual confidence grow in the face of such tactics?

The response was equally direct: What's wrong with mustering your strength on a proposition of crucial importance? Isn't that involvement? In a democracy, there must be freedom for all interested groups to support their positions vigorously, as long as they stay clearly within the rules. Why shouldn't the trustees occasionally reverse a position of the Executive Committee, or anybody else? Besides, they added with some bitterness, in point of fact ways had been found through indirect means to help more favored agencies to acquire new buildings.

The debate constituted the most ticklish moment in the process of merging the two agencies not only legally but in living practice. It was the last important confrontation. Cooler heads, led by Joe Berne, former Federation president, worked out a compromise arrangement that allowed the dust to settle. Merger was now a fact of life.

Out of the occasional controversies slowly evolved a philosophy and new methods aimed at serving a wider variety of community needs. Some communities are still discussing thirty years later the issue decided in that merger: whether there is a close enough relationship between work in community relations and programs aimed at Jewish commitment (the responsibilities of the Council) and the traditional Federation functions of fundraising, planning and budgeting to warrant joining them together.

The answer to that issue is determined by how broadly one conceives of the role of the central community organization. In Cleveland we opted through the merger for a broad community mandate, responsive to more overall community needs and embracing more diverse community interests.

My six years in Council predisposed me to favor and work for a liberal interpretation of communal functioning. Probably my views in community organization were really formed in my college days, when our Avukah study group was deeply influenced by Mordecai Kaplan. His *Judaism as a Civilization* had just been published, with its central concept of an "organic" community. American Jewry has never been ready for as all-encompassing an idea as Kaplan outlined, but Cleveland demonstrated about as much progress toward that goal as is practicable in a society that values autonomy and voluntarism so highly. The question has even been raised as to whether the growth of federations has gone too far in the direction of "centralism," threatening the pluralism that is universally prized. I think that is as yet a remote danger; the multiplicity of voices and interests in the Jewish community seems to me to remain intense. Lack of coordination is, I believe, more a problem than an unlikely possible central domination. In any case, the merger and the general period of creative good will that finally emerged led to the maturation of a community organization in Cleveland that in its own pragmatic way has been shaped by the ancient concept of *Klal Yisroel*, the collectivity of all Jewry.

Nevertheless, how to involve all sections of the community remains a problem, in Cleveland as elsewhere. As Irving Kane put it in a speech at the first Annual Meeting of Federation after merger: "Our chief concern is the unconcerned." It is an issue not unique to Jewish life; any democratic organization is constantly the target of complaints, both real and fancied, both constructive and violent, from those who feel left out of the process of decision-making.

In my time, such complaints have come most articulately from three groups: the Orthodox, women, and youth. The creation of the Kashruth Board and the major support extended to two Or-

thodox schools, the Hebrew Academy and the Yeshivath Adath, helped greatly in breaching the wall that sometimes separates the Orthodox community from federations. So did the active participation in communal affairs of the Stone family and a whole corps of younger Orthodox lay leaders. Perhaps most crucial of all was the veneration the entire community felt for such long-term Orthodox rabbis as Israel Porath, David Genuth, Shubert Spero, Louis Engelberg, and Jacob Muskin. All of them served the community as a whole as well as their own congregations.

The case of women has been more complicated. For almost half my time as a professional, the women had their own communal organization, the Federation of Jewish Women's Organizations. In the forties they shared quarters with us (the old Jewish Community Council) in the Chester-Twelfth Building. I worked closely, but always separately, as a kind of physical and spiritual nextdoor neighbor, with such presidents of the FJWO as Dorothy Kates, Adeline Kane, and Claire Dworkin, all of them active and dynamic leaders of an active and dynamic organization. In 1957, their Federation merged into the Jewish Community Federation, and, after a series of increasingly integrating adjustments, emerged as the Women's Committee (and, of course, the Women's Division of the Welfare Fund). The new name was adopted as a symbol that women's activities had become one of the major, ongoing central operations of the Federation and not an isolated separate outpost. Two of six Federation officers are at present women; twenty-eight serve on the approximately 100-member Board of Trustees; many major committees are chaired by women. Is then the process of integration successful? Has it gone so far that we can soon eliminate all separate organizations for women? Or does male chauvinism still persist, though more subtly? (No woman has served as president of Federation in half a century; none has ever served as head of the campaign; in the final analysis, major decisions are male decisions.) Both views have been forcefully expressed. Early on, I learned to duck such questions by ticking off the progress that had been made and then balancing that optimistic summary by pointing to all that remained to be done. So why should I shift gears now?

The question of involvement of youth is even more complicated. It is linked with youth's role in general in our society. Youthful youth (college age and under) probably is most productive when it is free of entangling alliances with Federation. The organized community can on occasion fund its projects and be responsive to its ideas and its criticisms without establishing artificial and meaningless devices like reserving places for its representatives on the Board of Trustees at a stage when the worlds of youth and maturity are so distant as to make direct linkage unproductive. Older youth, beyond twenty-five, like all other adults, will be attracted to the community to the degree that its program appears to deal with live issues, doors of entry are kept open, and posts of responsibility are not reserved for veterans only. But the need constantly to reach out to all the diverse elements of the community remains a monumental and never ending Federation task.

After the merger, my work brought me into close association with a new set of talented colleagues. Bob Hiller, later to rise from one post of responsibility after another to the directorship of the Council of Jewish Federations, was the campaign director. Jim Jaffe was the skillful and well-liked public relations director, who could drive you *meshuga* before somehow making all deadlines at the last possible second. Two men throughout the years were responsible for Federation's immensely complicated fiscal affairs: Rudi Walter and Dave Freiman, both masters of their craft. There was never the slightest hint of mismanagement, so devoted and painstaking was their supervision. By the time other long-term colleagues, like Richard Ronis and Howard Berger, joined the staff, I was already a veteran. As always, personal relationships are crucial if professional progress is to be made, and it didn't take long for these men to become my good friends. They teased me almost as unmercifully about my work and responsibilities as I did them. We became an integrated working staff largely because we became integrated personally. I grew to understand that the raising and budgeting of funds is not a necessary evil but an astonishing and unprecedented accomplishment that can also be a tremendous force for Jewish education, in the broadest sense

of that term, if it is perceived as a means rather than as an end in itself. And, as I have already suggested, my colleagues may have caught some glimpses of the Council's vision of a Jewish community bent on deepening its own heritage and at the same time, playing an increasingly significant role in American life.

Fortunately, the times were ripe for breaking new ground. The staggering problems of the newly founded State of Israel not only called for prodigious philanthropic help but required us to learn how to secure support from the media, from political bodies, and from many other community groups. In practice, the two kinds of work, community relations and fund-raising, became more and more intimately intertwined. Inevitably, so did the functions of lay leaders in the various fields. The chairmen of our Community Relations Committee illustrate the process of integration dramatically. They found their way into highly responsible Federation jobs both locally and nationally. Larry Williams became president of the Federation after filling other local and national posts; Jordan Band and Bennett Yanowitz followed Irving Kane as president of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council; Aileen Kassen and Bennett Yanowitz served as Federation officers; Robert Silverman headed the Israel Task Force and Al Gray the work with Russian problems while also chairing many other Federation functions. There was hardly a chairman of the CRC who didn't also develop other credentials within Federation work.

Sometimes the process extended far beyond Federation. I first met Senator Howard Metzenbaum during my trips to Columbus for FEP (Fair Employment Practices) legislation. He was by all odds the outstanding leader in the Ohio Senate in the fight for the legislation, conducting himself with the skill and independence that won him in Columbus, as it has ever since, both wide admiration and wide criticism. I found his bold and knowledgeable style attractive, and we struck up a friendship that has lasted and increased over the years. His term as chairman of our CRC demonstrated what has stood him in good stead in the larger arenas—that he performs best under pressure. He is one of the relatively few people I have met in public life who have grown more relaxed

and understanding as the honors and responsibilities have increased, rather than becoming increasingly pompous. Business success alone didn't satisfy him. I had lunch with him one day before his election to the United States Senate, and later, as we strolled aimlessly for a bit, he casually remarked that people were waiting at his office prepared to consummate a business deal. But he kept right on chatting, bored by the prospect of "only" another deal. Obviously, he has never had similar reservations about community work, since he has remained as close to the community as his work in Washington permits. It's a comfort to feel that we played a part in forging what is clearly a highly fulfilled life.

Perhaps his experience helps explain Federation's continuing appeal to busy men and women. I put it this way when I retired as executive director in 1975: "There is a dynamism that radiates from [our] building on Euclid Avenue—and its counterparts throughout the world—because the issues being debated and the possibilities for good and evil are so vast that only the totally apathetic or the totally insulated can fail to respond."

THE MACIVER REPORT

Not everything went smoothly. On the national scene one of the most frustrating but at the same time most dramatic developments of the early fifties was the withdrawal of the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League from the National Community Relations Advisory Council as a result of what became known as the MacIver Report. I was not one of the fundamental actors in that drama, but I was able to observe developments from close in because Irving Kane was chairman of the NCRAC at the time and Harry Barron, my closest associate, was chairman of the technical advisory committee that oversaw the entire process.

For many years, local communities had complained about what they felt was duplication in the work of the national com-

munity relations agencies and pressed for greater coordination among such giants as the American Jewish Committee, the Anti-Defamation League, and the American Jewish Congress. After various attempts to create informal coordinating mechanisms had failed, the Council of Jewish Federations finally succeeded in 1944 in establishing the National Community Relations Advisory Council (NCRAC), whose essential mandate was to achieve the desired coordination.* The significant letter in NCRAC was the A, standing for "Advisory." The resistance by the national agencies to any kind of coordination had been so strong that they were persuaded to enter into the process of joint planning only after it was clearly stipulated, even in the name of the new organization, that it was purely advisory and would have no authority over the agencies.

But that didn't settle matters. Charges of "duplication" and therefore waste continued so strongly that, under strong pressure from local communities, it was unanimously agreed in 1950 to conduct a study of the entire community relations field. Who was to make such a study? After much debate, the choice fell on Professor Robert MacIver of Columbia University, a respected veteran with excellent academic credentials in sociology and intergroup relations. Presumably he would be objective, since he had no relationship with any of the agencies. He even had the supreme qualification of not being Jewish! He would therefore be free of bias of any kind.

And so he was, in the usual meaning of that term. He had no bias for or against the national agencies. But rereading his report thirty years later is fascinating testimony to how much the world has changed. There is, for example, not a single reference to Israel in the entire report, although the state had been established two years earlier and was already profoundly reshaping all Jewish communal work. Reviewing the report three decades after its initial appearance raises the old question of whether it is really possible to be objective. MacIver obviously had little sympathy for

* In 1977, the agency became the National *Jewish* Community Relations Advisory Council. The addition of "Jewish" was in line with the later movement toward increased emphasis on Jewishness by most organizations.

any concept of the Jewish community as a community. At a time when problems of group identity and survival were everywhere moving to the fore, he stressed the importance of "integration," with little understanding of the opposite danger of disintegration through assimilation into the majority culture. More seriously, after gathering an impressive amount of data and information and becoming quite familiar with the various agencies, he then withdrew from the consultation process and arrived at conclusions and recommendations in accordance with his stated philosophy: "There comes a stage when the director [of a study] has to be given full responsibility to state what he believes . . . himself bearing final responsibility. In drawing up the report . . . the most effective procedure is for one person to take responsibility for giving his own best judgment, rather than for a group to balance pros and cons and to arrive at conclusions which represent the common denominator."

Having later had considerable experience in making studies, I believe such a procedure, while it sounds eminently reasonable, greatly increases the likelihood of creating conflict. In this case, it tore the community apart. The organization or field being studied should be intimately involved in the process of reaching conclusions if practical results are to be achieved. Unlike the case in the pure sciences, what is sought in community studies is not abstract truths but workable and creative proposals through which diverse interests can function more effectively. If MacIver had understood the value of seeking precisely "the common denominator," and had been more prepared to correct and amend his ideas in the light of the reactions of those affected by his study, his recommendations would have had a far more positive impact. This is not to suggest that a study director should abandon his positions lightly, or at all. The task of a study director is like that of a pilot of a ship or an airplane—although clear and unswerving about the destination, he must constantly correct the course in response to changing atmospheric conditions. MacIver hadn't much grasp of Jewish atmospheric conditions. He had his biases too.

Actually, his recommendations made sense: that national responsibilities should be allocated among the agencies by function,

thus avoiding duplication of effort. As generally interpreted, though this is not quite the way MacIver put it, the American Jewish Congress would pretty much do the legal work, the Anti-Defamation League would handle the fight against anti-Semitism, and the American Jewish Committee would concentrate on the media and education. The Jewish Labor Committee would have an exclusive in its chosen field of work with labor, the Jewish War Veterans in work with veterans, and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (at that time the only religious organization that was a constituent member of the NCRAC) in the religious field.

The reaction was prompt and sharp. "Nothing doing," said the two largest organizations, the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League. What MacIver saw as duplication they labeled "constructive supplementation." Is it really duplication, they asked, if two agencies sponsor radio or TV programs? We can use dozens of programs as long as they are good. Moreover, they claimed they were "generic agencies," responsible to their constituencies, and they were not prepared to abandon work in which they were experienced to untried organizations whose major interests lay outside the field of community relations altogether, as was the case in the work with labor and religious organizations. The other national agencies and the local CRC's, although many of them expressed reservations about various details, nevertheless overwhelmingly approved the report as a whole.

The climax came in Atlantic City in 1952. Delegates came to the decisive plenary session of the NCRAC with many unresolved questions. Did the two national agencies really mean it when they threatened to withdraw from the overall coordinating body, the NCRAC, if the MacIver report was approved and implemented? Would it be best just to let them go, as some urged, or should attempts be made to compromise in order to retain them? If so, in what areas?

Caucuses went on all over, in local communities before the convention and in Atlantic City itself. Tempers rose as the time for decision drew near. I happened to be sitting one day at lunch

next to John Slawson, the long-time executive director of the American Jewish Committee, when Shad Polier, one of the top lay leaders of the American Jewish Congress, approached him. The two men essentially symbolized the two opposing positions on MacIver. Shad was not only one of the most influential personalities of the time but by all odds one of the most colorful. Son-in-law of Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, whom he publicly referred to as "Daddy," he was handsome, highly articulate, pitiless in debate, capable of being both utterly charming and completely nasty. He strolled up to Slawson and addressed him in his thick southern drawl: "John, ah'm not sure you're votin' in accordance with your agency's thinkin' on that proposition. You better check it out."

Slawson almost had apoplexy. "What in hell are you talking about?" he finally got out. "You going to tell me how to vote on something affecting my own agency?"

Shad was unruffled. "Ah think you better call your national office and make sure." And with that he drifted past, leaving Slawson sputtering in rage.

The debate and the conferences went on till late at night. It was in the early morning hours, after the two agencies had caucused following a vote approving the report, that the climax came. The outvoted American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League announced that they were withdrawing from the NCRAC. Some members of their delegations got up to leave, but others persuaded them to sit down again long enough to hear the final comments of the chairman, Irving Kane. His talk was memorable. He referred to the "islands of loneliness" that would be their lot if they broke the ties that bound agencies together. Further, he pointed out that there was no need for the agencies to withdraw from the NCRAC, since it had no power to implement the report over the objections of the agencies. But his final plea could not reverse the momentum that had built up. The agencies withdrew.

Now the ball was back in the court of the local communities. Would they support the action that had been taken, largely at their instigation, by increasing or decreasing allocations to the

national agencies in accordance with their position on MacIver? With few exceptions, they did not. When it came to "the bottom line," most communities turned conservative and ignored MacIver. They were, of course, fearful of a backlash that might disrupt their own fund-raising if they "punished" the withdrawing agencies. Not long after, the Council of Jewish Federations began a process of reconciliation that resulted sixteen years later in the two agencies re-entering the NCRAC. As for the NCRAC itself, it had in the interim made up for the loss of the agencies by strengthening its ties with local CRCs and greatly expanding the number of its local member communities. This was a strategy devised by its skillful director, Isaiah Minkoff.

Anyone who attended NCRAC meetings had to be impressed with Minkoff's wisdom, and some of us could testify to his persistence. At one General Assembly, Minkoff and I were both on the Resolutions Committee of the Council of Jewish Federations, and we disagreed strongly on an issue that now escapes me. Time was running out because the resolution had to be presented to the plenary session the next day. The two of us were assigned the task of working out language mutually acceptable. We began our discussion shortly after nine o'clock, and till midnight I held my own in the lengthy two-man debate. Then I began to weaken, overcome less by Minkoff's logic than by his formidable energy which was obviously inexhaustible. It was clear that he was prepared to do battle with enthusiasm all night. I wasn't. By one o'clock I tried desperately to surrender, but that wasn't enough for Minkoff. I had to do more than give in; I had to be convinced. By that time, I was ready for any concession, if only I could go to bed. I staggered off, leaving him fresh as a daisy and nicely warmed up for further debate. I hasten to add that Minkoff's persistence hardened into something like stubbornness only when a matter of principle was involved. Otherwise, when such crucial matters were at stake as whether to order corned beef or tuna fish for lunch, he would flounder aimlessly, unable to resolve the conflict.

Although I did not think so at the time, it was probably a wise decision by the communities to avoid a confrontation with the national agencies. One of the remarkable features of Jewish

communal life is the final restraint it usually places upon bitter feuding that is destructive in the affairs of some ethnic groups. Jews are fond of saying of themselves that where there are two Jews there are three opinions. Although that adage properly reflects the fierce independence of Jewish thinking, possibly more significant is another characteristic. When the stakes are high and the need for joint action is crucial, there is an overwhelming sentiment for getting on with the job and working together in the common cause. Maybe we cannot afford the passionate disruptions of less-threatened groups, but whatever the explanation, it is a saving feature of Jewish life that it comfortably tolerates wide differences of opinion and even substantial bickering but always with a recognition that ultimately there is a need to join hands in crucial moments.

THE 1954 DESEGREGATION DECISION

The fifties were the honeymoon period in civil rights. The most decisive event was of course the Supreme Court decision in 1954 declaring the doctrine of "separate but equal" invalid and decreeing the end of legally enforced segregation in America. Sometimes crucial events in history are not properly recognized at the time they occur, but that wasn't the case this time. Community relations executives were meeting in Philadelphia that memorable Monday, and I remember Will Maslow, the director of the Commission on Law and Social Action of the American Jewish Congress and one of our leading legal experts, being summoned from the room for an important telephone call and then breaking into our meeting to announce breathlessly that the Court had made a historic decision. It had instructed authorities everywhere to move toward desegregation "with deliberate speed." (At the time, we envisioned a lot of speed and had no idea how deliberate progress would be.) To add to the excitement, the Court had even referred in its decision to the work of some of our close associates.

We were dazzled by a vision of a new, emerging America. Indeed, there soon followed a clutch of spectacular legislative and judicial victories. Relations between the Jewish community and the black community were never closer; Charley Lucas, the director of the NAACP, was fond of repeating that he considered our headquarters his downtown office. No wonder, since we were deeply involved in his annual membership campaigns and worked closely on many issues with him and the black community. In less than a decade, practically our entire agenda of aims was achieved: fair employment legislation, fair housing legislation, desegregation of public accommodations, establishment of enforcing commissions, and supporting judicial decisions. If I had been told when I first got into community relations work that we would so soon realize all the objectives we had set ourselves, I would have expected life in America in the 1980s to be blissfully peaceful.

What went wrong? Probably only the shallowness of our judgments and the romanticism of our expectations. We vastly underestimated the complexity of the problems we were facing and tended to look on our campaigns as definitive solutions rather than as useful and necessary beginning steps in a process of social change that will never be completed once and for all. It was good that we could not foresee the complexities of developments like affirmative action programs and increased racial tensions as blacks took over exclusive responsibility in many formerly integrated social movements. The tasks at hand were difficult enough without adding the burden of ultimate results.

THE TERCENTENARY CELEBRATION

For me personally, the fifties were also the years when I began to move beyond community relations into overall community responsibilities. The change began with the community tercentenary activities, particularly two with which I had totally contrasting experiences. One was dramatic and satisfying; the other, the most frustrating project I have ever been associated with, since it

made progress with such glacially "deliberate speed" as to make solving desegregation problems seem speedy by comparison.

The tercentenary was, of course, the celebration in 1954 of three hundred years of American Jewish history. Communities throughout the country observed the event with local programs. Many of them were dramatizations whose theme was the contrast between the chilly reception of the first boatload of refugees in 1654 in New Amsterdam by that crusty old anti-Semite Peter Stuyvesant with the spectacular progress thereafter. We chose a somewhat different course. One of my literary heroes during my teaching days had been Norman Corwin, whose broadcasts during the war seemed to me a high-water mark in artistic achievement put to social use. His "On a Note of Triumph" broadcast on VE Day was in the noble American tradition defined by Lincoln and Whitman, celebrating with passion and compassion the monumental victory while rededicating us with sober realism to the immense tasks ahead.

My enthusiasm for Corwin persuaded the committee to extend an invitation to him to write the libretto for an original cantata for our celebration. To my surprise and delight, he accepted. To make things even more exciting, we engaged Maurice Goldman, a schoolmate from the old Glenville days, to write the original music. Maurie was then briefly in Cleveland between stints in Hollywood, where he had become a leading composer for the movies. The result of their collaboration was *The Golden Door*, an imaginative and artistic interpretation of the American Jewish experience through drama, music, and the dance. It was almost like old times again, working with Saul Meisels, some really outstanding singers and a selected group from the Cleveland Orchestra in producing the spectacle. To my immense satisfaction, Norman Corwin, who came to Cleveland to whip the performance into shape and direct it, turned out to be personally warm and cooperative and essentially the man I had imagined him to be in my teaching days. *The Golden Door* was a dignified, colorful presentation, far superior to the usual puff pieces celebrating the occasion. The community responded by jamming Music Hall for the performance.

The other project also started out bravely enough. Our Tercen-

tenary Committee, elated by the success of *The Golden Door* and many allied events, decided that it was time for the community to record its own history. Judah Rubinstein, a young scholar fresh from Harvard, was engaged to begin the research for the proposed volume, with the general expectation that we would produce the book locally. But suddenly there was a new development, particularly appealing to us at a time when we had just completed a project using national figures with such satisfying results.

It was brought to our attention that the American Jewish History Center of the Jewish Theological Seminary had been established to write local Jewish histories and had tentatively chosen Cleveland as one of the cities whose history it hoped to trace. So why not use its resources? An invitation went out to Moshe Davis, then provost of the Seminary and founder and chief executive of the History Center, to confer with us about taking on the job. Moshe swept into town and swept all of us off our feet. He was a superlative salesman. Persuasive, instantly establishing close personal relationships, words and ideas pouring out of him at an overwhelming pace, he was irresistible. We entered into a contract with the American Jewish History Center to write our history, expecting quick as well as expert results. That was in 1955. The book finally appeared in 1978 and even then, after twenty-three years, it came out in an atmosphere of last-minute, hurry-up pressures.

Its period of gestation stretched on so interminably that many of the original committee members sponsoring the book didn't live to see the final publication. The necrology included Carl Wittke, head of the history department of the graduate school at Western Reserve University, Harvey Wish, distinguished history professor, and Judge Albert Woldman—all of them for years enthusiastic and helpful members of the team who finally drifted off in discouragement and did not live to see the final product. We went through three different writers who took on the project for a few months or years and then, for a variety of reasons, gave up. In the process, we created such an immense volume of correspondence, explanations, complaints, new starts, and increasingly un-

happy exchanges of viewpoints that at one stage we talked about writing the history of the history, since the process itself had taken on a life of its own. One of the men who tried his hand at the job was Charles Reznikoff, now generally recognized as a distinguished American poet. How in the world Moshe Davis ever talked him into accepting the assignment I will never know; he was obviously miscast. He came to Cleveland on a couple of occasions, modest, self-deprecatory, gently commenting on human foibles and nature's splendors, assuming all blame for the snail-like pace of progress on the writing. He finally asked to be relieved of the responsibility when it became clear that, like his predecessors, he had little prospect of ever completing the script.

Throughout the years, and then the decades, Moshe never lost his patience and good cheer. Sometimes his undiminished optimism was maddening, and I would refer bitterly to letters from him, written years earlier, filled with assurances that had turned sour with the passage of time. For example, by 1965 it was frustrating to re-read notes like this one from the previous decade: "Although we were not able to produce the volume in 1957, we are confident that you will have it before 1958 is over." At one point in the late sixties, after both he and his latest writer had moved to Israel, there was a stormy meeting at his home in Jerusalem. Even then, after hearing me out, Moshe assured me cheerfully that the day would still come when we would drink a *l'chayim* in celebration of the publication of the book.

He was right. In 1979 I finally delivered a copy of the published history to him, again at his home in Jerusalem, and we celebrated the occasion with proper toasts, as he had predicted. However, the book I had brought with me to Israel was not really the one we had worked on so painfully over the years. So much time had elapsed during the writing that our original cutoff date of 1945 was now hopelessly out of date, since it would leave unexplored the period after the Second World War, clearly the most productive part of Cleveland community history. I had vigorously made this point in one of our innumerable meetings, this time in the office of Dr. Gerson Cohen, the new head of the Jewish Theological Seminary. To my surprise and delight he assumed complete

responsibility for ensuring that the history would finally be completed. And delivered on his promise. He and Davis urged me to undertake the writing of a second volume covering community history since the end of World War II. I had earlier agreed to write a final updating chapter for the original volume, so the expanded assignment seemed logical. The result was that Judah Rubinstein and I collaborated in producing *Merging Traditions*, published only a few months after the appearance of the original volume by Professor Lloyd Gartner, *The History of the Jews of Cleveland*, which covered the period from 1837 to 1945.

I will make two claims about our volume. First, it was produced in respectably short order, being completed from research to publication on schedule, in less than two years. Second, Judah, who was responsible for the larger share of the volume, comprising over 400 photographs, converted it into a remarkable community project. He interested an astonishing variety of individuals and organizations in doing a bit of research on their own, in family albums, attics, and other out of the way places, so that literally thousands of photographs were collected, from which he selected the most representative for publication. A lay committee of Eugene Freedheim, Frank Joseph, David Myers, Leo Neumark, Ben Zevin, and Irving Kane as chairman did far more than react to the script. They contributed both their judgments and their own formidable knowledge of community history. The result of all this input was more than the production of a volume; the entire project helped raise the understanding and appreciation of their own history among thousands of Clevelanders, as well as many now scattered to the south and southwest. It also had more lasting results. The close association established with the Western Reserve Historical Society, co-publisher of both volumes, led to the creation there of the Cleveland Jewish Achives, thus institutionalizing the awakened interest in communal memorabilia.

But the curse that had dogged the history project from the beginning got us too. Selection and placements of the photographs were completed, the script completely revised, and the galleys read and corrected. All systems were finally go. And then, the night before the final press run, the printing plant burned to the

ground! Everything was lost. Recreating the script was easy, since we had copies at hand, although the dreary correcting of proofs had to be gone through again. But far more important were the photographs. The negatives had all been returned to a central repository, where they were mixed together with the hundreds not selected for publication. The whole task of locating those that had been selected, making new prints, reducing them to proper size, and reconfirming what prominence to give them on what page all had to be undertaken again.

So what comes easy in Jewish life? Not histories, judged by our experience. But it turned out that "this, too, is for the good," as the cheerful Hebrew saying puts it. The second look provided an opportunity for some further improvements.

There have been permanent dividends from the community's heightened concern with its own recorded history. Judah became the first full-time archivist of any Jewish community in the country; arrangements were made for the first time for preservation and orderly arrangement of the archives of many community organizations and prominent individuals. Henceforth, the past would be able to speak with some clarity to the future.

FIRST MISSION TO ISRAEL

With the coming of jet planes, shuttling off to Israel for a quick visit has become for many community leaders about as formidable a journey as a day's junket to Youngstown when I was a kid. But in 1959, when I became the staff escort for the first Cleveland community mission to Israel, one of the first community missions anywhere, it was still a major and exciting undertaking. I have subsequently gone to Israel ten more times, three times for extended periods, and it's no longer easy to recapture the breathless excitement of that first visit. It began long before the landing in Israel, with the challenge of persuading enough leaders to join the mission to make the as yet untried project worthwhile. That

wasn't too hard because Maurie Saltzman, the most charismatic of our younger leaders, agreed to be the chairman of the mission, and the magic of his name assured a good turnout. We wound up with fifteen couples, only one of whom had ever been in Israel before, so we were all a little wide-eyed, in contrast to the far more sophisticated and jaded reactions now, when even high school youngsters swarm all over the world in their blue jeans.

Our first stop was France, partly to mold the couples, many of whom did not know one another, into a coherent group before we got to Israel. Moreover, from a practical viewpoint, since jet planes were not yet in general use, the jump directly to Israel was too strenuous. It turned out that because of head winds it took us fourteen hours just to get to Paris.

We certainly did "cohere" in France, if that is the word for it. The days were devoted to serious business, aimed at achieving an understanding of the French Jewish community. One afternoon, for example, we were all invited to a reception given by the European office of the American Jewish Committee. It was held at what in this country would be called a country club—a posh one, with a liveried footman at the gate. The reception itself was conducted in the ceremonial manner at which the French instinctively excel. Having been warned of its formal nature, we were all decked out in our finery, and I was in the process of acknowledging the courtesies extended to us in my halting French (show-off stuff on my part; our French hosts had no trouble at all speaking to us in English) when an infernal racket broke out just outside the reception room. Two of our couples had split off from the group that day and were only now belatedly showing up. In itself, the tardiness could easily have been overlooked, but that was the smallest part of it. I looked out the window and there was Sam Straus (may he rest in peace), the most informal member of our mission—to put it gently—dressed to my horror in tennis shorts and sneakers, obviously sweated up from recent exertions. "What in hell do you mean, we can't come in this way?" Sam was demanding of the perplexed footman outside. "Try to stop us, Mac." Who could stop Sam? A moment later he led his little flock of three others into the room, completely unabashed, loudly reas-

suring everybody to go right on about their business and not mind him.

The nights were given over to more relaxed studies of quite different aspects of French society. One evening my own understanding of how things work in the real world was greatly expanded when it was decided we'd all go to the Lido. We were assured by the frosty headwaiter that there simply was no room for us; perhaps if we wished to wait for the next floor show? Two of our group took him aside for a chat. They must have been extraordinarily adept at improving Franco-American relations, because after the brief interview the maitre d' suddenly became more friendly, and even convivial. He snapped his fingers, and, like Moses parting the Red Sea, a crew went into action. Some of the patrons already seated in the choice seats must have been astonished as their tables were abruptly pushed to one side, and a new long table was introduced into the tiny vacated space. As a responsible tour conductor, I modestly held back to let everyone else be seated first, with unforeseen and joyous results. The only spot that could be found for me was directly at the stage end of the table. I soon found myself watching the floor immediately in front of me rise three or four feet to form a stage. And there I was, staring at those stunning topless beauties so close that I had an impulse to duck every time they pirouetted gracefully. Quite a time was had by all.

But we had a better time in Israel. When the plane first touched down in Lod Airport, all of us spontaneously burst into applause. If only it were possible to recapture the dewy, virginal impressions of that first contact with the land and the people. Yes, yes, I kept saying to myself, it's really so! Here all the weary clichés come to vigorous life; all the campaign slogans get recharged with immediate meaning. All these porters and customs officials and ticket takers, some charming and some surly, all are Jews, no matter the color of their skin or the fact that so many look more like Arabs. We wound our way slowly up the Judean hills, with the moon now out and the place names and the road signs imparting a special magic: Latrun, Ashkelon, Bethlehem. Suddenly, as the lights of Jerusalem came into view, sparkling from the very top of the

last hill, the line of the old ghetto song of faith flashed into my mind: "Mir zeinen doh!" ("We are here!")

On later trips, particularly after Ruth and I had our own apartment, we could hardly bear the "tourists" with their stereotyped reactions and set travel schedules. But in 1959 we were classic first-timers. And some impressions never fade. We sat late one night, together with the Metzenbaums, looking out at the wall of the Old City, doubly mysterious because it was in Jordanian territory, forbidden to Jews, watching the trickle of traffic in and out of the Jaffa Gate and hearing the occasional howl of the dogs prowling in the no man's land between the two countries. The magic we felt that night is there still. No wonder. I had been preparing for that experience ever since my boyhood days with Rabbi Goldman at the old Jewish Center.

We met with a succession of political and economic leaders, including President Ben-Zvi, but the most important person to us was Chaim Vinitsky, then, as now, director of United Jewish Appeal operations in Israel and overseer of every detail of the itinerary of missions like ours. He is one of the most intriguing figures I ever met in Israel, always immaculately dressed (complete with jacket and tie, in defiance of Israeli custom) and perfectly poised, infinitely patient, totally in charge, miraculously responding to the most outrageous demands and emergency needs, friendly and attentive—but finally, reserved and aloof. One sensed in him an ultimate inner discipline that set him apart from the hurly-burly of fierce Israeli politics; a basic skepticism that kept him essentially an observer of the passing parade, playing his full part and then some, but at the same time keeping his own counsel, with a clear understanding of the foibles and vanities always exaggerated in a tourist milieu. I saw his reserve break down only once, and that was under revealing circumstances. In the midst of one of my conferences a decade later, when we worked together in planning the Conference on Human Needs, a young girl burst into his office, beside herself. As far as we could make out from her hysterical account, she was part of a group of American high school students on tour and had cut out from them in total despair at what she felt was rejection by her peers. "Nobody loves me," she wailed, her dream trip having obviously turned to ashes.

"*I* love you," Vinitsky assured her, putting his arm around her, and gently he led her from generalities of despair to discussing specifically what she had seen, where she would like to go, the nature of her group, and what could be done to repair the breach. He put aside not only his conference with me but his many other pressing responsibilities to comfort one lonely school girl.

Sometimes I lost patience with him. He was present, often at my urgent invitation, at crucial planning meetings for the Conference on Human Needs, but he never spoke unless directly questioned. Then he would supply the needed information succinctly, in contrast to the far more usual Israeli volubility. He continued to address me as *Mr.* Vincent, even though I called him nothing but Chaim, and was equally polite and deferential, without the least hint of subservience, to everybody else. On the way home after one meeting I established by persistent questioning what I had suspected all along. He knew far more about the problem we had been wrestling with at the meeting than any of us. Bewildered, I asked him why he had not spoken out. He replied, "No one asked me." My furious protest against such rigid formality didn't faze him in the least; he continued to follow his own strict protocol, never advancing his own interests or in any way suggesting the depth of his own knowledge and understanding. There can be no doubt about the enormous contribution he made to a whole generation of American visitors to Israel by his virtuoso performance, vastly enhancing the pleasures of exploring Israel and understanding its problems. But I was always uneasy, sensing an underlying unhappiness and feeling that there were depths in this man and possibilities that were never fully utilized.

Those insights came later. At the time, it was enough to luxuriate in the never-ending string of tourist and human pleasures that Vinitsky laid out for us. In retrospect almost all our experiences testify to the breathless pace of change in Israel. We visited an army camp, for example, where improvisation was the name of the game. The tank unit was a Rube Goldberg collage of spare parts slapped together from here and there, rather than the supremely sophisticated armament one sees now. We stopped at one of the few remaining *ma'abaroth* (transit camps), hastily put up to meet the first overwhelming surge of immigration following

the creation of the state. Their tin corrugated roofs and raw running sewage were already on the way out, to be replaced by housing that may often still be inadequate but nothing like the primitive accommodations of the first decade of the state's existence. We flew down to Eilat for our fund-raising session and found it to be an undeveloped outpost, rather than the luxurious winter resort and port it has become.

We moved in an aura of undiluted romanticism, having come to be inspired rather than to examine critically, but occasionally reality broke through. One night we were the guests of Dov Joseph, treasurer of the Jewish Agency, a completely tough analyst and spokesman as befitted one of the heroes of the darkest days of the War for Independence who, by his own description, had been the responsible minister who had to say no in the face of desperate needs. His sober analysis of Israel's economic future was a valuable corrective to our sometimes over-enthusiastic yea-saying. I have felt ever since how important it is to achieve a good balance between the romantic and the realistic in regard to Israel. Without the romantic—that is, an almost irrational passion and love and dedication—nothing can be accomplished; without some tough realism, neither we nor the Israelis will be able to meet the crises constantly erupting in this brutal century effectively.

It was from every point of view a great trip. We broke ground for Federation in demonstrating how much could be accomplished by such group tours, and the Vincents came home vastly richer through acquiring closer ties to such lifelong friends as the Maurie Saltzmans, the Max Friedmans, the Ernie Sieglers, and the Alex Millers, among others.

But I didn't have long to savor the trip. I had hardly got home when I was off again, this time to San Francisco for the General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations to report on a project that had engrossed me for a full year, the study of Jewish cultural institutions in America. If the trip to Israel had broadened my horizons by adding an overseas dimension to my local perspective, the cultural study vividly reminded me that Cleveland is only a small part of a dynamic national community. It was also, except for the world of community relations, my debut on the national stage.

THE NATIONAL CULTURAL STUDY

The trip to San Francisco, which was to be a turning point in so many ways, really began a year earlier in New York. I was there in 1958 attending the quarterly meeting of the Council of Jewish Federations when Phil Bernstein, its executive director, asked to see me. At the conference that followed, he invited and strongly urged me to staff the Council's forthcoming study of National Cultural Services that had just been authorized. My response was my usual negative knee-jerk reaction: to turn down anything that broke up my customary work pattern. And this assignment certainly would do that, since it required spending much of the next year in New York and along the eastern seaboard, where almost all the cultural institutions were located.

On the other hand, it wasn't easy to turn down an urgent invitation from Phil. He was the third of my triumvirate of teachers, together with Harry Barron and Henry Zucker. I had never attended a school of social work; so if I was not to be a total impostor as a community service professional, I had to acquire on-the-job training from talented colleagues, about the way lawyers or even doctors were professionally trained in an earlier age. And Phil was a superb teacher. He was, first of all, a supreme optimist, to the point where good-natured fun was forever being poked at him because of his stubborn insistence on seeing good and constructive possibilities in situations that looked hopeless to everybody else. But he was no sentimental romantic; he simply breathed such an atmosphere of confidence and sureness that, without quite knowing how, you found yourself making out in the tightest of situations. He was an absolute bear for work—no doubt to a fault, since the charge was occasionally made that he had difficulty delegating his overwhelming responsibilities. But I found his unfailing support an enormous help in the various projects that he talked me into undertaking over the years.

Nevertheless, when I left the interview I was determined to turn him down. But Ruth changed my mind. We discussed the offer at length, with my objections sounding thinner and weaker by the moment. I wound up saying yes.

The formal mandate of the study was both impressive and a little frightening to a novice:

> The American Jewish community has created and maintained a vast network of organizations to meet humanitarian needs, material and spiritual . . . . It has poured into these services very substantial money, energy, and devotion . . . but the levels of development (in American Jewish life) are notably uneven, and one of the contrasts is that of the national cultural efforts. They are conducted by a number of small organizations, severely limited in scope and finances. They operate in specialized fields, with little continuing relationship to one another, and with chronic financial frustration . . . . The cultural needs of American Jewry and the impact of the organizations (serving them) have never been assessed in any total view. Such an assessment has been long overdue.

How to get started on such a sweeping enterprise? Luckily, I had three solid supporters: Phil, Julian Freeman and Judah Shapiro. Julian, a former president of the Council of Jewish Federations, was appointed chairman of a lay committee to receive the recommendations of a professional advisory committee. I affectionately referred to him as "Colonel Blimp," because at that time he was quite tubby, impressively moustached, and spoke in appropriately pedantic measures. His good humor and total dedication to the cultural field never deserted him not only during the study but to the end of his life. But my most important ally during that intense year was Judah Shapiro, then national director of Hillel, who was appointed chairman of the Technical Advisory Committee, which actually conducted the study. He was equally at home in Jewish culture and general culture; his Yiddish was as fluent as his English, and his interest in every nook and cranny of scholarship was insatiable. He was a born raconteur and a splendid chairman, patient and flexible but always in thorough command.

Judah was a living paradox. As chairman of the committee that analyzed the problems of Jewish cultural life, he was superb. But when he became the first director of the National Foundation for Jewish Culture, created as a result of the study, and was therefore responsible for implementing the recommendations he had done

so much to formulate, he was an unhappy failure. In itself that contrast is not particularly surprising; profound thinkers are notorious for their frequent inability to deal with practical affairs. But in Judah the almost schizoid split was unusually dramatic; his frustration at the gap between plan and result soured his personal relationships.

Throughout the study, Judah and I worked together in complete harmony; his help was invaluable. Even after he became Foundation director, our relationship continued close. Because of my role in the study process, I was able to wangle support for the new agency from Cleveland far out of proportion to that from any other community. Our early and substantial contribution was instrumental in getting the agency started. In addition, I tried in every way I could, by service on the Foundation Board and by actively trying to interest others, to help the agency and him personally in the difficult task of bringing a new organization to life.

I still do not understand what congealed his original warmth into a frigidity that bordered on hostility. I would be inclined to explain it on the basis of some failure on my part, except that he turned with equal sharpness on other colleagues who similarly attempted to be of help. Evidently he expected support from the communities to be self executing. Having demonstrated the need for more nourishment of the cultural agencies, he apparently felt the funds should automatically flow in, so that he as executive could devote himself to scholarly and cultural affairs without having to bother with the difficult and mundane details of administration. Unfortunately, things don't work that way. After several years Judah resigned and dropped out of the organized Jewish community scene to devote himself with his usual brilliant articulation to the affairs of the Labor Zionist Organization, which he headed for many years.

But that was far in the future. For that wonderful year of the study, the two of us planned the work of an intensely creative committee that included some of the most distinguished and even glamorous leaders on the American Jewish cultural scene. Among its most active members, many of whom never missed a meeting, were Salo Baron, probably the outstanding historian of

our generation, then professor of Jewish history at Columbia; Solomon Grayzel, editor for the Jewish Publication Society; Abraham Neuman, president of Dropsie College; Marshall Sklare, outstanding sociologist, then of the American Jewish Committee and now of Brandeis University; Jacob Marcus, director of the American Jewish Archives of Hebrew Union College; Emil Lehman, then director of the Herzl Institute, spinning off ideas by the minute; my old friend, Moshe Davis, whom I tried at the meetings not to twit about our mutual problems with the writing of our history; Carl Urbont, director of the 92nd Street Y; the ebullient Lou Kaplan, head of the Baltimore College of Jewish Studies, and a dozen or so other scholars, authors, and distinguished cultural figures. Although they were all powerful personalities with strong ideas, they were also highly disciplined. They took assignments, wrote papers, and came to meetings having actually read minutes and analyzed agendas. It was essentially a year of commuting for me; I spent most of the week in New York and went home for long weekends. Whenever I got to feeling sorry for myself because of all the traveling and hotel meals, there would be a meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee and I would be recharged for another couple of weeks.

The very first meeting set the tone for all that followed. I had been working for several months preparing for the committee work, and I came to the first session feeling I had become something of an expert on the American Jewish cultural scene. After all, I had consulted in some depth with key people at no less than twenty-six agencies involved in one way or another with cultural work. The interviews ran the gamut from fairly casual discussions with agencies only modestly and indirectly involved in some phase of Jewish culture to extensive meetings covering several days at the more important agencies.

One of the highlights was browsing through the stacks of YIVO (an acronym for the Yiddish words for the Institute for Jewish Knowledge), particularly the section containing records of the concentration camps seized by the United States Army and turned over to YIVO. They were heartbreaking on two scores.

There was, of course, the horror of the tragedy itself. I wrote at the time:

> One little book tucked away on a back shelf I shall never forget. It was written by the children in the Lodz Ghetto, beautifully decorated with childish art, with little verses addressed to the Nazi commander of the ghetto on his birthday. One verse cries out to us with indescribable horror. It says of the commander . . .
>
> "Er hot uns nisht vergessen ("He has not forgotten us,
> Er git uns vos zu essen." He gives us things to eat.")

There was another kind of tragedy in those shelves. The masses of human documents contained there were at that time uncatalogued and in danger of disappearing altogether if some steps were not quickly taken to preserve them better. Anne Frank's tragedy is at least partially redeemed by her story's being preserved for us, but these martyrs were in danger of dying twice, for even their memories recorded in these documents seemed doomed. Such conditions were certainly not the fault of YIVO, which, like most of the cultural agencies, was manned by utterly selfless, devoted, and appallingly underpaid staff who lacked even so essential a safeguard as some type of pension arrangement. I left the institution determined to help make some constructive changes.

Altogether different was the day spent at the office of the old *Menorah Journal.* It was obviously a backwater. I had looked forward to the interview with Henry Hurwitz, the one and only editor of the magazine throughout its colorful history, about the way I would have felt if suddenly I had been given the opportunity to meet Scott Fitzgerald or some other literary figure of the twenties. As a matter of fact, I hadn't realized that Hurwitz was still living, since I associated him with the literary ferment following the first World War. My expectation that I would be meeting a living anachronism proved accurate. Hurwitz and his office were perfect symbols of faded glory. He welcomed me into his silent quarters with his courtly manners, only to launch into an attack on Zionism and the wickedness of deserting the universalist mes-

sage of Judaism. He was fighting a battle that had been long since lost. That didn't prevent him from spelling out his grandiose schemes for the future and the certain retribution that would overtake all his enemies. I was more impressed by his waxed mustache and his perfectly groomed blonde secretary than by his arguments.

In complete contrast was my interview with Salo Baron. He invited me to visit him at his summer home in Connecticut, and it turned out to be one of the fullest days of the entire study. I had rented a car as the easiest way to get there, but it gave up the ghost somewhere on the Henry Hudson Highway—to my consternation, since I had heard of the tightness of Baron's schedule and the need to keep appointments on time. By desperate pleading I was able to get a replacement car and eventually arrived at his incredible study. I was not surprised at the spread of books piled high on the shelves all around the room, but the boxes of notes! Such a huge mass of index cards and quotations! But scholarship was not on Baron's mind that day: it was money. He outlined what he felt was required to give the cultural field the support it desperately needed. I felt particularly guilty when his wife, who was also his colleague, interrupted us to report that their new in-laws (their daughter had just been married) were on the phone inquiring when they could visit. Baron assigned them a specific time with the admonition that they would have to understand that at the expiration of the stipulated period he would have to return to his scholarly work. And here was I, taking almost his full day!

It didn't take long for me to find out at the first committee meeting how much more I had to learn. The committee quickly established a strong central focus for the study by limiting it to four fields—archives, libraries, scholarship, and research—and by cutting down to nine the number of agencies to be intensively studied. But that was only the beginning. We wrestled with such elementary but complex questions as: What is an archive anyway? What should be preserved? Where? How could priorities be established among the cultural needs? Should the arts be supported? How could we encourage and expand scholarly interest in Judaica at universities? How could we secure more aid for the strug-

gling cultural agencies? How could we get them to work together more closely?

We agreed on no universally accepted standards, but as the meetings went on, we did reach enough consensus to come up with a series of recommendations:

> The entire field is terribly undernourished and needs far more vigorous fiscal support from the communities. (Not at all surprising.)
>
> To remedy the situation, a National Foundation for Jewish Culture should be established which, among other responsibilities, should provide grants for encouraging first class scholarly work, should create a Council of Cultural Agencies to coordinate the work in the field, should help communities to develop their own cultural programs and should in general act as a "central address" for the entire cultural field. (All this *would* be new on the national scene.)
>
> Chairs of Jewish studies at colleges and universities should be actively encouraged.

Additional specific suggestions and recommendations were made in each of the four fields we had identified as being our responsibility. But these were still only recommendations. The payoff would be in the action taken in San Francisco, where the Council of Jewish Federations would hold its annual meeting, and then in subsequent actions (or lack of action) in the local communities. Would the CJF accept our recommendations? Would the local communities follow up by making the necessary grants?

Phil Bernstein cleared a choice spot on the General Assembly program—the opening evening session—for Judah and me to present our reports and the committee's recommendations. What followed made history, both for the Council and for me. I lump the two together because my sudden emergence on the national scene was largely due to my good fortune in being in the right place at the right time. The national community was obviously ready and eager for a new direction in its work, adding a cultural dimension to its traditional concerns with planning and budgeting and fund-raising.

The presentation in San Francisco was sheer triumph. On only a few other occasions have I felt an audience to be so totally responsive. I began this way:

> The theme of our report to you tonight is time. . . . Throughout our history we have been a people with a profound sense of time; we have been a history drenched people. Our values have been so rooted in the past that the present took on such meaning and the future was given such purpose that we could endure the hostility of the outside world with serenity. We were anchored.
>
> But American Jewry in recent generations, our study essentially states, lost this precious sensitivity to time, to the past as a living guide to the future.
>
> And no wonder. Everything about new and bustling America was centered on the present. "The past is a bucket of ashes," wrote Carl Sandburg in a revealing line of poetry. . . . And we Jews, the most adaptable of peoples, joined with enthusiasm and great skill in the American emphasis on the tangible and practical problems of everyday life. And thank God that we did! . . . When the present impinges as cruelly as it has on Jewry in recent times, there can be little time or energy for the long range challenges of the cultural future.
>
> Now is the time, our study essentially says, to overcome the imbalance resulting from a present not well rooted in the past and not well related to the future. The whole world has learned how terrifying is practical, technological accomplishment if it is not accompanied by what, for want of a better term, we might call spiritual perspective, a sense of history, of deep roots, of direction . . . of time.

And so on to the specifics of our recommendations. Judah followed me with his own summary, and the evening was a complete smash.

Lew Weinstein and Phil Lown, both of Boston, both towering figures in Jewish community life, hauled me to one side after I had been mobbed by well-wishers and urged me to accept the directorship of an important national agency. I was bewildered. On the basis of one study—actually, one talk? The honeymoon lasted long enough to accomplish the establishment of the recommended National Foundation for Jewish Culture, with which I have been closely associated ever since.

But honeymoons end. I have already described Judah Shapiro's unhappiness with the failure of the Foundation to become an instant overwhelming success, a major institution serving a major interest of the American community. I share the disappointment that what we had dreamed might happen after San Francisco didn't turn out just as we had hoped. Few things do, as my civil rights experiences taught me. The Foundation has, I believe, made a valuable contribution to American Jewish life, particularly by its splendid grants program, making possible hundreds of first-rate scholarly studies and no doubt attracting a number of fine young talents to the Jewish field who might otherwise have wandered off to other studies. Numerous chairs of Jewish studies were created. A Council of Jewish Agencies was established. A program in the arts is being launched. But the hopes that the Jewish community would address itself to the problems of Jewish culture with the same vigor that it turned to philanthropic challenges were obviously overblown. As we remarked even that night in San Francisco, our enduring Jewish respect for culture too often takes on the form satirized by the saying: *Culture far yenem* (Culture's for the other guy.) Israeli cultural institutions still get a far more sympathetic response than do our own indigenous organizations. Nevertheless, a strong start was made, a cultural corner was turned, an enduring commitment was forged. As for me, from that time on I was in constant demand nationally, both as a speaker and as a consultant in a variety of fields. I had found my spot in San Francisco.

PACE AND THE UNITED FREEDOM MOVEMENT

The contrast between the relatively peaceful and optimistic fifties and the turbulent sixties was as sharp in Cleveland as everywhere else. Immersed first in the passage of civil rights legislation and then in its implementation, we did not foresee the violent developments that grew in intensity during the decade. Vietnam and

Watergate were still in the future, but the mood of disillusionment and militancy was already apparent. Many of us full-time civil rights campaigners were unprepared for the change in climate. We still measured social progress in terms of equal opportunity, but now the demand was for equality of results. Legislation and action by the courts helped the talented and the trained to break through traditional barriers of discrimination, but huge numbers were simply not equipped to take advantage of the new opportunities. Reminded daily by TV of the growing affluence of the society as a whole, the dispossessed grew impatient as the years went on with limited progress that seemingly didn't extend to them. They wanted in.

An example of both the constructive contribution and the weakness of the gradualist approach was the experience of the PACE organization. I was out of town in 1962 when I got an urgent call from Hugh Calkins, whom I knew only casually as a dynamic and respected young attorney with a particular interest in public education. He told me that he had been appointed chairman of a new committee called PACE (Plan for Action by Citizens in Education) that had been funded for a year to study the problem of education in Cleveland and make appropriate recommendations for improvement. He urged me to join the committee, a relatively small one of twenty-three members who were broadly representative of the community.

Membership in PACE turned out to be quite an experience. We were united by our desire to improve the quality of public education, which we agreed was approaching a critical stage, but there was a lot of difference in how we individually defined the nature of the growing crisis. Some members were absorbed in the fiscal difficulties of the schools as their tax base eroded, particularly in the Cleveland school district. Others were primarily concerned with the "Why can't Johnny read?" question, or with the need to provide better lay leadership for school boards. My prime interest was reflected in a letter I wrote in response to Hugh's suggestion that each member define the problems he thought should be canvassed. I wrote (in part):

> Many children being educated now in Cleveland will live as adults in the suburbs or elsewhere and, in any event, artificial polit-

ical boundaries cannot obscure the fact that in a broader sense we form a single functioning community. Yet our many school systems live in isolation from one another.

Despite Supreme Court decisions, our children are being taught in more segregated schools, even if of the *de facto* variety, than ever before. We still have a few public schools that are racially heterogeneous, but they are getting fewer. Most are either overwhelmingly or completely white or Negro. . . . We pay a staggering price, in my judgment, for this condition—in a growing indifference to the problems of the central city, in less comfortableness in the face of cultural diversities.

What can we do about it? That is the challenge to our committee.

In view of the way the desegregation issue later tore the Cleveland system to pieces, my advice on its crucial importance seems sound enough. But at the time, it wasn't easy selling my suggestions even to the committee members, let alone to the schools. Not that the members were ideologically resistant to the idea that the schools should integrate. They simply didn't see the problem as a major priority. Nevertheless, they were dedicated, forward-looking, and worked their heads off. We met regularly once a week for a full year, either in the evening or on Saturday morning, mostly in the headquarters of the PACE Association in the Arcade, which was a lonely place at night. And there were dozens of subcommittee meetings.

I nagged so much that I was appointed chairman of a committee on intergroup relations. Other members headed up other committees that debated basic educational issues. Maybe that was one trouble. We covered so many topics, all of them important (finances, school board membership, community involvement, etc.), that we wound up with twenty-six major recommendations, making it difficult for any one of them to stand out. Two came from my committee, and their lead sentences read as follows:

Recommendation 20: The human relations problem in the schools is not merely to eliminate deliberate discrimination but, more significantly, to counteract the practical segregation that results from the countless practices of modern urban life. The prob-

> lem, in other words, is to move from a policy of neutrality, which possibly was adequate in the 1950s, to a policy of forward movement, which is essential today.
>
> *Recommendation 21*: A Human Relations Center should be established to serve as a central source of teaching aids, statistics, and other resources. A community which adopts an affirmative action policy on human relations will not lack for opportunities to effectuate it. . . . Children interested in specific fields should be brought together for intensive instruction.

As obvious and even non-controversial as such mild suggestions now seem, they were hot issues at the time. The debates were gentlemanly enough, but occasionally they grew heated when it came to deciding what was most important and most doable. I only regret that when it came to the bottom line of putting first things first I wasn't even more of a crank.

Calkins as chairman drove us along at a furious pace, sparing himself least of all. Helen Bond, who had been active in the community in a variety of ways and knew how to get things done, demonstrated what could be accomplished by total concentration on an issue. She undertook almost singlehandedly to rectify the disgraceful absence of libraries in the Cleveland elementary schools. By the time she was finished with her self-appointed task of interesting appropriate community leaders, there was a library in every public school. It would have been better if I had fought equally tenaciously without being distracted by other problems. It would have been a favor to various school systems to have embarrassed them more pointedly; they would have been saved much grief later.

To some extent, I was inhibited by my liking for my colleagues, who in large measure did not share my insistence on change. Sam Salem was the first executive director. He was of Lebanese descent, which made for some uneasy joshing when we occasionally chatted about the situation in the Mideast. Robert Binswanger succeeded him after the PACE report was published and we were given a renewed mandate beyond the year of the study to try to implement our recommendations. Bob was enthusiastic, personable, and articulate (at least, articulate enough to go from PACE

to a position on the faculty of the School of Education at Harvard and then, inevitably, to responsibilities in Washington) but he lacked the drive and the toughness needed to brush aside the monumental conservatism of many school districts. Maybe I should have pushed the professionals harder, though at the time I was accused of being almost paranoid about the desegregation issue.

In any case, events overtook us. The pace of PACE was too gradual to keep up with developments as the decade wore on. Churning forces coalesced around a new organization, the United Freedom Movement, that wasn't much minded to operate through committees or carefully balanced reports. More and more, direct action became the name of the game.

The immediate issue that led to the formation of the UFM was the overcrowding in inner city schools. The baby boom following the return of soldiers from the World War II produced a flood of school children in the early sixties that the schools were unprepared to handle, even though there had obviously been advance warning of the coming surge of youngsters. At first the schools tried to get by with half-day sessions in the crowded areas, plus suspending kindergartens. The outcry, particularly from the inner city, was immediate and strong, no doubt heightened by the expectations aroused by the Supreme Court desegregation decisions. Reluctantly, the School Board yielded to the pressure by busing full classes, almost always completely black, to schools with more space, mostly all white. On arrival, the classes were kept intact, allegedly sealed off from the original settlers. The result was that the system suffered all the difficulties of busing with none of the advantages. Students were subjected to the inconvenience of busing but no integration took place.

Protests mounted. Demonstrations were held at school headquarters; passionate meetings were held under the sponsorship of the UFM. The School Board announced a policy of "diffusion," calling for a gradual absorption of the bused students into the host schools. But the action came too little and much too late.

Next, the School Board announced that a number of new schools would be built immediately in the crowded sections of the

city to relieve the situation. Certainly *that* would provide a satisfactory solution; the central city would now have the newest schools of all. Instead, the new policy increased the tension. The protesters claimed that the sites chosen were not only inadequate but selected in such a fashion as to assure continued segregation. The Board's sudden building program, it was charged, reflected an indecent haste to preserve separation.

Impasse! In keeping with the escalating tempo of resistance in the civil rights struggles in the South, more forceful techniques were introduced. First there were sit-ins, then school administration headquarters were forcibly taken over. Protesters at the building sites prevented construction workers from getting on with their work. Finally, a boycott of the school system was organized. Parents were urged to send their children to the new "Freedom Schools," whose hastily constructed curriculum put overwhelming emphasis on the students' racial heritage.

Confrontations grew particularly severe in the Murray Hill ("Little Italy") district and in Collinwood, where parents organized in opposition to the busing, while still claiming that their interest was in preserving neighborhood schools and values, not animus to any ethnic group. That was the official line; the reality was that both sides were so prepared for violence that the police were constantly called in. Soon their performance too was suspect, as charges of police brutality and prejudice were raised.

Almost nightly, meetings of the new United Freedom Movement were held, with constantly growing audiences demanding action. The situation reached a climax when a young white Protestant clergyman, Bruce Klunder, was run over and killed by a tractor while he joined in protesting construction at one of the new sites. The meetings more and more became large, amorphous affairs. Small new organizations with names like "Freedom Fighters" or "Housewives and Shoppers" began springing up overnight, completely impatient with traditional organizational procedures. They wanted action, quick. As is always the case in such situations, militants took over, and those who struck notes of caution or spoke up for gradualism lost their credentials.

I learned a lot at those meetings about the nature of the "power

structure," a term much used at the time. It conveyed the idea that an unchanging group, made up primarily of corporate heads with a sprinkling of political figures and attorneys, ran things in town and made all the decisions that counted. No doubt there was truth in that assumption, but it was only a partial truth. Actually, during those turbulent years the power structure shifted from week to week and happening to happening. One of the real tragedies was the *lack* of any ongoing, responsible power structure. The problem was more the absence of a strong center in the city to make things happen than the resistance of a rigid, entrenched vested interest. The UFM itself for a time wielded considerable power. Its outstanding leader was a former school teacher, Ruth Turner, who was an unknown before the emergence of the UFM. She soon faded out of the picture, but for several months, by her combination of self-assurance, dignity, and readiness for action, she probably had a more decisive influence on how things went in the city than any corporate head. When she took the floor at a meeting of the United Freedom Movement during those tense days, hers was the voice that counted.

And where was the traditional power structure meanwhile? It formed a Businessmen's Interracial Council and other temporary organizations to keep up with the fast-breaking events, without much success. I attended some of the weekly breakfast meetings of representatives of major businesses and minority groups, where problems and solutions were endlessly debated. Considerable money was found for various projects in the central city without enough care being given to how the funds were utilized. In general, the city moved (or didn't move) not according to a script cleverly worked out by an all-knowing clique, but erratically, as first one organization or individual and then another briefly exercised power, often through mounting threats of destruction if their demands were not met.

In such a climate the Jewish community, which by this time had almost literally no children in the Cleveland school system, had no central role to play. However, both PACE and the Community Relations Board provided means for us to make suggestions for resolving the crisis. But the mood was growing ugly and I

attempted to express what had been learned from the conflict during a lull in 1964, following a temporary truce that had been painfully worked out, in a report to the Federation Board:

1. The withdrawal from the city not only of Jews but of an overwhelming number of other leaders deprives the school board (and many other Cleveland institutions) of desperately needed responsible candidates for public office, and makes for the election of mediocrities. It also tends to neutralize the pressure that can be exerted by many liberal, but suburban groups.
2. The role of the papers and the TV was helpful on the editorial page and harmful on the news pages. Their positions were on the whole intelligent and constructive in their editorial comment, but the enormous playing up of the conflict added to the fever, particularly as the heady taste of publicity encouraged everyone to try to get into the act.
3. The business community (and almost the entire "power structure") remained totally silent, despite repeated attempts to enlist their aid. Its suburban orientation certainly helped produce this negative role. The vacuum left by their lack of leadership is another key to understanding the situation.
4. The Catholic church, recently emerging vigorously from its traditional isolation, increasingly withdrew from the struggle as an ally of the UFM as the thrust for direct action moved toward defiance of the law. To some extent, the same observation holds for the other two religious groups.
5. Within the Negro community, almost all the old line leaders faded into the background and were severely criticized by the activists. Particularly inept were the Negro ministers, who played almost no role, seemed out of date when they spoke, and at the last moment tried desperately to recapture some leadership. With one exception, the leaders were laymen and there was very little of the "Christian" in this movement.
6. The activists were in substantial measure unknowns, some of whom have displayed real leadership ability. The role of the Negro parents was real "grass roots" with a healthy emphasis on good education. There is some talk of the emergence of a "Negro community," which has certainly not existed heretofore. I would doubt this; the strongly disparate

elements in the UFM are held together only in crisis, when external pressures are at their peak. It remains to be seen whether in the showdown at election time, the new element can successfully challenge the traditional leadership.

7. Racism is rising. Even the most faithful white members of CORE, who were literally ready to give their lives, were made to feel at times of greatest tension that no white man can be trusted.
8. Significant sections of the UFM consciously desire trouble and unrest. They have in effect quit on the normal process of negotiation and view turmoil as a necessary condition to smash the smugness that engulfs our northern cities. Their followers are not so sophisticated; they are stirred into wild joy at anything that upsets the white man.
9. Although responsible (and even brilliant) leaders of the UFM were able to retain, with difficulty, the fundamental decision-making power, they did it only within limits prescribed by the militants. No voice could be raised as to where all this action was headed, or how great a price should be paid or what the relationship to the total good of the community might be, or the wisdom or lack of it of lawlessness. Questions could only be effectively raised as to how much could be gained by one course as opposed to another, with a pervading bias in the direction of militance.
10. The community as a whole comes out of the experience favorably disposed toward the fundamental UFM case (integration of the transported school children), unsympathetic to the school picketing, outraged at the final lawlessness of the militant groups, but highly critical of police ineptness.
11. A case could be made that some progress has been made in dispelling the cloud of "good will" that has characterized this city, thus making necessary a confrontation of real issues. But there can be no doubt that militance on all fronts has dangerously escalated. The blood of the Negro community is up and so is that of substantial sections of the white community. Both groups now talk in terms of a coming showdown and it will be a job of the first order to prevent it—in Cleveland or anywhere else.

The showdown was not long in coming. An already serious situation deteriorated into violence in 1968 when the Glenville

area, once the very center of Jewish life, erupted. Carl Stokes was then mayor. He had come into office because of racial pride by the black community and the fear of whites that further disasters would follow if the weak leadership of the previous administration continued. The result was a temporary civic unity with a promise of possible progress unparalleled before or since. Stokes was the first black mayor of a large city; he had good looks, political savvy, intelligence, and much personal attractiveness. The city was thoroughly frightened and ready to follow new and unprecedented leadership.

I had known Carl during my FEPC days when he was one of the prime leaders in the campaigns for that legislation. I had enjoyed working both with him and his brother, Lou Stokes, on various civic committees. He had given me credit, far too much credit, for helping him get his son accepted in an exclusive private school, breaking the color line there. It was a major tragedy both for Carl Stokes and for the city that despite great initial promise, his Cleveland career didn't work out. He put the blame on the unresponsiveness of the establishment and the media as well as the continuing crustiness of the "ethnic types." One can grant cogency in each of those charges and still lament how much he himself contributed to the unhappy results. As a legislator, he was skillful; he was an effective speaker who played the political game knowledgeably. But he soon tired of the dreary day-by-day wrestling with the multitude of little problems inevitable in the executive function, from repair of potholes to supervising restless police and fire departments—none of them particularly dramatic or satisfying issues. Follow through was not his strong point.

One day, Maurie Saltzman, Stokes, and I met in my office to discuss a variety of problems, but mostly how we could be helpful to the administration. Maurie mentioned in passing that he himself faced a difficult situation at his factory. Security was becoming a problem and there was a possibility he might have to move to a suburb from his central city location if better police protection was not provided. I expected Stokes to give the obvious reassurances or at least to say he would look into the matter, since the possible loss of jobs would be a serious blow to the city. Moreover, he had come to us to ask our help and I thought he would be

responsive to Maurie's problem in return. To my surprise, Carl's instant advice was to move out, expressed without regret or concern.

At another time he called on the three religious faiths to provide funding and manpower for a study (with recommendations for action) of welfare problems in Cleveland, since the city was fiscally too strapped to undertake the responsibility itself. Together with the other two religious groups, we picked up the tab for the project and provided more than our share of lay leadership. Herman Stein, then provost of Case Western Reserve University, was the chairman of the Survey Commission. Although he was not our direct appointee, he was a member of our Board of Trustees and a vital Jewish community leader. As a matter of fact, Stokes had a number of Jewish leaders in his entourage and in general could have commanded almost any response from us. But that undertaking, like almost all others he began, got only his initial strong interest and leadership. When the problems grew complicated, he all but dropped out.

A dramatic moment in the Stokes story came at our annual "Brother's Keeper Award" luncheon. It was a prestigious yearly event, instigated and funded by Harry Stone to honor a member of the general community who best illustrated by a courageous act what it meant to be your brother's keeper. That year our choice for speaker was General Benjamin O. Davis, who had been chosen with much hoopla by Stokes as his safety director. As the highest ranking black member of the United States Army, he had a national reputation and was almost as charismatic as Stokes. Inevitably, the two men had a falling out; they were too much alike and too competitive to share the limelight for long. Stokes fired Davis the day before our meeting. Suddenly, an event that was usually genteel and full of generalized good will became a front page, frenzied affair complete with television crews and cameras eager to record Davis' reply to his firing. We were innocent and bemused bystanders in another chapter in the breakdown of the civic love affair with Stokes.

A rather strange and certainly unforeseen by-product of the increasing militancy all around us was our strengthened relationship with the Catholic community. Until the sixties the Jewish

community was clearly the leader in the civil rights movement, and the Catholics were the most conservative. True, on occasions such as publicized legislative hearings we had managed to forge a kind of ad hoc unity so that we could produce spokesmen from all three faiths, but as far as day-to-day responsibilities were concerned, there was good cooperation by a number of Protestant denominations, but only token support from the Catholics. Now everything changed. The traditional Church Federation (Protestant) was replaced by a completely re-organized Cleveland Interchurch Council, strongly dominated by activists. The Catholics were torn two ways. They were responding locally to the worldwide changes in Catholicism, particularly during the papacy of John XXIII, propelling them far more actively toward social concerns. On the other hand, in Cleveland they were as uncomfortable as we were with the growing domination of social amelioration movements by unstructured organizations (or non-organizations) that were volatile and unpredictable. So the organized Jewish and Catholic communities grew closer together as they found common ground in seeking to advance human rights through more orderly and gradualist methods than the United Freedom Movement and its numerous successors could accept.

For a number of years we had been "dialoguing" (a favorite word at the time) with the other two religious faiths, exploring grounds for better understanding and more common action. For several years the relationship was institutionalized in a "Conference on Religion and Race," with Rabbi Daniel Silver and Jordan Band providing much of the Jewish leadership. During the summers I had often been the Jewish representative, usually with Father Ed Camille for the Catholics and Reverend Emanuel Branch for the Protestants in intergroup relations workshops at Western Reserve University. Now these generalized discussions took on more specific meaning. I found myself working with Ed Camille on almost a daily basis in response to the dramatic events around us. Our relation grew so close that if I picked up the phone and the voice on the other end greeted me with "Shalom, shalom. . . ." I knew it was Father Camille calling.

That association helped me realize that I had been the victim of

my own stereotyping in assuming that the Catholic community would be unresponsive to our human rights activities. I set about nourishing our relations with the personnel at the *Catholic Universe Bulletin*, the diocesan paper, and became close friends with Joe Breig, columnist and chief editorial writer there. We soon found we shared common views not only on matters of social change but on other issues as well. We even learned to live comfortably with issues on which we did not agree. I had the good fortune a few years later to be his host during his trip to Israel, where I marvelled at his ability to get along on a minimum of food and a maximum of beer. His subsequent articles on Israel, widely syndicated throughout the country, were models of interpreting life and issues there.

The high point of our work in this area in the sixties was our Glenville Project. We slowly came to realize that our role had indeed changed—that leadership in the direct action programs now had properly passed to the blacks themselves. What then were our new responsibilities? The Jewish community had completely moved out of the Glenville area but deep emotional ties remained. We thought it might be worthwhile to build on them constructively. Working with whatever neighborhood groups we could find, we tried to identify the needs in the neighborhood and the steps that could be taken to meet them. We decided to concentrate on Glenville High School, of which we had such fond memories. In the course of four years, almost two dozen projects were initiated under a variety of sponsorships. One Jewish organization undertook tutorial programs for the kids who needed remedial help. Another concentrated on legal problems, offering to guide those not knowledgeable about their rights through the thickets of legal maneuvers. Mt. Sinai Hospital worked with a committee attempting to upgrade health standards. Another organization formed a Scholars' Club, encouraging the more talented students to go on to college by providing a whole array of services. In every case, attempts were made to form teams composed of both Jews and blacks to provide the services, thus eliminating any hint of the traditional do-gooder approach.

In view of the tragic and bloody events in Glenville at the end of the decade, it is easy to be skeptical about the results of our ef-

forts. But that would be falling into a misjudgment to which conceptualizers are particularly prone—to be so conscious of historical developments that individual developments are overlooked. The lives of thousands of Glenville residents were positively affected, as an impressive number of graduates of the many programs continue to testify. And in the Jewish community hundreds had an opportunity to substitute real contacts with real people for generalized commitments to human rights.

Nevertheless, the shoot-outs in Glenville brought an unhappy conclusion to our work there. I was working in Israel in 1968. As we arrived at a dinner party, the host greeted us with: "What happened today in your Cleveland?" He had heard a melodramatic account on the radio about rioting in Cleveland. The reality was bad enough but his report, filtering in from thousands of miles away, warped by language barriers and a lack of understanding of totally different social and political circumstances, made it sound frightful. I was horrified at the account of blood running in the streets of Cleveland as blacks confronted whites in a shoot-out in a district called Glenville, with the "military" (the National Guard, it turned out) preserving order. Cleveland was never the same thereafter. Neither was the nature of our work in human relations.

That work had been anchored for a generation in the intimate teamwork of blacks and Jews. As the two most obvious "out" groups in history, they seemed bound together so securely by common interests that their alliance appeared permanently fixed. Just as Martin Luther King and Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel marched together arm in arm on the national scene, so throughout the civil rights struggles local leaders of the two communities provided the leadership and the inspiration for the various campaigns, nowhere more notably than in Cleveland.

Now everything was rapidly changing. The Jewish community could hardly qualify any longer as an "out" group as it rose near or to the very top of the so-called socioeconomic ladder. Moreover, it became increasingly absorbed in the unceasing struggles of Israel to survive in the face of bitter hostility. Strong appeals were made to "look inward" as the organized community was enlisted in the fight against creeping assimilation—a responsibil-

ity made more compelling and poignant as the full effects of the Holocaust were slowly realized.

The changes in the situation of the black community were equally profound. The philosophy of "black is beautiful" was aimed at nourishing racial pride, but one inevitable effect was increased isolation. "Do it yourself" was the new slogan in organizational life. Strong Jewish involvement in the NAACP, Karamu (the renowned local theater-community center serving blacks), CORE, and other groups came to a precipitate end as it was made clear that only blacks were welcome in leadership positions and often, even into membership. The honeymoon period in relationships was over. A study of anti-Semitism in 1981 revealed a sharp and continuing drop in anti-Jewish attitudes in all sectors of American society—except for the black community! There they had increased.

Perhaps that should not be surprising. In family life growing up often involves revolt—most frequently against those who are closest. The black community was maturing, as it frequently proclaimed, and the closest members of the family, so to speak, were in the Jewish community. A dramatic example of this closeness occurred in the early sixties, when Councilman (later Federal Judge) George White led a delegation to our office, asking our help in creating a Negro Community Federation to be based squarely on our Jewish model. I protested that the experience and the methods of organization of the two communities were so different that it was a mistake to copy our pattern literally, even to adopting our name. I supplied them with full background materials, including our constitution and major committee documents, and met with them a number of times, but I urged that they adapt the material to suit their very different needs and totally different communal organization. My advice wasn't followed. Either they were so impressed with our results or they were so intent on producing a structure quickly that they copied our format closely—at least in their formal documents—and actually established an organization that held together for some time. It was a testimonial to the good feelings and mutual respect that had characterized our relationships for so many years.

But now we were in a new and quite different era; the old part-

nership was dissolved. But just as the period of youthful revolt usually is succeeded by maturity and a renewed and more secure position in the family, possibly the sense of essential comradeship, or at least deep mutual understanding, between the two communities can be reestablished, on a different basis. This is not just a pious wish. In business and in politics, new contacts are being forged, perhaps less personal than in "the good old days," but based on more normal and equal status. The potentially explosive issue of affirmative action programs, which at one point threatened to pit the two communities against one another, is evidently being accommodated without major turmoil. Historically, the most explosive element in black-white relationships has been in housing, but here too there is a realistic basis for long-term improvement. Blacks have moved impressively into the middle class and even into affluence while continuing their traditional pattern of choosing Jewish neighborhoods in which to live. For their part, Jews are less inclined to move outward again as prices escalate and it becomes increasingly apparent that there is no longer any escape from mixed neighborhoods. The result is more living together in a stable fashion than in the past, as illustrated most dramatically in Federation's Heights Area Project, to be described subsequently.

The old days of intimate alliance are over. The traditional coalition of blacks-Jews-labor-liberals is not likely to be restored, at least as we knew it. But a new generation may find its own ways of creating bonds of common action so clearly called for by the long historical record of the two peoples.

THE CLEVELAND JEWISH NEWS

In the late fifties it became embarrassingly clear that whatever its accomplishments in other fields, Cleveland was no leader in the world of Jewish newspapers. There were two weeklies, the *Jewish Independent* and the *Review and Observer*, both in existence for

many years. The *Independent* was founded before the first World War; the *Review and Observer* was even older, going back to the nineteenth century. But neither was any longer much of a newspaper. Both had become essentially scissors and paste jobs, relying on hand-outs from organizations seasoned with an occasional feature and a bit of syndicated news from the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. The "personals" (announcements of engagements, marriages, deaths, etc.) were what enabled the papers to retain what pathetically little circulation remained.

Both papers were still owned by the families who had originally founded them years ago. They had served the community well enough in their earlier years and no one wanted to hurt them by establishing a competing paper. The residual good will was particularly evident in the case of the *Independent*, whose editor for many decades was Leo Wiedenthal, brother of Maurice, who had founded the paper early in the century. What to do? After considerable informal discussion by the officers of Federation, I was commissioned to explore with Leo the possibility of selling his paper to some more vigorous group. We were confident that if he did, the Wertheimer family, owner of the *Review and Observer*, would follow suit.

Nobody could be further from the usual stereotype of a newspaper editor than Leo Wiedenthal. Soft-spoken, painfully modest and retiring, always dressed in sober black, he hated the controversy which nourishes so many papers. In fact, his interests didn't seem to lie primarily in a journalistic direction. He was a passionate admirer of the stage, properly proud of his splendid collection of old programs culled from the golden age of the theater before radio and TV took over. Equally impressive were the rare books he had acquired. His most stunning civic accomplishment was conceiving and then selling the idea of the Cultural Gardens along Liberty Boulevard. Every time I drive past that magnificent succession of ethnic gardens between Superior and St. Clair avenues, now desecrated by so much brainless destruction, I grieve over how far we have strayed in our national violence from the gentle good will toward all men that was the world of Leo Wiedenthal.

I got nowhere with Leo at that interview, except for swapping



Jewish Community Council, 1943. Meeting of the Executive Committee, President Philmore Haber presiding.



Signing the Proclamation Celebrating the Tercentenary of Jewish Settlement in America, 1954. Seated left to right*: Ezra Shapiro, Irving Kane, Mayor Anthony Celebrezze, Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver.* Standing left to right*: Sigmund Braverman, James Miller, Abe Nebel, Harry Barron, Hyman Horowitz, Executive Director Henry L. Zucker.*



Addressing the General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations on the Twentieth Anniversary of the Founding of the National Foundation for Jewish Culture, San Francisco, 1978.



Signing of the Public Accommodations Law, Columbus, Ohio, July 30, 1961. Left to right: *Charles P. Lucas, legislative representative, Ohio Committee for Civil Rights Legislation; Sidney Z. Vincent, Associate Director, Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland; Sam Weisberg, Director, Ohio Committee for Civil Rights Legislation; Governor Michael V. DiSalle; Rep. David Albritton, sponsor of the bill; Rep. William A. Milligan, sponsor and Chairman of the House Labor and Industry Committee.*



First Federation Mission to Israel, 1959. Conference immediately on landing at Lod Airport. Left to right: *Chaim Vinitsky of the United Jewish Appeal, Vincent, and Tour Leader Maurice Saltzman.*



First Federation Mission to Israel, 1959. Visit to Ayanot Agricultural School of Pioneer Women's Organization.



First Federation Mission to Israel, 1959. Reception by President Yitzhak Ben Zvi.



Opening the First International Conference of Jewish Communal Service, Jerusalem, 1967

some views about a couple of productions then playing on Broadway. Putting out a publication each week was clearly getting to be a burden for him at his age, but he was not yet ready to let go. However, a few years later he was. Henry Rocker, his lawyer and a former Federation president, called to say that the time was now ripe for doing business. A period of intense negotiations followed. Should the new newspaper be a Federation property or should it be privately owned? If the former, how to keep it from becoming a house organ? If the latter, who would be the new owners? Should it be run for profit or should it be put on a nonprofit basis? What should be its relationship with Federation?

Larry Williams, acting both as legal guide and as community leader, and I undertook research on all these questions through correspondence, telephoning, and occasional visits to other communities that had gone through similar experiences. But research was only the first step. There followed months of frantic activity, culminating in thirty community leaders taking responsibility for establishing a new publication as an independent, nonprofit enterprise. They guaranteed a bank loan of $155,000 to purchase the two existing papers and to provide start-up financing for the new one. Their interest went far beyond money. They wrestled with problems as diverse as naming the paper, staffing it, housing it, arranging for its printing, determining fundamental editorial policy, and shaping its relationship with the Federation.

I tried to capture some of the excitement of those days in a piece I wrote for the paper when it celebrated its tenth anniversary in 1974:

> The discussions went on for months—formally in private homes and offices; informally at parties, on street corners, everywhere.
>
> One by one, the questions were resolved. Mike Glass worked out the financial arrangements. Larry Williams was the legal expert. Al Soltz found a place for business in the Film Building. Nelson Stern chaired a series of meetings to establish editorial policy. Lloyd Schwenger found himself elected president, with Irving Kane as chief negotiator whenever sticky problems arose, as they constantly did.
>
> All 30 trustees were involved at one time or another in the interviews that led to the selection of Arthur Weyne and Bernice Green

to handle the editorial staff and Al Hersh and Phil Edlis to get the business end started.

But no mere listing of names or responsibilities can capture the mounting tempo of those nine months climaxing finally in the first number of the paper on October 24, 1964.

The presidents who followed Lloyd Schwenger were Ben Zevin, Max Axelrod (who served by far the longest term in the office), Wilton Sogg, and Vic Gelb. They couldn't have been more devoted to the paper if it had been their own private enterprise instead of a massive imposition on their time and their serenity.

The *News* has obviously been a vast improvement over its predecessors and plays an important role in the functioning of the community. And yet, it remains true in Cleveland as throughout the country that the Jewish press has not yet achieved its full maturity. No English language publication has attained anything like the role once played by the Yiddish press in the life of the immigrant generation, nor have we produced anything to compare with the *London Jewish Chronicle* in its heyday. Curious, in a people so enamored of good writing, so active in the field of general journalism, and so productive in the world of magazines, where first-rate publications are taken for granted. There are many explanations for this lack, but the lack persists. In the general community newspapers are a major interpreter and frequently, for better or for worse, a determinant of public policy. In the Jewish community they have not attained that kind of influence. But that fact of Jewish life in no way derogates from the splendid record of the *Cleveland Jewish News* in elevating the standard of Cleveland's newspaper from mediocrity to respectability and competence.

LIFE AS A PROFESSIONAL

I had now been in the field of communal service long enough so that I began to have responsibilities to my professional colleagues throughout the country. My first national office, except for serv-

ing on the NCRAC Executive Committee, came with election as president of the Association of Jewish Community Relations Workers. It was not a particularly notable achievement, since the office was more or less rotated among directors of community relations in the larger communities. If I made a distinctive contribution during my term of office, it was toward making the field more professional. That had its ironic side as I had had no specific professional training whatever and even felt embarrassed when I had to note my profession on various legal forms or when the children, questioned at school about their father's occupation, would ask, "What do you do anyway?"

It was a tough question to answer. Social worker? Where was my training? Communal worker? No one would understand what that meant. Executive? Too generalized and too pretentious. Whatever my job definition, I faced a dilemma. I wanted to preserve the spontaneity and freedom from stuffiness and professional jargon characteristic of my colleagues, but I also felt the need for more rigorous evaluation and better prepared presentations at meetings. There was too much "show and tell." I wanted to move beyond reporting particular happenings or techniques to formulating general guidelines for action and conduct. Also, I was shocked by the lack of pension arrangements and other elementary protections in many communities. No respectable professional should tolerate such conditions of neglect. If we were part of "the Jewish civil service," as some of us claimed, then we should set standards for ourselves and be treated in accordance with that professional status.

As one symbol of our progress toward professionalism, I thought it important that we should meet at places conducive to real thinking. On several occasions we gathered at Arden House, a lovely mountain retreat the Harriman family had given to Columbia University to be used for high level conferences. It was an ideal meeting place, perfect for "think" conventions. Isolated on top of a wooded mountain just west of the Hudson River but within easy distance of New York, its whole atmosphere encouraged thoughtful debate and relaxed concentration. My memories of the place abound in sense impressions—sights and sounds and

smells. There were huge bowls of apples in the hallways, obviously collected from the trees abounding round about; they gave off such a fragrance that I still cannot bite into a juicy McIntosh without bringing back memories of Arden House. There were log fires blazing here and there; nothing promotes a mood of contemplation better. There was nowhere to go to distract you from your work except to walk around the grounds, where there were only the deer to consult. The presentations and the debate seemed to flourish under such ideal circumstances.

We re-examined many of our assumptions. For example, we had hotly denied for years that there was any such thing as a "Jewish vote." Now, under the impact of issues of major importance in which the Jewish community obviously had a great stake, like the many thorny questions affecting Israel's future, we gradually put aside what was essentially a defensive mechanism and addressed the issues forthrightly, speaking out more and more commonly in our own name. Our role in the civil rights movement was undergoing major change as our traditional alliances with blacks, labor, and liberals turned out to be too simple an arrangement to cope with an increasingly complex world. We debated at length the questions involved in the relationship of our field of community relations with federations, as well as the mutual responsibilities of local community relations agencies and the national agencies.

Through the influence of our colleague in San Francisco, Earl Raab, a selected group of us participated in a week-long seminar on "Problems of the Inner City" at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions at Santa Barbara. Now *there* was a think tank! Robert Hutchins, the founder and guiding spirit of the enterprise, welcomed us and remained for several sessions during the week. The real leader of the seminar, however, was Howard K. Smith, already a major name in TV and journalism, although his contributions on ABC were still to come. Except for the dozen of us from our professional field, the rest were nationally known personalities. I happened to sit throughout the week next to Linus Pauling, the only winner of Nobel prizes in two separate fields. Under the stimulus of shared discussion and debate, plus his

warmth and approachability, we chatted together at odd moments as equals. One afternoon he turned to me and said in his gentle, almost halting way, "I will not be here for the session this afternoon. I have another matter I wish to concentrate on. Will you keep notes for me?"

Of course, I assured him, and then added with a rather clumsy jocularity to mask my admiration for him: "I suppose you will be concentrating on some intricate problems of the structure of the atom?"

He responded, still quietly, in that slow voice, "Something like that. And anyway, I often cannot follow what you fellows are saying. It sometimes gets too complicated for me."

"Really?" I said. "You are going off this afternoon to concentrate on the structure of the atom—or something like that—and you find what *we* are talking about to be too complicated?"

"Oh," he protested, "the problems of the inner city are far more complicated than the problems of the atom."

And so they are.

Becoming president of the community relations workers automatically put me on the Executive Committee of the National Conference of Jewish Communal Services (NCJCS), the overall organization that includes group workers, educators, case workers and substantially all other fields of Jewish communal service. (The NCJCS has now become the CJCS, dropping the "National" in deference to its Canadian members.) I took on various responsibilities, gradually became more involved in the work, and at the annual meeting in May 1967, was elected president.

It was an extraordinary year to hold the office. Before the convention I had thought the major issue before us would be the resolution of the "right-left" controversy that had plagued the organization for almost a generation. The problem was not new to me. It posed a dilemma to many organizations following the Second World War, because our wartime alliance with the Soviet Union led to associations that proved burdensome after the war. Communists had taken advantage of the climate generated by the conflict to try to mold programs of various organizations closer to their party line. On the other hand, the brutal intolerance of the

McCarthy period of the fifties led to witch hunts and restrictions on free expression that made it difficult for liberals to speak their piece without being accused of being "red." I have already described how this issue was faced in the Jewish Community Council at the time of the expulsion of the Jewish People's Fraternal Order.

Earlier, during my teaching days, I had been one of the original members of the Teachers' Union, which was torn apart in the early forties by charges of Communist domination. Hyman Lumer, later to become one of the national leaders of the Communist Party, then taught at Fenn College (predecessor of Cleveland State University). From his position within the college section of the union, he tried to persuade some of us "liberals" to back the left position in the national struggle for domination of the union. His approach was low key, in contrast with the tough fellows on the right who finally had their way and expelled the leftist fringe. They made no distinctions in their attack on all who opposed them, except to refer occasionally to the liberal crowd, of whom I was one, as dupes, though we contended we stood only for due process. Maybe they were right and there was no way to patch things up between the two factions. In any case, I learned the hard way how difficult it is to stand for full freedom of expression and calm judgment in an atmosphere that breeds self-righteous and uncompromising rooting out of all evil.

The NCJCS had been caught in a similar controversy, before my time. This had nearly wrecked the organization, as opposing factions sought to impose their ideological programs on the whole body during the annual conventions. Finally, in desperation, it had been decided that the only way to keep the organization from splitting apart was to avoid *all* issues. Henceforth, it was agreed, the NCJCS would confine itself to presentation and discussion of issues of direct professional concern, avoiding all resolutions and adopting no action program.

Now more than a decade had passed, and the struggles between the right and the left had subsided, but the prohibition on action remained. Although pressing issues kept arising, nationally and internationally, with a consequent growing demand on the part of

delegates that they should not forever be silenced by the conflicts of the past, the prohibition remained in effect. I had been appointed chairman of a Committee on Public Issues to study the problem. We recommended a reversal of position. I reported our thinking in a talk that began in somewhat flowery terms:

> Tonight we catch up with history. On all these [crucial issues], this Conference has had nothing to say. Our history has silenced us. But fortunately, a new generation has arisen that knew not Joseph [McCarthy].

We suggested providing safeguards against the danger of the annual convention being suddenly stampeded by requiring that resolutions be submitted well in advance of the convention to a Public Affairs Committee which would have time to debate issues calmly before offering recommendations, in writing, to the delegates. Our amendment was accepted, and we were able to put the NCJCS back into business as a participant in the issues of the day. In a normal year that would have been enough to distinguish an administration.

But 1967 was not a normal year. We met in Atlantic City in late May, only a week before the outbreak of the Six Day War. The atmosphere was tense. Nasser had already moved his troops into the Sinai, the United Nations had meekly withdrawn at his demand, and Israel was surrounded by what seemed overwhelming forces poised for its destruction. It was certainly no time for business as usual or for the kind of polite discussion without action that had characterized the NCJCS for many years.

Our guest at the annual meeting was Zena Harman, one of Israel's great women and certainly one of the outstanding social workers in the world. She shared with us, in her restrained and therefore more powerful way, what it meant to be confronting a hostile world in those days of decision, and how much support from America would mean. I was asked to respond to her for the Conference and put our feelings this way:

> How shall we respond to this Woman of Valor? What words can we use that can bear the terrible weight of the love and the admiration we feel for our Israeli brothers and sisters? What kind of spir-

itual Esperanto would it take to burst the bonds of cliché so that we can express our determination to be worthy, to conduct ourselves in the days and the weeks and the years ahead as men, as Jews. . . .

I shall in a moment put before you a formal resolution for adoption as our *thinking*, and a program of action for our *doing*. The resolution and the program together are both act and symbol. . . . As act, they spell out the details of the specific tasks we set ourselves. As symbol, they testify to our determination to be Jewish leaders. And now supremely is the time to demonstrate that we are indeed leaders, for all of us here, whether educators or Center workers or community relations workers or Federation directors, *all* of us face The Time of Testing . . . just as Israel faces its time of testing, as America faces its time of testing, and as the American Jewish community faces its time of testing. . . .

Israelis have already passed their moral test. For them, *ain braira* . . . There is no choice. There, everything that makes life worthwhile is at stake, as is life itself. So it is no wonder that Israel has given us and will continue to give us an example of courage unsurpassed anywhere in history. Theirs is a courage compounded of wisdom and distilled from restraint . . . a courage that answers taunts and boasts with quiet calm and determination.

And what of our American Jewish community? How has it reacted to The Time of Testing? The past eight days have been an agony and the future is full of deadly menace. But we can take joy and renewed courage from how the American Jewish community has acted . . . the *entire* Jewish community.

We have had our doubters and our cynics about the Jewish community, and some of their doubts and some of their cynicism have been legitimate and useful. But tonight I reject their doubts and their cynicism and say for American Jewry as for Israeli Jewry in the most literal sense, without sloganeering: *Am Yisroel Chai*. . . . The people of Israel lives on, as all dynamic organisms live . . . rising to the challenge of those who would destroy it and drawing profound new sources of strength hitherto unsuspected, pouring out a spiritual adrenalin that will energize us for whatever lies ahead.

When I finished my talk, which ended with a series of proposals for action, the audience took over. After the expected shouts of

approval of the program and the sudden unscheduled singing of "Hatikvah," spontaneous fund-raising broke out all over the place. Everyone seemed to want a piece of the action—now!—as a means of dedication to whatever tasks lay ahead.

THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

No one would have dreamed that hot Saturday night that the very next week Israel would accomplish such astonishing feats of arms and turn menace into victory, all within six days. The quick triumph made it possible to go ahead with a project that had for years been in the planning stage—creation of an International Conference of Jewish Communal Service. Its first meeting had been scheduled for August of 1967 in Jerusalem. It was an enormous undertaking that my predecessors in office had nourished and slowly brought to reality in many meetings over the years. Most of the inspiration and almost all of the preliminary planning had been American. Now as the new president of the NCJCS, the chief sponsor, it was my duty, together with the other co-chairman, Dr. Giora Lotan of Israel, to preside over the founding meetings.

In late May, when the NCJCS met, any thought of actually being able to go through with the plans, now only two months away, had seemed ludicrous. All hell was obviously about to break loose and Israel would hardly be in a position, it seemed, to act as host of the Conference, even if the delegates from all over the world would be able to get there to carry out the workaday tasks of mounting a convention.

Now everything fell into place. Israel's amazing triumph set the stage perfectly for the meetings. We were swamped by those who were caught up in the worldwide passion after the war to go and see with their own eyes the miracle of a united Jerusalem and what seemed then a newly secure Israel.

The Conference needed only finishing touches since so much of

the work of preparation had already been done. Though many contributed to mounting this international project, certainly the key figure was Miriam Ephraim, one of those unique personalities that the Jewish civil service creates from time to time to serve as models for the rest of us. She had already devoted a lifetime to work in the Jewish center field and now, on retirement, carved out a second career as secretary-general of the quadrennial conferences, all five of which she has shepherded through many difficulties. In Israel, the chief leaders were Dr. Lotan and Moshe Kurtz, the director-general of the Ministry of Welfare. Lotan was then the head of the National Insurance Institute of Israel, roughly comparable to our Social Security system. He conformed to the stereotype sometimes called a *yekke*—a German Jew who is competent, hardworking, courteous, not particularly imaginative, not easily given to relaxed informality until he is sure of your friendship. Kurtz was an absolute bear for work. Like almost all the directors-general in Israel, he was evidently adjusted to a situation in which his boss, the minister, got all the publicity and glory while he did the work. We couldn't have had a better Israeli partner.

We put on quite a show. Our honorary president was Zalman Shazar, President of the State of Israel, and our honorary chairman (we had splendid titles all around) was Aryeh Pincus, better known as Louie. He was head of the Jewish Agency, and I was to know him much better the following year when I returned to Israel to work on the Conference on Human Needs. The vice-chairmen were an almost equally distinguished lot. Israel Katz, who had obtained his doctorate at Cleveland's Western Reserve University and later became Minister of Welfare in the first Begin cabinet, represented Israel. Other officers included Saul Hayes, certainly one of Canada's outstanding spokesmen as the director for many years of the Canadian Jewish Congress; Walter Lippman of Australia, who enormously impressed all of us with his account of the "lonely community" he represented and the obligation for us to reach out to his country "down under"; Gus Saron, director of the South African Board of Jewish Deputies, who had spent considerable time in Cleveland so I had the pleasure of re-

newing that friendship; and Julien Samuel, director of the Fonds Social Juif Unifié of France.

During the period of planning for the Conference, I had worked most closely with Samuel since we were co-chairmen of one of the major committees. He was an experience. We wound up being quite good friends, but I had to be extraordinarily sensitive to problems of protocol. Long before the chilling of Franco-American relations, I got a foretaste of that typically French touchiness from Julien, who with the utmost politeness found frequent occasions to suggest that United States Jewry could profit from a little humility and could not simply make decisions by itself. Quite right, but not easy to carry out in practice when decisions had to be made quickly. The difficulty was compounded by the fact that his English was almost as bad as my French, and some of our conversations on the occasions when we met face to face were ludicrously charming, as we thrashed around in two languages, occasionally amazing ourselves by expressing thoughts that the other actually understood.

The conference itself was pure drama. The excitement began even before it opened. Several of us arrived early to make arrangements for launching the new enterprise and we stole a day here and there to survey the results of the Six Day War. Smashed tanks still littered the battlefields, particularly in the Sinai, surrounded by overwhelming litter left by an army in mad retreat—letters, glasses, shoes, all jumbled together in testimony to the pell mell rout a few weeks earlier. In the other direction, the West Bank, many of the houses still flew white flags as a mark of surrender. A few of us were actually driven through the deserted town of Kuneitra, abandoned by its civilians in such haste that many of the doors were left wide open, with personal effects dropped helter-skelter in the streets as the inhabitants fled in panic.

But to me the most impressive vignette was a totally peaceful one. We were drawn, as everyone else was, to the Old City, open to Jews for the first time since 1948. It was packed with emotional Israelis, many of whom had never seen this part of Jerusalem. Two old ladies were wandering a bit ahead of us and as they reached a high point from which they could look back and see the

western (or Jewish) section of the city spread out below them, one turned to the other and pointing first to the Old City and then to the new said: "*Ot iz der khosn un do iz di kale.*" ("Here is the bridegroom and there is the bride.") It was one of the best arguments I've ever heard for the indivisibility of the city.

Another highlight was the experience at the first Tisha b'Av observance in the reunited city. It had long been the custom to make a pilgrimage to the Western Wall on this day, marking the traditional date of the destruction of both temples as well as other tragic events in the life of the people. But for almost two decades that had been impossible, as Jordan had prohibited Jewish or even Israeli Arab access to the Old City. Now, it seemed, all Israel was bent on making up for lost time. As night fell, huge throngs began approaching the Jaffa Gate from all directions to make their way down the winding passageways to the Wall. It was obvious that it would take all night to accommodate a crowd of the size that seemed to be coming. We had therefore gone down in early evening to the Wall, which had not yet been renovated, and by midnight we were ready to start back home. Streams of visitors were still arriving, in a festive mood despite the grim history of the day. We chose the southern path back, past the still shattered and deserted synagogues. But the crowd of us pushing our way up was met by an even larger crush of bodies fighting their way down through the narrow corridor, still full of debris. Everyone seemed relaxed and good-natured, but as the jam pushing in opposite directions was packed tighter and tighter, the situation grew progressively more frightening and then potentially dangerous. When we reached the narrowest point, all motion stopped. I hoisted Ruth up on a tiny ledge in the wall to give her breathing space, and slowly we fought our way foot by foot out of the crush. As I looked back at the swarming multitudes, I thought of the opening verses of the Book of Lamentations, traditionally recited on Tisha b'Av as a mournful reminder of the destroyed ancient Jerusalem: "How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people!"

Well, the city was anything but solitary; I could testify that it was at the moment too full of people. But how thrilling! The sheer vitality and bustling energy of the crowds below me seemed the

best possible symbol of the indomitable will of the Jewish people and its determination to get on with growth and reconstruction and reestablishment of order. By the next year the authorities had things well in hand, and the Tisha b'Av crowds had plenty of room with a well-planned and renovated area at the Wall itself. But that orderliness was far less exciting than the power and enthusiasm of that first celebration.

The opening session of the conference, on August 9, 1967, fulfilled all our hopes. The stage was full of notables: President Zalman Shazar, Mayor Teddy Kollek, Chief Rabbi Yehuda Unterman, and Chairman of the Jewish Agency Louis Pincus. All of them gave greetings weaving variations on the theme of the Conference, "Strengthening Jewish Identification."

In my remarks, I contrasted the mood of foreboding and menace we had experienced only two months earlier at our National Conference, just before the outbreak of hostilities, and the triumphant coming together in Jerusalem of representatives from every corner of the world. I concluded this way:

> It is for us at this Conference through the sober daily acts that have always given Jewish life meaning to transmute the dazzling inspiration of the Six Days into the practical structures that relate Jew to Jew, Jewish community to Jewish community and—dare we hope—man to man? This is our responsibility, and this is our opportunity as well, in these times that try men's souls. Dream and reality and nightmare have been mixed in a brew distilled of the passions and the loves and the hates of 2,000 years. Only the foolish will face the future with shallow optimism; only the faint-hearted will face it with easy cynicism. Jewish communities throughout the world have demonstrated these past two months that they are neither foolish nor faint of heart. In this crisis the once broken communities of Europe and those of the New World have played honorable and effective roles and have conducted themselves against all odds with dignity and bravery.
>
> We therefore reach out our hands to you in Israel and in the Conference that now begins, we pledge to you the best of our minds, the best of our hearts and the best of our acts.

But that night words were not really important. It was enough to look out over the hall, to see the earphones clapped on and off the

delegates' ears as simultaneous translation into Hebrew, English, French and Spanish identified which delegates came from what part of the world to appreciate that the Jewish civil service of the world was now for the first time meeting together—still another testimonial to the reawakening of an ancient people.

The next day the conference settled down to business with plenary sessions in the morning featuring major presentations followed by discussions on the theme of the conference. Afternoon sessions took the form of workshops where specific problems were canvassed field by field—care of the aged, family problems, youth developments, and community relations. Technology had obviously come to Israel; every morning full digests or even complete accounts not only of the speeches but of the discussions were available to the delegates. As Sanford Solender, the chairman of the Planning Committee, put it in his summary, in those jammed four days, we became a family. The fifth International Conference has now met and the organization seems to be established permanently, but for me that first Conference was a special thrill. As in the case of the formation of the National Foundation for Jewish Culture, I had the joy of being part of a process that led to the creation of a new permanent and significant Jewish institution.

As so often happens in Jewish life, in the midst of all our joy there came a chilling note of tragedy. One of the major speakers was to have been Charles Jordan, director of the Joint Distribution Committee. He never arrived. At first we got confused reports, then shocking confirmation of a tragedy. His body had been found floating in a river in Prague, where he had stopped on his way to Jerusalem to address us. It turned out he had been murdered, under circumstances still not completely clarified but obviously connected with his international humanitarian activities. A memorial meeting was hastily scheduled, a stark reminder of how fragile is our Jewish grasp on triumph.

Perhaps the most lasting single impression I brought home with me was the unique role of the Jewish communal servant in the United States. It became clear both from formal sessions and from informal conversations that in most countries, those who manned the communal agencies were looked upon as "clarks," as

the English pronounced it. The remarkable relationship in America of laymen and professionals performing different but equally responsible functions was obviously rare elsewhere. In many countries lay leaders would hire untrained people to do their bidding without permitting them to participate extensively in formulating policy, their function being largely restricted to carrying out orders. Frequently there would be little rotation in office, with a self-perpetuating laity running things in a spirit of noblesse oblige. I came home blessing the more creative relationship of professional and layman I had experienced, characterized by warmth and mutual respect and eagerness to share responsibilities.

Not that it is easy in practice to distinguish precisely between the functions of professional and layman. In some cities, the executive merely "executes" the decision of the laymen. At the opposite extreme, in other communities executives are effectively the community power, which they carefully share with a limited number of selected lay buddies. The golden mean between the two is not a fixed point but a constant shifting of responsibilities from issue to issue determined by a host of factors: importance of the issue, who is available to take action, who is most competent to deal with the problem, and other considerations.

The closeness of layman and professional can present problems as well as advantages. The top lay leadership tends to be management minded, since large donors inevitably assume prime responsibilities. And with the spectacular growth in fund raising and endowments, with many millions of dollars being raised and agency budgets running into double digit millions, federations have come to be viewed as big business, to be run as such. As a result, the prime quality often looked for when the time comes to hire a top professional is competence in the managerial field. Certainly administrative skills are crucial in enterprises as complicated as federations have become, at least in the larger cities. Fiscal incompetence and clumsy management can be catastrophic. But so can bureaucratic rigidity, also a frequent spin-off from bigness. It is tempting for an administrator to aquire an easy and painless reputation for probity by mechanically saying "No" to

new ideas or untried procedures. A healthy skepticism is proper and necessary; an executive to whom new proposals are likely to come for first hearing clearly has a responsibility to probe repeatedly with the question, "Why *should* we?" But even more admirable is the inclination, after the questions have been asked, to say "Why *shouldn't* we?"

Caution is an admirable virtue. But creativity is vastly more precious.

THE TURBULENT SIXTIES

One of the most persistent observations about Jewish life comes from nineteenth century Germany: "Wie es Christelt zich, so es Judelt zich." ("The way things go in the general community, that's the way they go in the Jewish community"—a pretty free translation!) How the turbulence of the late sixties affected the Jewish community is both a confirmation of that aphorism and at the same time a demonstration of how Jewish life may seem to reflect the general community, but always with a difference. There was the same revolt against "the establishment," the same demand for new meanings and deepened experience, the same cry of "Down with the old!" But with a difference.

The classic example of both similarity and difference occurred at the General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations in Boston in late 1969. For the only time in its history, the Assembly was picketed, by university students who barged into the sessions waving their placards, shouting their slogans, interrupting meetings, and generally threatening to take over. That was not unusual at that time. What organization escaped the attack and the contempt of aroused youth of the period? What was different was what these students were picketing about and how they were received by the delegates. It turned out that the young people were really not intending to disrupt and destroy. They were calling on the establishment to do more effectively and more directly pre-

cisely what the federations of the country had for years been proclaiming was their first order of business—the preservation and enrichment of Jewish life and Jewish values. We don't want to hear about such problems as the relationship of federations to their agencies, the students in effect announced, or dull issues about budgeting or management, or anything else that sounds like business as usual. There is a crisis in Jewish life, so we want to talk about Jewish education and Jewish values and what you are going to do right now to make Jewish life relevant to our generation. And they didn't confine themselves to talk. Their demands, it turned out, were highly specific. The federations of the country were to set aside $100 million from the next campaign to finance this revival of the spirit.

The delegates were enthralled. Despite the sharpness of their attack, "the kids" were clearly Jewishly devoted and wonderfully appealing and intelligent. There was, of course, no possibility of meeting their fiscal demands, which would have put ongoing Jewish life out of business. Nor had the students bothered to specify, except in the most generalized kind of way, just how the $100 million would be spent, but that too was in the spirit of the times. Never mind, the delegates in effect said, this is precisely what we've been waiting for all these years, and we must find some way to get together with these talented young people.

A committee was formed (what else?) with representatives of the young people playing prominent roles. After months of negotiations and planning, the committee unanimously agreed on recommendations that culminated in the creation of the Institute for Jewish Life. Its mandate was almost as undefined and all-encompassing as its high-sounding name. It was to seek out means of strengthening commitment to Jewish life through techniques and projects and grants presumably free of the encrusted procedures and fiscal inhibitions of the existing agencies. The money provided turned out to be ludicrously less than the gigantic sum that had been originally requested, but almost every community in the country did contribute to a fund that enabled the Institute to enter into its projected three-year existence with

confidence that it had enough financial backing and cooperation from local communities to enable it to respond creatively to its mandate.

I had been an active member of the Planning Committee and I was invited to be the director of the Institute. I declined, as I had ten years earlier when I was asked to become director of the National Foundation for Jewish Culture. At least my record throughout my professional life has been consistent. I have accepted many assignments that were time-limited and so allowed me to continue my work in Cleveland, and have turned down all those that required a complete break with my Federation career there. I did, however, become one of the six members of a kind of cabinet of advisers to the professional staff, so I remained close to the Institute throughout its history. (Elmer Paull was also one of the six. Cleveland was, as so often, highly involved in all that took place.)

The director chosen was Professor Leon Jick of Brandeis University, who was granted a leave of absence to undertake the responsibility, although he stipulated that he and therefore the Institute office would remain in Boston. Jick was in many ways admirably equipped for the job, if anybody could be for such an impossible assignment. Articulate, enthusiastic, innovative, keenly attuned to the world of youth, with a rich Jewish background, he gathered a talented young staff about him and threw himself, and us as advisers, into the work.

The first meetings of the Institute board were impressive. Many of the best-known names in Jewish life were present, including such personalities as Elie Wiesel, Rabbi A. J. Heschel and Chaim Potok, and the debates and suggestions came pouring out chaotically and at times creatively. As the months, and then the years went by, the pace inevitably slowed. There is, of course, no simple way to achieve Jewish commitment. Everybody understood that but in practice, as so often in Jewish organizational life, the expectations of a new experiment, particularly in the field of Jewish culture, were romantic. The launching of the Institute, as had been the case with the Foundation a decade earlier, was under-

taken with so much fanfare and enthusiásm that it was inevitable that there should be disappointment when the results turned out to be relatively undramatic.

Some have called the Institute a failure. I don't agree. For a period of four years it provided a means of responding to all kinds of ideas, sometimes through concrete fiscal help, sometimes by providing expert advice, sometimes by initiating ideas of its own. Its media project was a solid accomplishment, rescuing from destruction precious Yiddish films whose few remaining prints were close to final deterioration; it established a central address for organizing and making available and occasionally creating audio-visual devices of all kinds. Irving (Yitz) Greenberg spelled out at Institute meetings his ideas about a "think tank" on Jewish life that finally led him to create his own National Jewish Resource Center, carrying on under independent auspices some of the long-term aims of the Institute. One of the best sellers of the decade was the Jewish Catalog, which was in part sponsored and encouraged by the Institute. Most important, the communities of the country were vividly reminded of their responsibility to add a cultural dimension to their work. Viewed from the perspective of a slow evolution of Jewish communal responsibilities rather than only from the perspective of "results," the Institute made a contribution to Jewish life.

It was, however, a limited contribution. And so have been almost all the other cultural and educational undertakings by the community. The central fact of Jewish life after World War II, making by far the major claim upon its energies, has been the rescue and rehabilitation function. The responsibility has been so overwhelming as to absorb the major resources not only of money but of concentration and effort and leadership. In contrast, the cultural and educational field has been undernourished. Not so much in the way of money; the proportion of the communal budget going for such purposes has risen steadily throughout my professional career. We simply do not know how to cope with the tricky problems of building Jewish commitment as well as we do with the huge but clearly defined problems of providing transportation for refugees, mounting political programs, defining needs

in Israel, and conducting the major campaigns required to accomplish these highly tangible purposes.

Three times during my career I have staffed committees on Jewish education, one a decade, each growing in sophistication and each, I believe, modestly advancing our communal life. But in every case the same dilemma surfaced: transmitting a cultural heritage in a total environment that is not Jewish requires a broader approach than any one institution can supply. In each study I managed to incorporate the thought that education encompasses far more than schools, crucial as they are. I constantly harped on the theme that students react best when much is demanded of them, that intensive Jewish schools, particularly the day schools, pay much better dividends than those that compromise too readily with the students' absorption in the general culture. I stressed the importance of trips to Israel, summer camps, and retreats of all kinds. The approach to the problem of continuity must be multiple; it is unfair to saddle any one agency with the total responsibility.

The closest approach to rapid selling of Jewish life I ever witnessed took place one summer when I was invited out to the Brandeis Institute north of Los Angeles by its founder, Shlomo Bardin. I was enormously impressed, as were all visitors, by his skill in providing a unique combination of Jewish learning and Jewish experience for college students. I had been somewhat skeptical of all the accounts I had heard of changed lives as a result of a few weeks' stay at the Institute, but after watching the joyous dancing on Friday night, the magnificent Havdalah ceremony closing out the Shabbat, and the rigorously intensive study programs and discussions during the week, I became something of a convert. More important, it strengthened me in pushing for new programs and new experiments affecting schools and family life and the community as a whole.

My last professional Federation assignment before retirement was acting as secretary of the Jewish Education Committee. Perhaps more significant than any of its detailed recommendations was its success in getting a grant of $300,000 from Federation's Endowment Fund to subsidize projects in the educational field. It

was an unprecedented step, since standard procedure called for funding of projects only after they had been presented in detail for analysis. This time a large sum was reserved in advance, without submission of any specific project, as acknowledgement of the importance of the educational field and encouragement of creative ideas. Evidently the establishment could accommodate to new needs, if it was properly approached. The prime responsibility of federations to operate by consensus need not foreclose initiative and experiment.

THE HEIGHTS AREA PROJECT

Another symptom of the general dislocation of the times was the change in the Cleveland Heights area. Although there had been movement of Jews into the Heights area even before the first World War, it wasn't until the forties that it succeeded Glenville and the Mt. Pleasant area as the key center of the Jewish community. Now, a generation later, the seemingly inevitable movement "out" had begun once again. But this time the situation was radically different from the case on East 105th Street in the forties. Then there was only one major Jewish institution involved, the Jewish Center, and no one questioned the inevitability and even the wisdom of the move outward to the Heights. As a matter of fact, I had been involved at that time in numerous meetings with the leaders of small congregations, all of them Orthodox, helping them plan their move and trying to effect consolidations to avoid repeating in the new location the pattern of many tiny congregations, some of them housed in store fronts.

Now the community had almost diametrically opposed objectives. The aspiration was for stabilization, not movement. That change in direction was a key consideration in Federation's decision to locate its new building, completed in 1965, in the downtown area rather than joining the flight uptown. It was a procla-

mation of continuing faith in Cleveland, not only by staying put but by the excellence of the physical structure, universally judged an architectural gem. The chief architect was Edward Durrell Stone, designer of the Kennedy Center and other notable showplaces throughout the nation and abroad. At the dedication of the new building he brought down the house with his opening remark: "You've said so many pleasant things about me today that I only wish there had been present to hear them—all my former wives!" Joe Berne was chiefly responsible for providing Federation for the first time with a home of its own. Almost singlehandedly, he raised the necessary funds in not much more than two weeks from fourteen families, without any public campaign. Mike Glass and Henry Zucker supervised every detail of construction with daily loving care.

Now it was time to demonstrate the same determination not to run away from a key suburban neighborhood. In one area of Cleveland Heights, on or close to Taylor Road, the number of Jewish institutions threatened by the continued move outward was formidable: the Jewish Family Service Association, Hebrew Academy, the Bureau of Jewish Education, three major congregations, the Jewish Community Center, and Montefiore Home for the Aged. To replace them as part of another sudden move outward would present a staggering financial problem. Moreover, once the organizations moved, it would no doubt fuel the panic for individuals to get out. The result could be devastating. The sudden relocation of the whole neighborhood at a time of dramatically rising prices could put the purchase of new homes in the more affluent suburbs beyond the means of many.

What to do? Lloyd Schwenger, president of the Federation, called a meeting of all organizations in the area to discuss the situation. Federation began by pledging its cooperation in attempts to stabilize the neighborhood, a complete reversal of its position a generation earlier. Almost every organization that night pledged that it would stay put for the foreseeable future. Numerous committees were formed to deal with the expressed needs of the neighborhood, including better security, better polic-

ing, and protection against "blockbusters." Closer relations were soon forged not only with the city government, which was crucial, but also with other groups in the community interested in preserving the stability of the neighborhood. Funds were found to provide mortgage assistance to enable those otherwise unable to purchase homes in the area to do so. Highly significant was the explicit pledge that nothing would be done to exclude any group; every effort would be made to preserve the neighborhood while welcoming all religions and all races. It was a pledge that was carefully kept.

Now, more than a decade later, with the Heights Area Project still highly active, it is possible to claim for it enough success to counter the cynical prophecies of those who were certain that nothing could be done to stop the "inevitable" movement out. In an absolute sense, the claim may be valid. Neighborhoods do indeed change, and growing affluence and other factors do create strong outward mobility. But panic can be avoided. The Heights Area Project seems to demonstrate that patient planning, talented personnel, some business know-how, and modest amounts of money can make possible orderly change, a high degree of stabilization, and sometimes even creative growth. Evidently, the undertaking had national significance; as the Glenville Project had earlier, it once again won for Cleveland a Shroder Award as the most noteworthy community project of the year.

ISRAEL TASK FORCE

One more consequence of the unsettling nature of the times was international in scope. The smashing triumph of the Six Day War seemed to promise the birth of a new day, with peace just around the corner. The euphoria didn't last long. By the end of the decade the situation in the Mideast was clearly deteriorating, and it was apparent that Israel would need vigorous support from American Jewry beyond fund-raising. A more organized method of coordi-

nating community responses to the menacing developments overseas was needed than our ad hoc efforts in the past. The mass media had to be kept informed of our position on the fast-breaking events; a variety of explanatory materials had to be prepared; talks interpreting our points of view had to be made to innumerable groups; our own community needed to be kept informed on a day-to-day basis. An informal meeting called in 1968 to consider these and related questions resulted in the formation of the Israel Task Force. Its first chairman was Irving Kane; he was succeeded by Rabbi Dan Silver, a vigorous chairman for almost a decade, and then by Robert Silverman. The Task Force not only served as a model for other communities throughout the country; under prodding from Rabbi Silver at a General Assembly meeting of the Council of Jewish Federations in New Orleans immediately following the trauma of the Yom Kippur War, the Cleveland experience was also in part responsible for creation of a national mechanism with the same objectives.

My own relationship with problems affecting Israel also soon became far more urgent. In 1968, after considerable soul searching, I assumed a major responsibility for launching the forthcoming Conference on Human Needs, which required living in Israel for the better part of the coming year and dominated my life for quite a period to come.

THE CONFERENCE ON HUMAN NEEDS (COHN)

The 1969 Conference on Human Needs was one of the most satisfying experiences of my professional career. It was certainly the most ambitious project. Once again, it started with an invitation from Phil Bernstein. As an aftermath of the radically changed conditions resulting from the Six Day War, he said, major reassessments were now needed of the relationship and mutual responsibilities of Diaspora Jewry and Israeli Jewry. As one aspect of that reassessment, a world-wide conference of Jewish leaders

would be held in June of 1969 in Jerusalem, at the joint invitation of the Prime Minister of Israel and the chairman of the Jewish Agency. Its purpose had already been formally defined:

> To analyze and assess Israel's major human needs and to project programs which will overcome them in the next several years. Basic goal will be to help overcome dependency, insofar as possible, and to overcome social problems and not just alleviate them. The Conference will therefore address itself to [these questions]:
>
> 1. What are the nature, causes, and dimensions of the major needs in these fields?
> 2. What goal should be set for overcoming these needs in the next several years?
> 3. What programs will be required to achieve these goals?
> 4. What will these programs cost?
> 5. What share of the financing should be carried by Jews outside of Israel?
> 6. How can that responsibility best be carried out?

What was now urgently needed, Phil told me, was for someone acquainted with the American way of doing things to go to Israel and work with the designated staff of the Jewish Agency to make sure that the conference would be more than a talkfest. As evidence of how important organized American Jewry considered the forthcoming conference, the four major Jewish organizations in the field were prepared to share responsibility for sending a representative from America to represent their point of view. They were the Council of Jewish Federations, the United Jewish Appeal, the United Israel Appeal, and the Joint Distribution Committee. I would function as their man in Israel in preparing the conference. Moreover, Keren Hayesod, the organization responsible for fund-raising for Israel in all countries except the United States, had gone on record as willing to cooperate in making the projected conference a really historic event. It was an assurance that took on added meaning because the organization's chairman was Ezra Shapiro, my long-time friend who in 1945, as president of the Cleveland Jewish Community Council, had persuaded me to desert teaching for Jewish communal work.

It was a tempting invitation, made more urgent coming from the Council of Jewish Federations. Ever since my work a decade earlier on the cultural study, the Council office had been my second professional home. I had become so deeply involved in its operations that at the annual General Assemblies, possibly the most significant gatherings of American Jewry, I felt as if I were with my extended family, as I put it in one of my talks. Two Council presidents, Irving Kane and Morton Mandel, came from Cleveland as did Phil himself. I had developed close relations with them and with new presidents as they came along every third year. Lew Weinstein of Boston, Ray Epstein of Chicago, and Irv Blum and Chuck Hoffberger of Baltimore were particularly delightful colleagues. All four were exuberant intellectuals who seemingly had the time and the appetite for everything—travel, good living, sports, literature, politics. They were totally involved not only in the Jewish community but in the overall community, where they also occupied top positions. They were sophisticated without being bored or cynical; successful without losing their sensitivity to the problems of the underdog. It wasn't easy to turn down an invitation from an organization with which I had such close ties.

Nevertheless, I was realistic enough to sense that in practice I would find all kinds of resistance to the accomplishment of the heady goals that Phil had defined. In fact, I had a classic demonstration a few months later of the gap that could develop between stated aims and reality at conferences in Israel. I was a delegate at the Prime Minister's Conference of Leaders of Jewish Organizations, representing the Council of Jewish Federations, since I was already in Israel. The stated purpose of that particular conference was to help strengthen Jewish identity in the Diaspora. But it was all show and no substance. Windy speeches, many designed to satisfy political ambitions or pay off political debts, tended to be long on moral strictures and rhetoric and short on dealing realistically with the tough problems of Jewish education and identity in an open society. There was almost no give and take from the delegates and no reports from the field, from those actually struggling with classroom problems. Isaac Toubin made the best contribution, although he gave no speech. He was executive director

of the American Association for Jewish Education, which certainly should have put him in a position to play a key role. Moreover, he was one of the most discerning and knowledgeable interpreters of educational problems of the Diaspora. But he was not called on until the third day of the conference, when he was given exactly three minutes for his presentation. He used only one, to record his outrage at a conference presumably called for serious interchange, whose perfunctory resolutions were written in advance, and whose delegates were in effect merely expected to pledge their allegiance rather than to grapple seriously with prickly problems.

Although this was an experience still to come, I already knew enough about conferences in Israel to protest that my assignment could get me into trouble if I pressed too hard for real discussion and direct confrontation of perplexing dilemmas. Phil assured me that I was mistaken, that the American sponsors of the forthcoming conference meant business. He did not deny that there was another agenda beyond the clearly important reassessment of human needs outlined in the call to the conference. It had to do with how to increase American involvement in the way its contributions were spent. Monies contributed by the American Jewish community to meet problems of immigration and absorption in Israel had under the spur of the Six Day War now mounted to hundreds of millions of dollars annually. The dollars were channeled from the campaigns in local federations through the United Jewish Appeal and then by way of the United Israel Appeal to the Jewish Agency.

The Agency had a long and honorable history, going back to 1929. Until the formation of the state in 1948 it had functioned as a kind of government. Ben Gurion, for example, was its head until he became prime minister after independence was declared. Many questions of relationship between the Agency's functions and government functions were still not clarified. (Indeed, they still are not, completely.) Which one had responsibility for immigration and absorption, in which both were so profoundly interested? How exactly should the other communities of the world relate to the Jewish Agency? What were the responsibilities and what were

the limitations of the role of the American Jewish community? Could the Agency budget be really examined or merely approved? The forthcoming conference, although officially called jointly by the government and the Agency, really resulted largely from the determination by American Jewry to play a more active role in Agency planning. Under such circumstances, there would probably be resistance from both the Agency and ministries of government if they felt at all threatened by a more aggressive Diaspora. All these fears turned out to be justified.

But the invitation was too tempting to be resisted. I promised to leave for Israel as soon as my presidency of NCJS was completed, so in June we took off. Ruth made one stipulation. I had become so involved in frantic last minute activities that she insisted that we get away for a while by taking a ship rather than flying directly to what we both knew would be a busy time for us. We were so late in making arrangements that all we could get were first-class accommodations on the *Raffaello*, one of the last luxury liners still crossing the Atlantic.

The eight days of the crossing should have been pure delight. The ocean was incredibly smooth and the creature comforts were astonishing. I wrote home while on board:

> This is Childhood Revisited, a kind of fairy tale come to life, where during the day everyone conspires to feed you lusciously and see that you have fun—and at night you slink back into the warm dark comfort of the womblike cabin where you build up energy for the next day's games. I don't know how long I can stand it. . . . If life is real and life is earnest, as the poet remarked, nobody has bothered to tell this gang about it.
>
> The ship is a floating pleasure dome, with everyone engaged in a conspiracy to make you forget that there are problems in life. It has been a wonderful change of pace and I only hope I'll be able to make the adjustment when the honeymoon is over. I suspect I will. I'm getting eager to tangle with no-nonsense assignments in Israel.

I predicted my change in mood accurately. The hothouse atmosphere on the *Raffaello* palled long before we reached Naples. I probably would in any case have begun to feel caged by the enforced inactivity and the undeviating insistence on fun and

games, but reality broke through the romantic haze from the start. On the very morning we were to board ship, I came down with such pain in my eyes that I had to meet in emergency session with an ophthalmologist, who temporarily alleviated the pain. But it recurred on board ship, to the point where I had to give up even standing in the bow looking out over the calm ocean and feeling the marvelous rush of wind on my face. I consulted the ship's doctor. He couldn't do much by way of diagnosis or treatment and called a colleague in Naples while we were still three days out at sea.

The resulting conference with the Italian doctor after we landed was uproarious. He evidently was no more used to receiving shipboard calls than I was to making them. No doubt thinking that some wealthy American was involved, he had a staff of three ready for me, with nobody else in the office. He was a master of sweeping gestures, marvelously chivalrous toward Ruth ("Signora, *please*") and we blundered idiotically through a quasi-consultation, handicapped by linguistic problems as we tried to communicate with each other, mostly in bad French. Despite Ruth's and my continuing pleas that we had a specific problem and weren't there to get glasses fitted, he went through the rigmarole of purely routine eye examinations, none of which helped. It was not until I got to Israel that I found that I was suffering from herpes of the eye—better known as shingles.

It cost me some bad days, since part of the time I couldn't bear light and had to sit with painfully watering eyes in semi-darkness. But it had its good side too. I went to the doctor in the heart of Jerusalem several times a week and learned firsthand the joys of waiting for my turn in such crowded conditions that sometimes we had to sit on the staircase before we could progress into the tiny waiting room. I began to feel like an authentic Israeli.

I was impressed then, as I was later when I was shipped into Hadassah Hospital with an attack of tachycardia, by the contrast between the skillful and humane care and the inadequate physical facilities. In the bed next to mine during the long day I spent in the emergency room was a young soldier who had been injured in an accident during army maneuvers. He was of Sephardic origin,

and half his family, or so it seemed, gathered around him with appropriate nourishment. The father kept comforting his son by caressing and kissing the boy, charmingly free of our more sophisticated inhibitions. It was a lesson in cultural diversities, powerfully affecting the routines of caring for the sick. At another time, I visited a friend in a different hospital who received fine care, but his bed was in an open corridor, despite his being desperately ill. There simply was no other space available.

My problems when I first got to Israel were not only medical. All the difficulties I had vaguely foreseen turned out to be vivid realities. I could hardly guess from my first conference with Louis Pincus, head of the Jewish Agency and the Israeli to whom I was ultimately responsible, that we would wind up after the conference exchanging compliments and expressions of mutual satisfaction over how much had been accomplished. He warned me in the bluntest terms not to be too ambitious. The conference was to be a limited one, he stressed, and publicity and exaggerated claims were at all costs to be avoided. He stressed the negatives so categorically and seemed so weary and half-bored with my no doubt inflated account of the expectations in America that I left the meeting wondering why I had ever come. In retrospect, I may have expected too much and read too much into that first chilly reception. Actually, Pincus met me almost immediately after returning from one of his exhausting fund-raising tours, and I may have mistaken sheer weariness for boredom. But there was no doubt about his resistance. A year later, after the conference had turned out to be a success, Pincus wrote me recalling our first meeting, referring to his original "hesitations and warnings" and our "somewhat stormy relations," in contrast to the close cooperation we finally achieved.

I came to understand his strengths only gradually. He was an intensely political man, acutely conscious of the need to work in close cooperation with the government, which was far stronger than the Agency. He was skillful at walking the perpetual tightrope between the many claimants on his resources and the Agency's limited funds. The American Jewish community and its leaders, important as they were, were only one of the factors he had to

take into account—and he was trying to impress that fact of life on me at the very outset.

On the platform he was superb. More than once during the year, he would hurry on to the speaker's platform late, half breathless from his latest round of appointments, and whisper to me, "What is *this* group? What am I supposed to be talking about?" I would mutter back as much background as I could in the few minutes before he would be introduced. He would then take the podium, perfectly at ease, and in rolling periods cover the assigned subject in a manner expertly tailored for consumption by the particular audience. They were virtuoso performances. So was his ability to pick up useful points to make from his aides. After a while, listening to his talks, I found myself identifying his sources: "*That* point comes from Harry Rosen . . . *that* one is Ben Eliezer's suggestion." Never mind. He made them all his own. And once he was convinced that the conference might really make a positive impact—and, not at all incidentally, would allow him and his close associates to be given prominent roles in what was likely to be a success—he was thoroughly cooperative and generous in his sharing of credit.

The other official sponsor of the conference was the government itself. Its cooperation was not quite as crucial as that of the Agency, in whose offices I worked and whose help I needed on a day-by-day basis. But good access to information that only the government could supply was crucial, since our focus was on the problems of immigration and absorption in which it was deeply involved. My official contact with the government was Dr. Lotan, with whom I had worked a year earlier on the international conference. However, he carried no real weight in opening up channels of information to the various ministries. I therefore arranged an interview with Dr. Jacob Herzog, then Secretary to the Cabinet, and made very little progress. He was, like all members of his distinguished family, brilliant, highly organized, knowledgeable, and impatient. In effect, he informed me that the conference was, despite formal government sponsorship, an Agency show—and he used the word in its literal meaning of not having very much substance.

I had much better success with Pinhas Sapir, Minister without

portfolio in the Cabinet and subsequently Director-General of the Labor Party. Except for the Prime Minister, he was at that time probably the most powerful person in Israel. He listened without much outer expression to my plea for cooperation and my account of the expectations of my prestigious backers in America (most of whom he probably knew as well as I) and then almost off-handedly told me I would get the cooperation I requested. He was as good as his word.

But my real partners in mounting the conference were none of these frontline personalities. My days were largely spent with a team that had been established before I came to Israel. In fact, it turned out to be two teams. One consisted of a single person, Nissim Baruch, a young, handsome, talented researcher who had been given the assignment of pulling together the complicated background data needed to enable the conference to make its studies and recommendations. The other was a three-man team who turned out to be my daily companions for a year: Harry Rosen, representing the Jewish Agency; Zelig Chinitz, representing the United Israel Appeal; and most of all, my closest associate and dearest of friends, Shimon Ben-Eliezer, then the permanent representative of the Council of Jewish Federations in Israel.

At my first meeting with the team of three, before I even had a chance to get properly established, I was plunged into a conflict between the two teams. If Baruch was going to do all the researching, the other three asked, what were they supposed to do? Moreover, who was going to settle such questions as whether the issues of *aliya* (promoting immigration into Israel) or Arab human needs were to be included on the agenda?

I sensed I was being tested. It turned out later that even the team of three, who became my intimate associates, had doubted whether any hotshot from America was really needed to help mount a conference that the Israelis themselves were perfectly qualified to run. While still in America, I had even received a letter from Ben-Eliezer suggesting that it might be better if I delayed my departure "for a while." But now I was there, propelled by American impatience to get on with the job. Very well, they would soon find out what I had to offer.

"You're the American representative," I was told, "and your

community is not only the most powerful; it wants this conference the most. You want to have a say in the deciding? So decide." So, like a good American, I decided, with a silent prayer. Nissim Baruch would do the background research, God bless him, working pretty much on his own, and I would run interference for him whenever necessary. The team of three, with me as the fourth member, would concentrate on the agenda of the conference itself, defining specifically the areas to be discussed and preparing necessary data directly related to those topics. Everybody agreed, and the division worked quite well. *Aliya* and Arab problems, crucial as they were, were defined as being beyond the scope of our mandate.

The four of us met daily for months, most of the time in Shimon Ben-Eliezer's living room, since he was suffering from an advanced cardiac condition which put him into the hospital several times that year. At the first meeting, we pledged each other to do everything in our power to avoid the windy rhetoric that had plagued other conferences and to seek substantive involvement of the delegates. We even coined a word to express that determination and it became our criterion for every decision: *tachlitic*. It is a word to be found in no dictionary. *Tachlis* can loosely be translated as "getting down to brass tacks" and we used the invented adjectival form over and over, constantly raising the question with each other when any suggestion was made: "Yes, but is that really *tachlitic*?" In other words, will it help us discuss real questions and make specific recommendations? All our meetings were carried on in a mixture of hard-nosed realism and exuberant fun. We never referred to the Conference on Human Needs as anything but "COHN," and blessed the namers of the meeting for making possible an acronym that reflected its essential Jewish purpose so vividly.

Our first task was to define our focus. After innumerable meetings with higher ups, we settled on seven problems for analysis and discussion at COHN: education and culture, immigrant housing, development towns, higher education and research, agricultural settlements, health, and social welfare. For each, after the necessary research, digging out of data at the various min-

istries, and innumerable field visits, we hammered out readable background documents not more than a half dozen pages long. Each of them contained three sections. First, we defined as succinctly as we could the basic issues in the particular field; second, plans for the future; and third, specific proposals for recommendation and action. The last section was usually mounted in the form of questions and alternatives rather than set solutions, so as to encourage reactions by delegates. I insisted that the papers should be attractively printed, free of special pleading and high rhetoric, and forthright in posing down-to-earth questions for discussion.

I felt optimistic for the first time about our chances of producing a conference of issues rather than speeches when I received a copy of a memo Ben-Eliezer had circulated to our team. "Pincus has made a study [of our conference agenda and preliminary plans] and has decided that in light of Sid's comments, there should be a distinct change of style away from speechmaking to a factual presentation of issues." Most important, we were compulsive about meeting the time schedule we established at the outset. It provided for delegates to receive the papers well in advance of coming to Israel. Our aim was to stimulate preliminary consideration and debate in the various countries so that points of view could be clarified before delegates came to the conference. I went back and forth between the United States and Israel three times that year and on each visit home made reports at innumerable meetings, trying to build up preliminary interest.

These were all customary techniques back home, but they were quite new for many of the delegates and certainly for Israel, where conferences almost never were planned to leave so much time open for free discussion, with the possibility of unpredictable conclusions. Moreover, I insisted that many of my American colleagues should be made secretaries of the workshops where these key problems were to be discussed. After all, they were responsible for running individual federations and were old hands at eliciting discussion and encouraging differences in points of view. Finally, in addition to the usual top supervisors and policy makers, we were able to sell the idea of using those who had actual line

experience as resource people in workshops to ensure that day-by-day reality would help shape our conclusions.

The key figure in the preparation of the materials was Shimon Ben-Eliezer. Despite his growing cardiac difficulties, he usually prepared the first draft of various papers for our enthusiastically critical analysis. Then I tried my hand at redrafting. The process was marvelously exciting. The constant insistence on being "tachlitic" provided sharp insights into how events actually moved in Israel, with their intriguing mixture of self-seeking politics and selfless dedication, government turf and Jewish Agency turf, overwhelming fiscal problems and ability to make do, social conflicts kept in balance by inspired improvisation, warm fellowship and stubborn bureaucracy—all in eternal tension.

Shimon was a joy, professionally and personally. In addition to his remarkable insight into every facet of Israeli life, he was a man of extraordinary culture. The walls of his home were covered with his paintings, he was a passionate lover of music, his knowledge of literature was inspiring. He had had a fine classical education in Germany, and during our conversations we would find ourselves wandering off the subject at hand to explore the complications of the endings of the dative case in Latin or the aorist form of the verb in Greek. Our correspondence continued until his death four years later, and his letters are a brilliant reflection of Israeli life. Of my letters to him, the one that most pleased him was when I picked up a reference in an Israeli paper to the team of three as "The Three Musketeers" and expanded on it. Using the characters in the Dumas novel as models, I dubbed Shimon the Athos of the group because of his wisdom and unchallenged leadership; Chinitz became our Porthos because, like the Dumas character, he was the tallest and biggest and the most exuberant; Rosen was our Aramis because of his penchant for maneuver. All of which left me as D'Artagnan, a role for which I protested my inadequacy on grounds of advanced age and inability to wield the sword, among other deficiencies. The whole concept tickled his literary funny bone.

But the best summary of this remarkable man was a tribute by Dr. Ernest Stock in a foreword to a book by Shimon about Jerusalem's synagogues, published posthumously:

Functioning in a milieu where public relations was all important, Ben-Eliezer's modesty and self-effacement were such that few beyond his immediate circle even knew his name. A man of uncompromising integrity, temperamentally quite unsuited for politics, he yet had a sophisticated understanding of the game as it is played in Israel, and he served the political figures who were his superiors with unswerving loyalty and frequently with affection. Educated in Britain, equally at home in both German and English, he became in mature life an accomplished stylist in Hebrew. He was a cosmopolitan who fervently believed in the Jewish homeland, an Israeli patriot with an instinctive distaste for chauvinism, and a traditionalist whose religion was free of dogmatism.

Perhaps the climax of his career was his role as a principal architect of the Conference On Human Needs which took place in Jerusalem in 1969, and which in an important sense paved the way for the reconstruction of the Jewish Agency.

Among Ben-Eliezer's personal attributes were a capacity for friendship and an impish sense of humor, both of which remained undefeated in the most difficult times of failing health.

COHN did indeed turn out to be a great success and a tribute to him. Well over 200 delegates came, representing more than twenty countries. I was particularly pleased with the Cleveland delegation. Ed Ginsberg, the chairman of the United Jewish Appeal and deeply admired in Israel, made one of the major addresses. Three past presidents of the Federation attended—Mike Glass, Dave Myers, and Lloyd Schwenger—and the Cleveland delegation in general was one of the most impressive. It was a joy to entertain them at our apartment.

Though the mornings were devoted to speeches by leading personalities, including the President, the Prime Minister, Eban, Dayan, Allon, Lou Fox, then president of the Council of Jewish Federations, and many others, the real action was in the workshops. They were indeed unusually "tachlitic." We had worked till the last minute to ensure substantive discussions. I met with the American delegation the night before the conference opened, going over again the many points that had been made in advance by mail, stressing the need for real discussion and participation. Similar meetings took place with other groups, with the team of three assuming responsibility for the Israelis.

I think COHN did open the way, as Stock suggested, for the later reconstitution of the Jewish Agency. The *Jerusalem Post* in an editorial the day after COHN ended contrasted its performance with two earlier conferences that had been held that year:

> The Conference On Human Needs in Israel, just concluded last night, was even better prepared than the first two. Much work was invested prior to the meetings and the delegates were provided with up-to-date studies in the fields of education, housing, health, social welfare, and so on. The excellent preparation was reflected in the high level of the discussions in the workshops where most of the deliberations were carried on, unfettered and undisturbed for once by that old bugbear of conventional congresses: the party key and the haggling over "seats".
>
> Some delegates, among them those very familiar with our problems, noted that for the first time they had a chance not only to meet with the leaders of Israel, but also with the many men who are in charge of implementing the decisions taken and who are faced with the many problems discussed at the Conference in their daily work. Some delegates noted too that unlike other occasions when Israelis tended to make speeches to the Jews from overseas, this time there was genuine give and take in the workshops and the questions, the advice and the criticism of the visitors was keenly sought and carefully listened to.
>
> For the first time, the ground has been broken for long-range and truly mutual planning between Israel and the Jewish people living abroad.

Prime Minister Golda Meir, in her closing comments, was more succinct:

> Some of us have attended many conferences. . . . But I think I will not exaggerate when I say that there are some things specific, unique, and different in this get-together. . . . I had the privilege of listening in a little to the reports of the workshops yesterday and today. Every word that I heard, every report that was presented, every question that was put removes all doubts as to the new relationship established between Israel and the Jews of the Diaspora. There is no cleavage any more.

But once again our expectations outran reality. Ben-Eliezer, always a severe self-critic, was far from content with the results.

He charged me time after time in the years following COHN to do more to keep the momentum going and expressed his disappointment that he could not perceive a new deal in the relationship between Israel and Diaspora Jewry. It was of course far too much to ask from any one meeting. Progress in Jewish life, or anywhere else, is rarely achieved that way. But a start had been made.

For Ruth and me there were incalculable personal benefits. We lived for months as Israelis—in our own apartment, shopping in the little stores, tooling around Jerusalem in our Fiat till I knew the city as well as Cleveland, staring out at the hills of Moab in the afternoon and watching the incredible play of light on them as the sun sank, dropping down to Jericho to warm up on a winter weekend, entertaining guests, waiting three times a day for the four beeps that introduced the sophisticated, highly professional English news broadcasts. It was of course not a typical Israeli existence. We were highly privileged and protected. But it did give us an insight into the realities of life in Israel. Though I wrote pieces for the paper back home about the rollicking adventures of driving in Israel and using the telephone (which was then still primitive), we knew that far more significant than the frustrations of trying to get a leaky faucet fixed or even the exhilaration of exploring the Old City was the dogged, daily forging of a new-old people in a new-old land. And it was a profound satisfaction to think that COHN had made its contribution to clarifying the perennial questions of the relation of Israeli and Diaspora Jewry.

FOREIGN TRAVELS—GERMANY

Acquiring a reputation in any field can produce some heady effects, even in so relatively sober a field as Jewish communal service. I had now spoken in enough forums, written for enough journals and collected enough of the many available honors here and there so that I found myself in some demand as a "consultant." It is a title that has always made me a little uneasy. It implies

more expert knowledge than I am prepared to claim for myself or most others in our still emerging field. Often I would be approached for help by community leaders eager for "solutions" to community problems. It must have been frustrating to be told that progress would be largely determined by the degree of their involvement in the study process, not by advice from an outsider.

There was another, more practical side effect. Various job offers began to come my way. Some were warmly satisfying to the ego, holding out pleasant vistas of greater opportunities for service, not to mention much more substantial pay. No wonder that some of my colleagues, similarly tempted, moved around a lot. Even if you stayed home, I found, it was only too easy to take on so many extra assignments that the ongoing work could be neglected. In order to minimize such temptations, Henry Zucker and I established a firm policy that none of us on the staff would ever profit personally from accepting outside work. All financial arrangements would be exclusively between the hiring organization and the Federation, and we would receive no additional compensation, not even from the talks that we frequently gave. It was an effective insurance that assignments would be undertaken only to further communal goals.

The broadened experience was of course tremendously rewarding. In addition, as overseas assignments grew, Ruth and I arranged our vacation schedules so as to visit other communities on our way to or from assignments. Over the years, we managed to visit almost every country in Europe, with one notable exception. That was Germany. My attitude toward that country still borders on the irrational. Throughout my high school and college days, no doubt influenced by the backlash during the twenties against the propaganda and the whipped-up patriotism of the First World War, I had thought of Germany as a secure repository of western civilization and the most desirable place in Europe for a visit, and maybe even for graduate study. After all, in addition to its musical and scholarly traditions of excellence, what other country could match Germany (including Austria) in what was then my field, literature. Jacob Wasserman, Franz Werfel, Thomas Mann, Stefan Zweig, Lion Feuchtwanger—the list ran on and

on. That such a Germany could become a nation that committed and condoned genocide is still too much to bear, because it is so damning an indictment not only of Germans but potentially of the human race. In any case, I still cannot buy anything that says "Made in Germany" nor even see the German alphabet (after four years of college German) without its setting off memories of the Hitler period. I can't effectively defend that attitude. I know the arguments against continuing such a vendetta, and particularly the injustice of passing on to another generation the bitter resentment that can legitimately be directed only against their fathers. But who can live only by logic? The fact is that Ruth and I made our travel plans so that we always skipped Germany, no matter how directly it lay in our path.

But fate would have it otherwise. One winter, returning from Vienna on what was scheduled as a non-stop flight, we were informed after boarding that an unscheduled stop would be made in Frankfurt. It was too late to get off the plane, but Ruth announced she would stay on board during the stopover so as to avoid actually stepping on German soil. Again events made that impossible. Several oversized cleaning women came on the plane with mops and pail and announced that all passengers had to leave while they cleaned up. It turned out they were prepared, and were certainly big enough, to remove non-cooperative passengers physically. So we stepped on the bitter soil of Germany after all.

A more meaningful contact had taken place back home in Cleveland. Henry Ollendorf, executive director of one of the nonsectarian social agencies and himself a native German, conceived the idea of interesting the State Department in bringing over a group of young German leaders—largely teachers, social workers, clergymen, and others in the helping professions—to spend several months in Cleveland, taking courses at the university, attending lectures on various aspects of American life, living in American homes, and, during the summer, being assigned field work at various agencies. The objective was not only to inculcate better understanding of American life but to strengthen democratic functioning in the still reviving Germany. The experiment turned out to be a great success and has now spread to host cities

throughout the country, involving hundreds of students from many nations throughout the world.

But that first year, with the student body made up exclusively of Germans, was unique. I was asked to deliver some lectures and spend some time with the group interpreting Jewish life. I did my best to convey an understanding of the Jewish community with objectivity, but in answer to pointed questions, I shared with them my feelings about Germany. Naturally, there were strong reactions, both defensive and sympathetic. The day after my lecture, Ollendorf called to report that the group had asked for another session on Jewish life, for which they would take complete planning responsibility. But they wanted me to be there too, for reasons they did not spell out.

As it turned out, I never said a word. The session began with a number of statements by members of the class, each stressing that the speaker had been too young to understand what had gone on in Germany. Then the mood changed. A minister rose and in a strained voice described how he had thrown stones through a window of a synagogue on Kristallnacht and had generally been a Nazi enthusiast. That broke the dam of pent-up emotions. One after another, frequently with tears, they described scenes they had witnessed or had participated in, bringing to vivid life the horrors of the Hitler period. It was a kind of purgation for them and a shaking experience for me, listening to those attractive and intelligent young people revealing themselves as one-time actors in that hideous drama.

There was a much delayed sequel to that dramatic session. It had remained etched in my memory as one of the most memorable experiences of my professional life but I had no idea how strong an impact it had made upon the students. In 1973 Ollendorf returned from one of his frequent trips abroad to report that he had attended a reunion of that original class in celebration of their twentieth anniversary, and they had sent a message back to me. It was a letter signed by all those at the reunion informing me that the major topic for discussion when they reassembled two decades later was the confessional at the Federation. Who knows

how permanent such a reform will be, for them or for their nation? Or, for that matter, for humanity at large?

During our travels we had glimpses of the astonishing diversity of Jewish communities throughout the world: the solid, historically rooted English community, the suddenly burgeoning French community, revitalized by the massive post-war immigration of North African Jewry, the dead artifacts of the Yugoslav community, the first stirrings of rebirth in Spain almost 500 years after the so-called Golden Age there ended in mass conversion and exile. But the most powerful experiences were visits to the Soviet Union and South Africa. What an unlikely combination! In South Africa Jewish life pulsates with a vitality unmatched anywhere in the world, except in Israel, and in the Soviet Union it can barely breathe under the unremitting oppression of the government. Yet, in both cases there is the imminent threat of disappearance, for completely different reasons.

THE SOVIET UNION

Our trip to the Soviet Union, in 1977, was formally a typical tourists' junket. The Western Reserve University Alumni Association, as one project among many such excursions, sponsored a charter trip to Russia, and we joined it, only partly out of a desire to see a country and a society so crucial to world affairs. Our major motivation was to use the cover of the trip to meet with the "refuseniks," whose plight had moved so dramatically to the center of world attention during the seventies.

I can hardly claim to be among the first to have recognized the urgency of this latest chapter in organized persecution of Jewry. The early leaders of the movement in Cleveland were Jewish scientists connected with NASA who were inclined to be highly critical of the organized Jewish community without participating much in its work. Some of them seemed interested only in this one

concern in Jewish life, much like the passionate "one issue" advocates of the next decade. Nevertheless, though they were at times tactless and even disruptive in their approach, they were correct in their analysis, and I should have kept in mind my own earlier words about one function of Federation:

> Federation is by definition a consensus operation, by nature conservative, not easily adaptable to revolutionary change. One of its central functions is fund-raising, and in the nature of things, raising money requires that explosive controversies, a concomitant of social change, should be avoided or at least soft-pedaled. However, Federation should also appreciate the immense contributions of the disturbers of the peace, who are the restless, dissatisfied and cranky outriders of the battles for progress.

Sometimes it's not easy to remember that admonition. Community leaders are often so busy harmonizing contrasting and conflicting forces in the community that the value of sharp dissent and occasional crankiness is obscured. Maybe it was partly an attempt to compensate for my early lack of full vigor on this issue that led me to put much more stress on the Russian Jewish problem in later years and motivated my trip.

After careful consultation with what were then presumed to be authoritative sources in New York, we took with us a list of names and addresses of some leading refuseniks in the cities we were to visit, plus a suitcase filled with a few carefully chosen books, some cheap calculators, some clothing, and some simple medications. Each had a purpose. The books were standard Hebrew-Russian dictionaries and a few elementary Hebrew texts, plus several volumes of poetry impossible to get in the Soviet Union. The calculators and the clothing were included because they had a high value on the Russian black market and would provide a source of income to the dissidents, who were frequently destitute. The simple medications were to help meet medical needs that had been described to us. Innocuous enough, it seemed.

Not, however, innocuous enough. When we went through customs, we found, in direct contrast to the advice we had been given that hand luggage was rarely looked at, that it was the first to be

inspected. We had put several books there, and no sooner had they been uncovered than we were ushered unceremoniously into a small adjoining room and kept there for several hours. Not only our luggage but all our effects were minutely inspected. When the inspectors went through our wallets, they found the telltale names and addresses of the dissidents, and it was apparent that we were in trouble. Who were these people, the interrogators wanted to know. What had we to do with them? What were we up to with these names? Who gave us the names? Why were there "copies?"

The last question stumped me. What you have taken from us are the only lists we have, I argued. We have no other copies. But they meant something else. Obviously, the names on our list had been duplicated and they were hot to know who else had such lists.

From the safe perspective of three years, I am bemused by my reactions in that room, surrounded at times as we were by as many as five interlocutors. I consider myself a reasonably cautious person with no pretensions to feats of valor, but ringed by those heavy-faced interrogators, firing questions at me through an interpreter and then consulting with each other in Russian, what I mostly felt was not fear or defensiveness but anger. Ruth tried to slow me down, constantly urging me to be more circumspect in my responses. Finally, they offered to let us go if I would sign some form of release. As best I could make out, it stated that I agreed with the justice and wisdom of their confiscating the books and lists we brought. I balked till it became clear that it was the price of our admission. So I signed.

I thought it was significant that they didn't care about the calculators or the blue jeans or anything else tangible we brought in. Only the books and the slips of paper containing names were crucial. Evidently the authorities in the Soviet Union are perfectly at home with things, with anything they can touch. But they are deadly frightened of ideas and react with astonishing sensitivity to anything that promotes independence of thought. The same sensitivity became apparent on our way out. We obviously were by this time (if not also in advance of our trip) well known to the authorities, because the moment the inspector saw the name on our passport, we were again segregated and subjected to an inten-

sive search. This time, however, we had taken the precaution of giving such incriminating documents as our notes of the trip to fellow travelers, so they found nothing on us. However, they insisted on confiscating Ruth's date book, containing valuable (to us) addresses of such subversive people as our relatives and friends. But they met their match in Ruth. She dug in her heels, and despite the fact that the length of our examination kept the chartered plane waiting till we "passed," she insisted on getting back her innocent date book. And she did!

The ten days of the trip were both exhilarating and profoundly depressing. We regularly cut out from the planned visits to circuses and industrial fairs and other standard prepared delights to visit those whom we had really come to see. (Fortunately, Belle Likover, Associate Director of the Jewish Community Center, had also brought in copies of the names and addresses of those we wanted to see.) Two of those visits, to Dr. Benjamin Levich in Moscow and to Felix Aronovich in Leningrad, were particularly memorable, as this excerpt from my account, written directly after our return, testifies:

> That night after dinner, Belle and Ed Likover and Ruth and I set out for the home of Dr. Benjamin Levich, one of the world's really distinguished scientists, in an advanced field of research somewhere between physics and chemistry. It wasn't easy finding his place. Many adjoining buildings have the same street address, and the trick is to run down which section of the building, or indeed which particular structure contains the apartment you are searching for. We finally did locate it, and almost as soon as we knocked, the door opened and Levich welcomed us with open arms and with the inevitable "shalom". He then excused himself, insisting despite our protests that he wanted to be more formally dressed for overseas company. He soon reappeared with his wife Tania, who is his match in ideas and more than his match in English.
>
> Levich reminded me of a more dynamic Linus Pauling, a man equally at home in the worlds of science and human relations. He has a sense of humor, a warm personality, and a first-rate, inquiring mind. Since he is a member of the Academy of Sciences, a high honor in Russia, he retains certain privileges, but he is not allowed to publish, he cannot deliver lectures, and he described with re-

straint and a certain wry humor the way many of his colleagues at meetings shun him. This sense of isolation, of being a pariah in your own society, is shared by almost all the dissidents. They listen regularly to the Voice of America and BBC, and as a result they are amazingly well acquainted with developments here. Their great source of hope is the power of American public opinion. They are out of sympathy with the "noshrim", those who opt to go to America, but their full contempt is reserved for those who either seek or deny their Jewishness or have made peace with things as they are in the Soviet Union.

On a subsequent visit with Levich, we were joined by a number of other refuseniks. One was a man in his fifties who had been born in the United States and brought to the Soviet Union as a boy because his radical father had gone on a kind of Communist aliyah. He was now completely disillusioned and had demanded the right to emigrate on the controversial claim that he remained an American citizen because of his birth there. Another was an extraordinarily brave young woman, in her early thirties, whose husband has already served approximately half of a 15-year sentence for unspecified crimes against the state.

When we got to Leningrad, the picture was, if anything, even more bleak. There we visited the apartment of Felix Aronovich. The Levich apartment had seemed by American standards a pretty meager affair, but it was a palace compared with the Aronovich hovel. We found four dissidents gathered for study, as was their custom almost every day. But what an extraordinary class!

Aronovich was the English teacher, instructing from the few books he had managed to acquire. A single bare light bulb illuminated the four faces, frowning in concentration over the meager materials available. Another man was the Moreh, the Hebrew teacher, because although he knew very little Hebrew he was still more knowledgeable than the rest of them. After lessons, they have tea with a bit of cake, but the real sustenance is what they draw from each other.

We spent the evening listening to each of their stories. They were much alike except for details. All were tales of partings and broken families, plus the frustration of never knowing why you were refused an exit permit while someone else was allowed to leave. Aronovich himself is a case in point. His mother, father, brother and wife were given exit visas, but he was denied one, on the claim that,

having once worked in electronics, he has secret and privileged information. So he had to remain, when his pregnant wife, after much soul searching, emigrated. They had been told that if she didn't leave then, she would never get out. They live in hopes [later realized] that he too will eventually be able to join her and his as yet unborn son.

Two other people joined us late in the evening, one of them an attorney who had been most helpful in teaching the others how to utilize provisions of the migration laws most effectively. He has now received his own exit visa and will be leaving shortly, a great event for him that also brings great joy to his colleagues. But there is no possibility of their replacing him with anyone else who knows the ins and outs of Russian law so well. No doubt that is the reason why they let him go.

Rereading those impressions brings back a flood of other memories of the stubborn persistence of Jewish life in the face of official repression. Any sensitive visitor must have come away with similar feelings. But one experience we had was unique. We were caught in a sudden major fire at the Rossia Hotel, where we were staying, that took the lives of an undisclosed number of guests. Such "accidents" are not officially recognized as having happened in the best of all societies. Presumably only capitalist countries suffer such tragedies. By the next morning, repairs were already under way, traffic and even pedestrians were diverted from streets where they could view the damage, and all photographs were strictly prohibited. The only mention was a one-line notice in *Pravda* the next week, translated by our friends as, "The Communist Party extends its sympathy to the families of those who perished in the fire last week at the Rossia Hotel."

But nothing can obliterate the experience for us. That night we had, as usual, cut out from the group, who had gone off to the circus. After our own series of visits we were exhausted and had gone to bed early. We were fast asleep when we were awakened by a telephone call. It was Belle Likover, who somehow had managed to slip back into the hotel and phoned us to announce: "The hotel is on fire. Get out!" What followed was something out of Kafka. This is a brief excerpt from my description written at the time:

I went out into the corridor and smelled smoke. The so-called "key lady" who supervises the floor saw me and screamed something, obviously ordering me to get out. I was glad to—and communicated that crucial bit of news to Ruth. I hardly know what took place in the next minute or two while we threw on some clothes, so hurriedly that I didn't discover until the next day, when I went looking for my pajamas, that I was wearing them. I had simply thrown my longjohns over them in the excitement of getting the hell out of that building.

We ran to the stairs (we were on the 11th floor) and scrambled down to the main floor, only to find the exit doors there locked. That is typical of Russian buildings. The authorities prefer to funnel all traffic from even a huge complex into a single exit, presumably so that they can control and watch over the flow more easily. Somehow, we managed to blunder our way into the lobby, which was a scene of complete confusion and excitement.

Young firemen kept rushing in with stretchers, and occasionally with hoses; soldiers and police rushed in and out, but obviously no one else was allowed to enter the hotel. Occasionally, we were ordered out, but we didn't go. Where was there to go? Outside, a storm was raging. At one point four firemen came through the lobby each holding a limb of a corpse, whose head was bobbing up and down a few inches above the ground.

The rest of that night, when we finally were forced out and taken to a rundown hotel in another section of the city, remains in memory a confused nightmare.

As a result of my brushes with Soviet repression, I may have come away with too romantic an impression of the role played by their Jewish commitment in the ability of the refuseniks to stand up to the authorities. But there was no mistaking the toughness of their resistance, at least with people like Levich and some of those we met in the freezing rain outside the Moscow synagogue. For most, what seemed to motivate them was a sense of peoplehood and ethnic solidarity rather than any religious or even traditional grounding. This stubborn persistence of Jewish belongingness may in part result from the Soviet practice of identifying everybody by nationality. Your papers include your ethnic subgroup—Ukrainian, Georgian, Lithuanian, Jewish—and that identity accompanies you in every phase of your life. So (for at least

some Jews) the process seems to follow: All right, if I am so constantly identified as Jewish, I will *be* Jewish.

We had a less romantic view of the Jewish commitment of other emigrants two years later. We were in Vienna, on our way home from Israel, visiting our friends Roslyn and Milton Wolf, the United States Ambassador to Austria. By prior arrangement with officials of the Joint Distribution Committee, we were able to sit in on interviews with new arrivals from Russia as they made the crucial decision as to whether to go on to Israel or to some other country, usually the United States. Unlike those we had met earlier in the Soviet Union, these emigrants were hardly Jewish at all. In one interview with a family of four, we found that none of them could so much as name any of the Jewish holidays, except for Passover. They expressed little interest in Jewish life altogether, to the point where the question was asked, "Why, then, did you want to leave?"

In answer, they pointed to the youngest of the group, a fourteen-year-old boy. Anti-Semitism had now grown to such a point, they said, that he could not hope to receive an education that would enable him to be more than a hewer of wood in Russia. The motivation to leave for these emigrants was not the positive commitment to Judaism we had found in the refuseniks but a painful recognition of a negative reality; there is no future for *Jews* in Russia. The conclusion of the refuseniks in the Soviet Union had been: There's no future for *Judaism* in Russia. Either way, there is tragedy.

SOUTH AFRICA

Our experience in South Africa was diametrically different, but there too the threat of extinction of Jewish life is real. We went to South Africa in 1979 at the invitation of its Board of Jewish Deputies (the national representative organization) to conduct "a study of our welfare, educational, Zionist, and fund-raising agen-

cies, with a full report to be produced to enable our leadership to take decisions and to implement the actions which will flow from your investigation."

From the moment our plane touched down in Johannesburg, hours late and after midnight, we were overwhelmed with hospitality and kindness. Our host throughout the stay was the executive director of the Board of Deputies, Denis Diamond, a young man in his thirties, obviously beloved by the entire community and with good reason. A philosopher and a poet with a splendid Jewish background, he was deeply attached to his native land but nevertheless determined to go on *aliyah*, which he did the following year. The ambivalence in his attitude toward his own country was typical of South African Jewry as a whole. Almost all have a deep love for their country while simultaneously rejecting its oppressive policies. Like many South Africans, Denis was economically secure, coming from a family of means. He was totally at home in Afrikaans, which he preferred as a vehicle for his poetry, having the affection for it that one sometimes finds in oldtimers in this country for their native Yiddish. His attachment to the lovely countryside was apparent in his accounts of his childhood.

But he had already made up his mind that it was impossible for him to stay in South Africa. Part of the decision to leave was his complete dedication to Jewish life and his passionate love for Israel, but equally important was his horror of apartheid. I was with him the night he decided the time had come. He had invited me to attend a lecture by Percy Qoboza, an outstanding black journalist who had just returned from a year at Harvard, where he had won a Nieman fellowship. Qoboza's story of his childhood, with his father away for years working in the mines, was a striking account of what it meant to grow up in a land of enforced segregation with its bitter cruelties. His talk was made more dramatic by the simple directness of his presentation. But more significant than any words was his announcement soon after ten o'clock that he had to cut short the question period in order to get back to Soweto, the all-black city, before curfew. Blacks were not allowed to stay overnight in Johannesburg unless they were live-in servants. From Harvard's freedom to enforced exile in the bleakness of

Soweto! On the way home Denis brooded, "How can I bring up my children in a society like this?" He was too brilliant to be typical of any community, but I believe his reactions reflected the thinking of most of South African Jewry.

My first assignment in the country was to address the Thirtieth Biennial Congress of the Board of Deputies. During the proceedings I was struck by the constant repetition of the phrase: "We are a diminishing community." And indeed they are. Visits to the dynamic day schools, which perhaps half the Jewish children attend, bore witness to that melancholy fact. I was shown class rolls annotated with reports of numerous dropouts, because the family had left the country. Often they went to Israel, but from all I could gather, even more frequently they went elsewhere—mostly to the United States, Canada, England, and Australia. Nevertheless, the attachment to Israel is profound and intimate. I asked a high school class how many had visited Israel, and almost every hand went up. In chats with the students after class, where more confidential relationships could be established, I found many of them perplexed over what to do about imminent compulsory military service. Neither then nor in conversations with other Jews did I find any support for the national policy of apartheid, and there was an almost universal unease about the direction the country was taking. Many young people had reservations about serving in an army charged with enforcing such policies. On the other hand, failure to serve the required time in the army meant leaving the country permanently. What a dilemma! It was *Cry the Beloved Country* acted out in real life.

The policy of apartheid has had a major effect on internal Jewish life. It affects not only black-white relationships but every cultural group, since all are expected to seek nourishment within their own separate traditions—Afrikaner, English, Indian, Black, Coloured, and Jewish. The energetic and vital Jewish community there has willy-nilly been thrown onto its own cultural resources, with the result that the rampant assimilation so prevalent elsewhere in the Diaspora is much diminished. I was surprised to learn that the day school movement was negligible until 1948, when the Afrikaners took over the government. The subsequent development of a remarkable school system in so short a time was

at least in part a protective reaction to the growing domination of the educational system by the government. Synagogues are crowded every week. Jewish sports clubs are popular, and in general, social satisfactions are found in a Jewish setting. Support of Israel is massive, and the strength of the Zionist organizations reminded me of my youth before the men's Zionist organization here began to decline in vigor and power.

South African Jewry is overwhelmingly derived from Lithuania, and since I am a full-blooded Litvak myself, possibly I felt instinctively more at home there than I would in another kind of setting. Even the Yiddish accent was comfortingly familiar. But Litvak or not, you could not fail to be impressed with the vitality of the Jewish community in South Africa, both in its Jewish commitment and in its vigorous participation in the country's economic life. Evidently, in that area there was neither separateness nor discrimination.

However, from the standpoint of Jewish community organization, South Africa seemed conservative almost to the point of rigidity. I felt guilty, after the warmth of our reception in Johannesburg and Capetown and Durban, to report in my final assessment so much that I thought was in need of change. Leaders stayed in office for such long periods of time, without provision for rotation, that some chairmen headed committees for what seemed almost a lifetime tenure. Not a single woman had, up to the time of my report, ever served as head of a major committee. Separate fund-raising campaigns were conducted in alternate years by the Zionist organization, for Israel—and by a totally separate organization for local needs. The women reversed that pattern, raising money for Israel the year the men went "local". The relation between leaders of the two drives was friendly but there was a painful lack of exchanged information and support. In a community desperately in need of the most sensitive kind of community relations, no provision was made for an ongoing professional assignment of responsibility in that area. I began my report by positing the following assumptions:

1. South African Jewry's reputation as Jewishly perhaps the most devoted community in the Diaspora is richly deserved.

Your Jewish commitment, your high standards in Jewish education, your passionate devotion to Israel and in general your love of Yiddishkeit are magnificent achievements. The generally critical nature of the observations that follow will, I hope, be understood in the context of this favorable overall assessment.

2. A key to an understanding of both your accomplishments and your difficulties, it seems to me, is that South African Jewry is deeply conservative—in both the benign and the pejorative meanings of that term. On the positive side, you have conserved Jewish values and practices astonishingly well and have passed them on to your children. On the negative side, you seem unusually resistant to change. Over and over again, when I have questioned practices that seem anachronistic, I have been informed that this was the custom sanctioned by time and not really susceptible to change.
3. The great question underlying every issue I explored was the soul-racking question of the future of this country. On that subject; and on the nature of the proper Jewish response to the racial conflicts that fill the pages of your papers and dominate the conversation of your constituents, no outsider can authoritatively comment. . . . But since the only certainty about the future is that it will be difficult and problems will increase in severity, both because of the stress in the general community and because you will continue to be "a diminishing community," you must harness your forces effectively and replace fragmentation with better coordination of your community services and efforts.

Then followed a dozen recommendations for change.

As in all my dealings with South Africa, my report was cordially received and debated. I understand it was the theme of many follow-up discussions after we left. How much effect it finally had, I do not know. I do know, however, that the experience was one of the most memorable of my professional life, and whenever I think of it, I am simultaneously uplifted by the intensity of Jewish life I witnessed there and depressed by concern whether so colorful a chapter in our people's history can long survive in view of the massive internal problems of South African society.

RETIREMENT

By the mid-seventies the time had come to think seriously of retirement. It arrived a bit early for me, since Henry Zucker told me that he would retire in 1975 and, although I would not by then have reached the traditional age of sixty-five, I decided that I would retire simultaneously. I saw no point in hanging on for a couple of extra years and subjecting the community to two changes of administration within an unreasonably short time.

Actually, I had already had a foretaste of the ceremonies of retirement. In 1974 the Federation threw a party in celebration of my completion of thirty years of service, at the Stadium, of all places. There were some 10,000 at the ball park that night, but 9,800 of them had come to see the Indians play the Red Sox. The other 200 had assembled behind the outfield fence in late afternoon for a refreshingly informal picnic dinner, remarkable for its almost total absence of speech-making. It was a fun evening of joshing and good fellowship.

I appreciated no end the imagination of the Federation leaders in utilizing my youthful enthusiasm for the sport to design a baseball party. Alva (Ted) Bonda was then the top man in the Cleveland baseball organization, and he got us the run of the ball park. The highlight of the day for me was watching my two oldest grandsons, Michael and David Caslin, who had flown in from New York for the occasion, lapping up the festivities in precisely the way I would have done at their age. (Jeremy, the third Caslin grandson, will probably never forgive the decision that he was too young to make the trip.) Unlike the rest of us, they were intrigued by the high fly balls that came sailing over the fence during batting practice, occasionally missing one of us picnickers by the narrowest of margins. The boys actually got to fetch a hot dog for Gaylord Perry, Cleveland's best pitcher, and when they flew home the next day, they took with them a couple of balls autographed by practically the entire team.

The Stadium party was only the first in a series of events that



Conference on Human Needs, 1969. Reception for Delegates at the Knesset, Jerusalem. To the right of Prime Minister Golda Meir is Louis Pincus (turned from the camera), Chairman of the Jewish Agency and Chairman of the Conference.



Conference on Human Needs, Jerusalem, 1969. Caucus with American Delegation. Shimon Ben-Eliezer, chief Conference planner, seated at speaker's table.



"Thirty Years, Thirty Minutes." Speaking at the Annual Meeting of the Jewish Community Federation, March, 1975.



Celebrating Thirty Years of Federation service. A "behind the fence" party at the Cleveland Stadium, 1974. Grandsons Michael and David Caslin flew in from New York for the occasion and to see the following ball game.



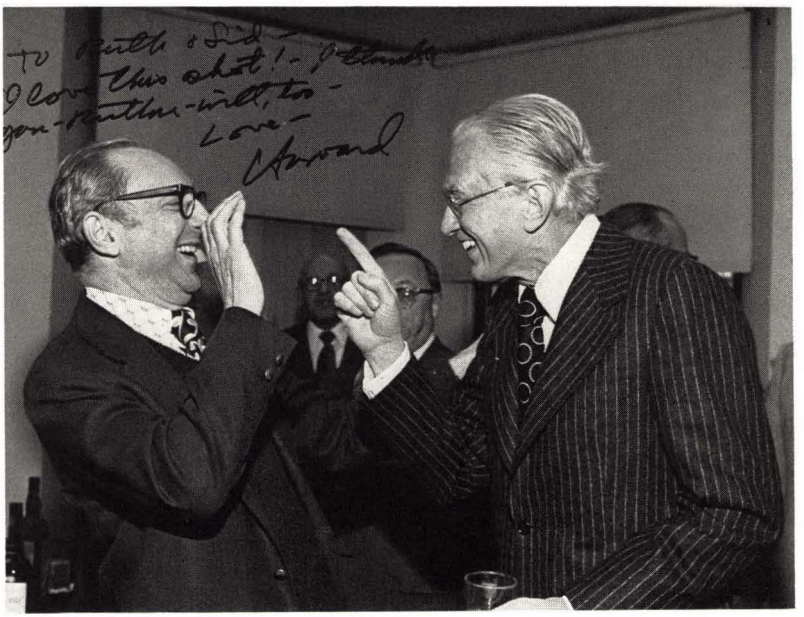
"Two in Our Generation," Hotel Cleveland, 1975. General view of the community event marking the retirement of Henry Zucker and Sidney Vincent.



"Two in Our Generation," 1975. Two Bernsteins flank the retirees; Irving (left), Director of the United Jewish Appeal, and Philip (right), Director of the Council of Jewish Federations.



Authors Book Exchange, 1979. Abba Eban inscribes his autobiography while accepting Merging Traditions, *co-authored by Vincent and Judah Rubinstein.*



Community Celebration Marking Election of Howard M. Metzenbaum to the United States Senate, 1976.



Federation's 75th Anniversary, 1979. President Albert B. Ratner recognizes services of the Secretary of the Anniversary Committee.



Living Presidents and Executives at the 75th Anniversary Celebration of the Founding of Federation, 1978. Left to right*: Henry L. Zucker, Morton L. Mandel, Maurice Saltzman, Albert B. Ratner, Leo W. Neumark, Lloyd S. Schwenger, Stanley B. Horowitz, David N. Myers, Sidney Z. Vincent.* Absent*: M. E. Glass and Samuel Goldhamer.*



Looking Forward to Retirement, 1975. Sidney and Ruth at "Two in Our Generation."



Changing of the Guard, 1975. Henry Zucker and Sidney Vincent turning over responsibility for Federation to their successor, Executive Director Stanley B. Horowitz.

made 1975 a year-long parade of farewells. At the annual meeting, I was the speaker and chose as my title "Thirty Years—Thirty Minutes: Some Reflections on Three Decades of Federation Experience." My theme was the significance of the Federation movement:

> I shall try to define tonight what three decades have taught me about the meaning of our Federation, that amazing consensus operation . . . that delicate community tight rope we all walk . . . constantly being pulled this way and that, by sometimes sincere and sometimes angry proponents of this or that cause, while we gingerly feel our way forward in community life, taking one modest step after another.
>
> That is both our strength and our weakness . . . that passion for accommodating differences and resolving conflicts. It can harness the total energies of the community effectively for joint action, but there is potential danger too. Compromise and accommodation can become so much a way of life that you lose drive and movement.
>
> So how shall we make a judgment as to how we have performed as a Jewish community? The only valid test I know is to turn to history. If we can define the historic tasks imposed on our generation by the mad sweep of events, then we should be able to judge how well or how poorly we have faced up to these responsibilities. . . .

The major portion of the address then defined five overarching responsibilities Federation had assumed: rescue and rehabilitation of the survivors of Hitler's insanity, the fight for Jewish rights and human rights at home, the provision of community services, the nourishing of Jewish commitment and continuity, and the strengthening of the Federation itself. While not glossing over many imperfections and weaknesses, I came to the following positive evaluation of how we had discharged our responsibilities:

> What mark shall we put on our community report card as to how we have performed? Have we been communal Phi Beta Kappas, mediocre performers, or rank failures?
>
> I leave the judgment to you—and to history.
>
> What is more important is what these mighty challenges have

done to us. It is an agony to live in historic times, in this bloodiest of all centuries, with its incredible hopes and incredible achievements and incredible disasters and its mortal threats.

But if it is agony, it is sometimes also ecstasy. For if there really is a dynamism that radiates from our building on Euclid Avenue and its counterparts throughout the world, it is because the issues being debated and the possibilities for good and evil are so vast that only the totally apathetic or the totally insulated can fail to respond.

The climax of the retirement ceremonials took place in June at the Hotel Cleveland. Almost a thousand people came to hear Henry Zucker give his "farewell address" and to wish us well at an embarrassingly laudatory evening officially entitled "Two in Our Generation." The two Bernsteins who directed our key national organizations (Phil of the Council of Jewish Federations and Irving of the United Jewish Appeal) came in from New York to add their comments, and we were bombarded by good wishes from all over the country and from Israel.

Gratifying as all this warm response was, more significant was the smooth manner in which the transition of professional leadership took place. Both Henry and I were determined not to repeat the sad story of some of our colleagues who hung on to their posts too long, creating problems both for themselves and for their communities. We hoped to cap our careers by demonstrating how to bow out gracefully. (Maybe I took too seriously the judgment in *Macbeth* I had discussed so often with students in my teaching days: "Nothing in his life became him like the leaving of it.") We gave the Federation officers more than a year's advance notice of our intention to retire and to withdraw completely from the work so as to leave no room for confusion about who was in charge. Informally, we added our conviction that Stanley Horowitz, a member of our own staff, had demonstrated so much ability as to warrant prime consideration as our successor.

The actual results have far exceeded my expectations and even my hopes. The officers urged us to stay on at Federation in an advisory capacity, and now, six years later, both of us still come down every morning to the offices reserved for us. It is a major

tribute, I believe, to the maturity and understanding of Stan Horowitz and the community as a whole that they have been able to utilize what we have to offer out of our experience and background without feeling threatened by having us around physically. As for us (I feel I can speak for Henry too, since we have discussed this matter many times), it is a little like the experience of being grandparents as contrasted with being parents: all the pleasures and comfortableness, and occasional usefulness, without the responsibilities and disciplines.

A questionable benefit was an increase in invitations from out of town to make speeches or undertake studies, presumably on the assumption that I now needed distractions to fill in the time. My inclination was to get out of the speaking business. Ever since I reported on the cultural study in 1959, I had received a constant stream of requests to speak to various audiences, to the point that I have spoken at meetings in every Jewish community of any size in the country. That may not be as distinguished an accomplishment as it sounds. One of my chief charms was that I never made a charge—and that is a highly attractive feature to communities husbanding their funds. I never learned the trick of constructing a set speech that could be used over and over; each one had to be painfully designed for the particular audience.

Of all the talks I gave over the years, three stand out, for different reasons, as most memorable in addition to those I have already described. The first was at the General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations in 1972 in Toronto, where I was asked to respond to a presentation by Leonard Fein, then on the faculty of Brandeis University, on "The Impact of Contemporary Issues on Jewish Life." It turned out to be more of a debate between us than a response, and great fun.

Leonard had burst upon the Jewish communal scene in the sixties with smashing impact. A brilliant phrasemaker and a keen observer, with first-rate academic and Jewish credentials, he became one of the most sought-after speakers on the Jewish scene. His role was essentially that of critic, applauding the goals of organized Jewish communal life, but decrying with acid humor what he felt to be over-organization, a drift toward smug self-

satisfaction, and a lack of vision about priorities. (Years later, he took on Prime Minister Begin and other leading Israeli personalities in comparably forthright critical attacks.) In Toronto, he was at his oratorical best. He made a distinction between "The Kingdom of Caesar and the Kingdom of God" and, identifying our Federation work with "Caesar," suggested that federations had become too "secular" and that in the future "Jews will no longer find in the secular kingdom either the challenge or the excitement they have found there for the past century." He was particularly scathing in this passage: "God is not to be found in large institutional settings. I do not know whether one in fact needs to go to the hills of Vermont or the forests of California to find God, but I am reasonably sure that he is not easily located in the offices of a social service agency or even in the auditorium of a 2000-member temple."

The heart of my response (which was also of course a defense of our Federation work) went as follows:

> I squirm at the division into Caesar's kingdom and God's kingdom, into the secular realm on one hand and presumably the spiritual realm on the other. Such a division into what used to be called the profane and the sacred is certainly not Jewish.
>
> Dr. Fein allows the possibility of finding God in the hills of Vermont or the forests of California, but denies that He can be present in a social agency office or in a synagogue auditorium. That also seems to me not in the Jewish tradition. God is approached Jewishly not through a search in the woods but basically through "mitzvot". . . .
>
> I would say that the office of a social service agency that is finding housing for a new immigrant is a very good way indeed to approach God, as is the auditorium of even a big synagogue that participates in a search for more Jewish meaning.
>
> Dr. Fein tells us that our strong card has been not secular success but the capacity for bringing the wisdom of God's kingdom to bear on the affairs of man. I couldn't agree more. But is that not what we have been trying to do? What else is the meaning of our leadership in civil rights, or in fighting the campaign against Soviet anti-Semitism or for Israel's rights or now exploring what "welfare" of the underprivileged means in the late twentieth century?

> Do these things not also belong to God's kingdom? . . . I believe the mundane, complex tasks of identifying the Jewish poor and caring for them, of running our agencies, of fighting anti-Semitism . . . yes, and of raising funds for Israel and our agencies . . . remain exciting, uplifting challenges. They belong to the secular kingdom but they also belong to God's kingdom.

I was delighted that Leonard requested permission, when it was time to reproduce our presentations, to add an "afterthought" to his remarks in which he gallantly accepted the cogency of much of my criticism of his criticism. We have argued differing positions on many occasions since Toronto, but always with a good humor that I find easy to achieve with this restless, creative personality who is as refreshingly critical of himself as he is of the imperfections of the society he observes so keenly.

The second talk that remains vivid in memory was in a totally different mood. The General Assembly met in New Orleans in November of 1973, just a month after the shattering experience of the Yom Kippur War. I was asked to speak on the "Agenda of Jewish Federations in War and Peace," with the aim of interpreting the shocking experiences we had so recently gone through and relating them to our ongoing work. I began:

> I agreed with reluctance to deliver this talk and I prepared these remarks with growing frustration. You will understand why.
>
> All of us are still dazed from the yo-yo effect of good news and bad news . . . of living and dying with hourly bulletins from the battlefield and the diplomatic front . . . of studying each other's faces each morning to find reflected there hope and fear, agony and relief. It's too soon to discuss calmly and objectively a subject like agendas and assignments for war and peace . . . too many feelings need to be sorted out first . . . too many problems need a sharper focus before we can grapple with them.
>
> And my frustration about what to say goes even deeper. For the theme of this meeting presumably is that life goes on, and it is now time to begin thinking of how to pick up where we left off on Yom Kippur. That's all perfectly logical and necessary, no doubt, but some of us will have difficulty accepting "life goes on" as a guide if that cliché implies a return to some kind of normalcy.
>
> For how is normalcy possible in an abnormal world where the

representative of Israel in the United Nations sits isolated, badgered, insulted . . . when African nations on whom love and attention were lavished sell their friendship overnight for money . . . where great nations of Europe sanctimoniously pledge to be "evenhanded" when they know perfectly well that their neutrality is one-sided.

No, we're not yet ready to talk of normalcy. Our mood is still one of astonishment that life goes on at all when the world continues to play Russian roulette. Instinctively, we plead for a little time to adjust . . . to digest the mad tumble of events at home and overseas before we turn to tomorrow's agenda.

I then shifted from that mood of mixed gloom and defiance to a definition of the realistic foundations of hope and confidence for a better future. After reviewing the astonishing outpouring of love and support from Jewish communities throughout the world, I finished with a statement of confidence:

It is important to understand why we performed as we did, because in the answer to that "why" we can find the courage and rationale for getting on with the overwhelming tasks of tomorrow, overseas and at home. The real explanation of our performance lies, I believe, in the countless prosaic agendas over the years in hundreds of cities, dealing with daily Jewish concerns at home and abroad. Through that undramatic process, we have forged a tough and vigorous national community, prepared to deal with the dramatic onslaught of a crisis. That is to say, though our communal performance in the crisis years of 1973 and 1967 has been dramatic, it could not have happened without 1972 and 1966, and all the other years when no flaming events occurred.

We knew how to act in 1973 and we will know how to act in 1974 and 1975 because we have trained ourselves for years in how and why we had to act, just as the training of Israeli pilots in 1966 and in 1965 and in all the other earlier years made possible their spectacular feats of 1967 and 1973.

And so, while it is true that *things* will never be the same again, for Israel or for us, the *process* of continuing commitment and a dedication to the long view must be the same. We must find the strength to overcome the manic-depressive reaction to news bulletins and prepare ourselves to respond to the long-term, new and old demands on Jewish life, in Israel and at home.

I concluded on a note of optimism that may have been overstated, but it was a needed antidote to the bleakness of what we had been experiencing.

The third memorable talk also took place at a General Assembly, this time in Dallas in 1977, when I was asked to summarize the conference. I used the occasion to go beyond a factual digest of what had taken place at the Assembly itself into an overall assessment of our organized community life. I requested indulgence for expanding my assignment because it was the last time I would be addressing the Assembly. (About time, too! During a span of twenty years I may have made more appearances in that forum than anyone else.) The Council of Jewish Federations reprinted the talk under the title *Paradox and Promise*, reflecting my theme of seeing community life as a drama in which creative and disintegrating factors are constantly in conflict, but with solid accomplishment often being achieved out of the resulting dialectic.

> Federations are simultaneously accused of being too secular and of invading the turf of religious institutions. Our passion for consensus makes us ponderous and slow to adapt to new conditions, we are told; but at the same time, we represent too much centrality, too much power. We are called the most inclusive organization in Jewish life, but also we are seen as elitist establishments, difficult to break into.
>
> Where does the truth lie among these many contradictions? Or should we abandon the search for a single truth and accept the reality that these opposing perspectives are *all* valid ways to judge our communal performance?

I reviewed in some detail federation relationships with synagogues, with Israeli institutions, with our constituent agencies, and with the general community, all of them occasionally controversial. I concluded:

> The simpler days of the Good Guys and the Bad Guys are over. Some of our traditional allies are now on some issues pitted against us, and some of our former opponents now sometimes express views, whatever their motivations, close to our own. In this new era of agonizing complexity, we shall have to learn to live with

topsy-turvy developments . . . No relationship is permanently fixed.

How then shall we steer a consistent course in such stormy seas? It is traditional and proper that we conclude these meetings on a note of hope. Where shall we find hope in a world so mixed up, so menacing?

My judgment may be distorted because this is my personal valedictory, since I am one of the generation that is stepping away from the national podium, but my confidence rests, finally, less on projects or even on philosophy than in people. Maybe it is sentimental to elevate personal relationships into a basis for confidence in the future, but I don't think so. I think our ultimate strength is precisely in these warm and intimate relationships, achieved while we face sober and practical and grim challenges. That combination of warmth and toughness has made our communities into an amalgam of the personal and the organizational, a unique instrument forged on this American soil, combining the Jewish heritage of personal responsibility for each other with the effectiveness and efficiency of American knowhow.

The result is as yet imperfect and there are of course occasional breakdowns and failures and bureaucracy. But when we operate at our best in community work, we do more than fund raising and budgeting and planning. We are also creating our own version of *havurot* [Jewish communes]. Perhaps not in structure, but certainly in spirit. I leave Dallas feeling that I have spent five days with my much-extended family, to whom I am bound by ties of shared anxieties and shared concerns and shared activities and shared love, not only for the Jewish People as a whole—but for very precious and very individual Jewish people.

It's natural in summing up a long career to think first of "accomplishments." I do take particular joy in having served as president of three national or international professional organizations and being intimately involved in the creation of new community instruments: the Ohio Committee for Civil Rights, the National Foundation for Jewish Culture, the International Conference on Jewish Communal Service, PACE, the Conference on Human Needs, the Institute for Jewish Life, the *Cleveland Jewish News*, the Heights Area Project. It was supreme and creative satisfaction to be one of those who saw a community

need and then wrestled, along with others, through the period of organizational gestation, suffered through the birth pangs of a new institution, and nursed it through its formative years, and helped to shape its destiny.

But after all is said and done, it is people that count. And what vivid personalities have been part of the passing communal parade. The most frustrating aspect of writing these memoirs has been that I could not name so many who played key roles in community life—and my life. The professional and the personal have been so intertwined in my life that one relationship has spilled over into and nourished the other. What a collage could be constructed of those who contributed liveliness and color to the communal scene. A few examples chosen at random, from the many not already included in these pages:

Ben Kleinman, outstanding raconteur, whose presence on any platform was guaranteed to attract an audience. The best testimony to his skill as a storyteller was the universal eagerness to hear him tell the same story over and over. The attraction lay not in the punch line but in his consummate mastery of Jewish dialects and his loving recreation of authentic and haimish settings. But he could be passionately serious too. When it came to Israel, to Hebrew, to Yiddish, he was in dead earnest. We disagreed on almost every issue and took pleasure in hurling oratorical lances at each other. Often our debates began at lunch before a Federation meeting and were carried on through the mails. The opening lines in an exchange of letters that followed one of our debates about the relative merits of practical men and intellectuals, whom he deeply distrusted as a class, may give an insight into the mixture of seriousness and fun in our discussions. I began my letter to him:

> Dear Ben,
>
> On Sunday you leaned across the smoked fish and potato salad, fixed me with your steely eye, and inquired, "What *is* an intellectual?" You were obviously suggesting that those who don't give with the big words and cloudy ideas are just as hep as the showoffs who do. . . .

He answered:

Dear Sid,

First of all, when I leaned across the smoked fish and potato salad last Sunday, it was only to get some smoked fish and potato salad. When I saw you looking at me as if I were a "goniff," I thought: "I'd better make some conversation to take his mind off the food." I was going to ask, "Who was the caterer?" when from the "bima" [platform] someone used the word "intellectual." I thought, "Now I can really sound erudite." Hence the question.

Frank Joseph was a master of the argument-stated-inversely. The technique began with the words he often used to initiate his remarks. A senior partner in one of the city's most prestigious law firms, he would nevertheless start off with the statement, "I'm just a plumber lawyer." His most common reaction to a proposal would be: "I'm all for it," followed by highly critical comments. He became chairman of the governing boards of some of the most outstanding organizations in the city, including the Musical Arts Association (The Cleveland Orchestra) and John Carroll University, among many others, but he would also accept and faithfully discharge assignments to relatively modest committees and subcommittees.

Art Reinthal, son of the fourth president of the Federation, remained all his life a figure out of the 1920s. A classic liberal in the mold of an earlier day, he would make a lunch date every couple of weeks to pour out his heart about the difficulty of adjusting to an increasingly violent age that had no time for grace and little interest in the niceties of life. He was a brilliant master of light verse and would send me his poetic comments on developments, often scribbled at night. (In his words, "I went from bed to verse.") Once, when the crazily shifting pattern of events in the Mideast momentarily made Syria's preservation from attack by Iraq crucial, I found this note from Arthur in the mail:

It's more than delirium, it's plural—deliria;
Otherwise why am I rooting for Syria?

Max Friedman and Henry Goodman and Phil Wasserstrom were universally regarded as salt of the earth types, precisely the kind that a community must have if it is to make solid progress. Yet each suffered a serious flaw in judgment. Every summer they

insisted on inviting me to play golf, despite the fact that I was the kind of duffer whose play could sour the most fanatic devotee of the game. I tried to discourage any interest in low scores by violating all the rules of the game, chatting away enthusiastically as I addressed the ball on the theory that in any case I had very little to lose. But they insisted on remaining cordial and encouraging.

David Guralnik, leading lexicographer and editor of the best of the dictionaries, consistently beat me at my own game—word use. Whenever I got to believing that I could handle a phrase expertly, I would find that I was no match for Dave's erudition. We had some hot exchanges on the proper use of such common words as "uberous" and "callipygian," and I felt secure in sharing our exchanges with a few friends, confident that the words were too abstruse for us to be charged with indelicacy.

Sam Miller was a rare, even unique kind of lone wolf. He was in agony if circumstances occasionally made him sit through an entire meeting, but he was ready to drop everything on little notice and rush off anywhere to devote himself utterly to causes he believed in. He viewed all goyim as potential anti-Semites, but at the same time he befriended dozens of them (and of course many Jews), generously and inconspicuously. I once had breakfast with him at seven o'clock (not that he ever ate anything), and I believe I was his third appointment that morning.

Some of the personalities were memorable in their own inimitable way. Bill Treuhaft was always the perfect gentleman and Anne Miller the perfect lady; Ben Yanowitz was always unruffled, the counter-puncher in argument, patiently hearing out the other fellow's point of view before expressing himself, eloquently and with good humor; Max Axelrod, constantly bemused by the world's injustices, was unable to sit still for two minutes without pacing back and forth, the better to express his frustration with private and public outrages.

The friendships extended beyond Cleveland. I came to know Sidney Hollander, a former president of the Council of Jewish Federations, only when he was approaching seventy, which then seemed ancient to me. But not in Sidney's case. He was totally irrepressible, with a delicious, impish sense of humor. When he

was nearly eighty, he was asked to give a brief report at one General Assembly and began it something like this: "They told me this is a routine report and I was not to be witty or charming. 'Be dull,' they instructed me, 'like Julian Freeman or Stanley Myers.' " (Both these men, also former presidents of Federation, and among his closest friends, were sitting directly in front of him as he spoke.) "I tried. Really I tried. But they have been dull all their lives; how do you expect me to learn overnight what came to them naturally?"

A vignette . . . Teddy Kollek, the dynamic mayor of Jerusalem, so full of life, fast asleep on stage during a particularly long meeting, graphically demonstrating his low estimate of routine and his method for reserving his energy for more vital undertakings.

Most stimulating was spending a couple of days at Brandeis University as the Milender Fellow in 1976, exchanging views with the young men and women training for communal service in the Jewish field. Their enthusiasm and imagination and challenge to stuffiness are the best guarantee that Jewish life will continue to produce the vivid personalities that enriched my professional life.

What made the work so refreshing was what I alluded to in my Dallas talk: the conviction that I was not only working *for* a concept like The Jewish People, but *with* very individual and colorful Jewish persons.

It all added up to a very full career. So full that I gradually lost my defensiveness when I periodically compared the course my life had taken with that of my childhood friend, Dan Levin. We shared as youngsters a passionate interest in writing and literature, and in a variety of social movements. We were also devotees of baseball, though he was as partial to the Tigers as I was to the Indians. He was the founder and editor and I was his associate when we produced a literary and artistic magazine, *Crossroad*, during the Depression. It had remarkable contributors: Ted Robinson (the Philosopher of Folly); Herbert Elwell, the composer; Milton Fox, assistant curator of the Art Museum; Chester Himes and Jo Sinclair, novelists. But our lives divided soon after the magazine inevitably went broke. Whereas I have been based

all my life in Cleveland, Dan struck out early for greener pastures, tasting life styles all over the world at a tender age, long before it became the custom for youth to do so. Moreover, he did what I only talked about, becoming a distinguished novelist, literary critic, and university professor. From time to time over the years we have compared notes and traded judgments about which of us has led a fuller life. Or, beyond individual cases, what are the relative advantages of staying at home and actively changing environments.

There is no way to decide such questions, but as good an answer as any was suggested by my youngest grandson one Thanksgiving when he was asked: "Which do you want—apple pie or pumpkin pie?" Jason's reply was unhestitating and enthusiastic: "Both of each!"

If I had had the wisdom to respond that way to the questions fired at me over the years:

—Which did you enjoy more: teaching or community work?

—What's more crucial: overseas responsibilities or responsibilities at home?

—Should we devote ourselves to the Jewish community or the general community?

—Where should the emphasis be: on fund-raising or on continuity and commitment? on synagogue or Federation?

After all my ruminating, I turn for answer to all those questions, and many more to a four-year-old:

BOTH OF EACH!

That's what this book—and my life work—has been all about.

III

Reflections

AN EXPLANATORY NOTE

The first two sections of this book are primarily concerned with my experiences rather than concentrating on the issues in Jewish life that form the major agenda of communal work. My position on these questions was expressed over the years in the many talks I was invited to make. This section is a smorgasbord of excerpts from some of those presentations, plus one complete talk.

Most of the formal titles were assigned to me by my hosts and were usually designed to pique audience interest rather than to define substance. The brief excerpts are therefore arranged here by general subject matter as the best means of reflecting my reactions to the issues facing the community. Most of the questions touched on remain timely and urgent, though they are viewed in these excerpts in the perspective of the time and of the occasions for which they were prepared.

RELIGIOUS AND RACIAL RELATIONS

The Status of Intergroup Relations
Lake Erie College, Painesville, Ohio, February 7, 1963

How shall we evaluate the status of our religious and racial relationships, as contrasted with a generation ago? On the one hand, there has been great progress. As groups, if not as individuals, we are less inclined to stereotype each other. We know that Catholicism is not a single-minded monolith receiving daily orders from Rome, but a dynamic organism with plenty of latitude for growth and difference of opinion. We know that Protestantism is not an unquestioning servant of high finance and a preserver of the status quo, but a highly fragmented, loose confederation of contradictory impulses. We know that Judaism is not an exotic oriental combination of international banker and cunning subversive, but a highly complex culture united only by its determination to preserve its identity. We know that Negroes have abandoned forever their role as hewers of wood, drawers of water, and eaters of white men's watermelons for their new role as militant challenger of American complacency.

In religious relationships, our tensions are moving from the vulgar level to the mature level of fundamental disagreement about issues. We do, however, have basic and perhaps insoluble disagreements. The Catholic doctrine of "the one true church" cannot fail to create difficulties that can be explained and interpreted, but not resolved. Jews and Catholics are hopelessly divided on issues of church-state separation, with Protestant denominations landing squarely on both sides of the issue. Jewish and frequently Protestant positions differ profoundly from Catholic positions on civil liberties, control of subversives, birth control legislation, control of pornography.

What we have here is what has been called "Creeds in Competition." It is the genius of democracy that it expects and welcomes pressures from its subgroups, each of which constantly and properly is seeking to mold the nation closer to its ideals. This type of conflict, carried on under proper ground rules of respect for the

opponent and avoidance of deciding moral questions by majority vote, is the very stuff of democracy. But conflict will persist, and tensions will arise.

On many great questions we are increasingly united—the right of the workingman to a decent wage, the responsibility of government to care for the underprivileged, the need to eliminate discrimination from American life. In religious relationships, I believe America is at long last growing up.

And about time too. For the hour is very late. Religion until yesterday was in a fair way to becoming almost irrelevant to American life. A substantial part of our people has always been unaffiliated with any church, and even the recent widely hailed "return" was more a return to religiosity than to religion. For on the great issues of war or peace, social justice, the dignity of the colored man, religion as a whole, with honorable and noble exceptions, was remarkably quiet.

Now its leaders have finally entered the lists en masse. In the words of Robert Gordis, an outstanding religious leader: "Religion has too long been comforting the afflicted. The hour has struck for afflicting the comfortable." America has certainly been the most comfortable nation the world has ever known. Now we are sorely afflicted, by deadly external threats and by powerful internal tensions.

The measure of our maturity lies in how we respond to these monumental pressures. We can lose ourselves in nostalgia for a sentimentally conceived "good old days" when the world without and sub-cultures within presumably knew their place. Those who react in this way will inevitably seek villains and scapegoats, because they can tolerate only simple explanations.

Or we can accept cheerfully the proposition that only the grave is free of tension. Out of the deadly peril of the atom bomb can come a world of peace. Out of the bitter racial turmoil can come—and, I believe, is coming—a day when the Negro walks fully erect in America. Out of our fundamental religious disagreement can come a comfortableness in the face of valid, unchangeable difference.

These are all only possibilities, not certainties. It is for us, in the ancient Biblical tradition, to be "strong and of good courage" in

order that our generation may acquit itself like men in this most decisive of historical epochs. . . .

A GUIDE TO SOCIAL ACTION

An Experiment in Empathy
Milwaukee Jewish Welfare Fund, September 29, 1969

In these violent times, how can we continue to play a constructive role in helping to achieve democratic goals without yielding to the hysteria that threatens to engulf us? Here are four propositions for your consideration:

I shall continue to be deeply involved in problems of the inner city.

This is by far the most obvious of the propositions. The faint of heart who would now withdraw from the struggle because of its violence are condemning themselves and all of us to more violence. Our body politic is somewhat in the position of a person whose leg has fallen asleep, and the first signs of returning life inevitably are the tingle and the sharpness of pain. We have been asleep racially for centuries and the pain we are now experiencing is in the deepest sense hopeful. It is a sign that the Negro is returning to life, is beginning to walk erect. We may yearn for the return of "the good old days," but racially speaking, they were not good. The peace we thought we enjoyed was the peace of oppression, of a nation that fought a war for democracy using two armies, one black and the other white . . . that treated its black citizens as second-class citizens or not citizens at all, by taking away their votes, by sending them to separate schools, by penning them up in ghettoes. For all of its tumult, who would not prefer the present situation which offers the possibilities of hope and progress? We were, I trust, never engaged in work in the inner city because we wanted to mete out little rewards to Negroes conditional on their good behavior. We work for our cities because our passionate Jewish historic devotion to social justice demands it; the best of

our American traditions of democracy and respect for the individual demands it; and because our Jewish self-interest demands it, since we shall always live in the most critical danger when the fabric of our society is torn by injustice.

I will surrender my judgments to no other group or individual, nor will I follow any "line" that perverts truth to accomplish its ends.

I abhor violence from whatever source, and will denounce it whether it comes from the right or the left, from whites or blacks. I will not condone or explain away injustice, even if it claims justification because of other injustice. A Jewish businessman threatened with extortion deserves my support and help, and the extorter is my enemy, whether his skin is white or black.

I abhor racism, regardless of its pigmentation, and I shall attempt to distinguish between racism founded on hate and the desire to seek selfish privilege, and the legitimate and healthy "racism" which is really a thrust for group identity. This requires the ability to distinguish between the validity of a distinctive dress, a distinctive appearance, and a distinctive culture, and an insistence that only my kind shall be hired or promoted.

I abhor falseness, and I will not for the sake of promoting alliances with militant groups, white or black, associate myself with accusations about Israel or America that follow party lines and are obvious lies. The problems facing both Israel and America are real enough without complicating their solution with ridiculous accusations that are ludicrous both in their substance and in their "non-negotiable" manner of presentation.

I recognize we are living in revolutionary times, and I will work for adaptation, unafraid of change, to new conditions.

The fundamental dilemma we face is a result of a conflict of viewpoints, each justified if seen only in its own terms. Under such circumstances, the burden of accommodation rests upon those who are comfortable to adjust to those who are uncomfortable; on the Establishment, to use the popular lingo of the day, to adjust to those seeking for the first time to exercise power. This demands of us a remarkable capacity to make unpleasant sacrifices and radical changes, possibly including redistribution of income and redistribution of opportunity that will be painful for us

to resolve. The harsh fact is that we are in more serious trouble than perhaps ever before in our history as a nation, and ironically, we arrive at that crisis at the precise moment when we were never so well fixed materially. People or groups who are well off always resist change; the volcanic upheavals of our day demand change. The result is that more than in 1776, we are living in times that try men's souls.

I shall seek the engagement not only of Jewish individuals but of the Jewish community.

Many thoughtful community leaders, properly worried about inner Jewish decay, warn against such a step. They suggest that the tasks of social involvement be borne by individual Jews and that the Jewish community should limit itself to the tasks of Jewish survival, for which it is uniquely equipped. I share the concern that prompts such a conclusion, but I disagree with the conclusion. As turmoil and unrest grow and explode, no group is secure—certainly not the Jewish group—and therefore, for reasons of self-preservation as well as altruism, the Jewish community as such has a stake in a just and functioning society.

The union of Catholic, Protestant and Jewish energies and leadership helped pass our best civil rights legislation. We have increasingly in recent years helped as a community to fashion this American society a bit closer to our heart's desire. For the Jewish community as a whole to withdraw now in its own name from such responsibilities, uniquely among the major sub-groups, would impoverish American moral and social growth, stamp us as a kind of second class or withdrawn culture, and nullify our commitment to the Jewish imperative going back to biblical days: "Justice, justice shalt thou pursue."

There are, of course, caveats that should be observed. Before undertaking any social betterment project, an agency should ask itself some questions, just as it should ask some questions about projects within the Jewish community. Can the agency be effective? Is its staff capable of handling the assignment? Does it have a contribution to make that others are less equipped to offer? Can the project be turned over to others after its worthwhileness is demonstrated? Is it likely to create such internal controversy as not to be worth the price? How is the project related to other

agency concerns? What opportunities does it provide for lay involvement and enrichment?

In a word, the approach should be pragmatic, with each opportunity weighed on its merits, with constant evaluation, with a desire to achieve a balance between conservatism and good sense on the one hand, and leadership, enthusiasm and growth on the other.

Certainly there are dangers ahead. But life is itself dangerous in 1969, and those who have played it safe and agencies that have been reluctant to change have found that course the most dangerous of all.

We can face the future paralyzed by the horrors implicit in a civilization that can press a button and destroy itself. Or we can resolve that the incredible gifts of the new science shall be put to the service of mankind. Similarly, we can turn from the real threats of an open society and seek the comforts of an enclave, or we can realistically but cheerfully seek out the full opportunities for Jewish and human growth that such a society offers.

THE NATURE AND FUNCTION OF ESTABLISHMENTS

The Jewish Community and You
Southern Regional Conference on Young Leadership,
Atlanta, Georgia, October 16, 1971

I believe that establishments are intrinsically neither good nor bad. But they are inevitable. That is to say, when groups desire to accomplish any objective, they will inevitably create an establishment, no matter how anarchistic or revolutionary they feel themselves to be. If they don't, not much will be accomplished and they will quickly fade from the scene—as has been the case with the Flower People and the hippies and the yippies and the other undisciplined, non-establishment fads that have had their

moment on the stage. Their lack of organization, of *establishing* themselves must soon prove fatal. They can provide excitement, define weaknesses, point directions, but they will not themselves effect change. The revolutions that make it, in any sphere of life, are those that organize. And if we are talking here today not about revolution but evolution, of moving responsibly from where we are to where we want to go, then the need for staying power, for work, for establishments is even more crucial. Margaret Berry put the case pretty well to some of us social workers:

> Protest alone has not brought change. It has aroused the conscience of others. But eventual basic change has come as a result of a coalition of forces—the technicians, managers, doctors, lawyers, social workers, housewives, businessmen—all those forces who work out, compromise, negotiate if necessary, the tedious details.

But to claim that establishments are inevitable is not to say they are necessarily good. Often they are "dull, stale, flat and unprofitable" and sometimes tyrannical and oppressive and unresponsive. Those who now loudly attack establishments—whether they are 20 or 70 years old—do so with great justification. The world obviously is in a mess and desperately in need of change. All establishments, including the Jewish one, are proper subjects for criticism. No tradition, including the Jewish one, is exempt from searching reexamination of its credentials when what has been produced is so bitterly unsatisfactory.

THE ROLE OF THE VOLUNTEER

The Role of the Voluntary Agency
Annual Meeting of the Cleveland Catholic Charities, February 8, 1972

There was a time in our national life when we saw the Volunteer as Hero. We Americans thought of ourselves as a self-reliant, fiercely independent New Breed, breaking with the closed class

society of the Old World through all manner of voluntary associations, political, social, and economic.

The very first page of our history tells how the Pilgrims formed a kind of voluntary agency, when by mutual agreement they entered into a Compact to establish their religious society. From then on, till this century, there was the frontier, the drive to the West as the central American tradition. Its hero was always the loner, the Good Volunteer who triumphed over the Bad Volunteers intent on robbing the bank or otherwise creating mischief. When life grew more centered in the city, we developed a new type of Volunteer Hero—Horatio Alger—who through self-reliance, constant volunteering and devotion to "getting ahead" invariably rose to the top of the heap. I refrain from comment about how he behaved once he got there.

On the more sophisticated level, nothing has influenced our political thinking more than the words of Thomas Jefferson: "That government is best which governs least." Jefferson saw us as a nation of self-reliant burghers caring for our own needs and those of occasional unfortunates through our own voluntary efforts, rather than relying on the state, which was viewed as potential tyrant. In philanthropy, we created the Community Chests, partly to safeguard the voluntary sector against the governmental sector. There was a time when it was common to hear warnings at Community Chest meetings that if we didn't contribute properly, government would take over, presumably a great evil.

This American tradition of the volunteer has been a precious motif in our national life. Thank God, it vigorously persists, as our gathering here today testifies. But it needs updating. For reality has intruded on our romantic myths of Up from the Log Cabin. The plain, inescapable fact is that the volunteer alone, or the voluntary agency alone, or the voluntary agencies together cannot by themselves cope with the world of 1972. The Good Guy could in the showdown shoot down the Bad Guy, but what if in the real world the Bad Guy is society itself and its malfunction? You all remember Pogo's famous saying, "We have met the enemy, and he is us." No voluntary association of many Good Guys can by their voluntary efforts alone deal with the complications of unemployment and welfare and injustice and pollution.

Bigness has taken over. We may deplore that fact, but the fact remains. Mom and Pop stores become supermarkets and then national chains. Unions multiply and form Big Labor, to match Big Business, created by smaller enterprises merging with larger enterprises and still larger giant enterprises. Governments find even they are sometimes not big enough to cope, and common markets are formed where entire nations pool their resources. Social agencies are not exempt from this drive toward bigness. As expenses increase and income does not, more thought is given to mergers that it is hoped will save money and improve performance. I suspect that even in your parish work, there comes a time when the individual units are too small to be viable.

How shall we as volunteers, responsible for our agencies, react to these developments? One possible reaction, and a common one, is to accept this reality as a fact of life and dismiss the voluntary agency as an anachronism, an idea whose time has passed, with little to offer to the complex world of the late twentieth century. The tough problems we face, this point of view holds, can be solved only by government. Billions of dollars are needed and whether we like it or not, whole areas of our life which traditionally were dealt with either by the family or by voluntary agencies are now inevitably coming under the direction of government: welfare, health programs, housing, even our school systems. What role can voluntary agencies possibly play when it comes to these vast and crucial areas of our national life?

Moreover, we are told, the issues themselves are so involved that only professionals can deal with them effectively, experts who devote themselves to knowing more and more about less and less. The idea that lay people—volunteers—can do much more than say amen is quaint; and the basic function of the voluntary agency, involving doing and decision by laymen, is on its way out. If voluntary agencies can amuse some old ladies or keep some kids out of mischief, fine; but let's not kid ourselves that there is any real role for them any more.

Well, that's one possible reaction. But in the world of the spirit, just as in the physical world, action breeds reaction. As the drive toward bigness and government power goes relentlessly forward, evidently the human spirit produces antibodies to protect the

spirit of the volunteer. That is to say, man challenges the machine; he accepts the computer and the increased role of government but in one way or another he proclaims, "Here I am . . . the individual man . . . the volunteer and my friends . . . We count too."

UNIVERSALISM AND PARTICULARISM

If I Am Not For Myself . . .

Plenum of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council
Los Angeles, California, July 1, 1972

The result of all our millennial Jewish wandering between two worlds is that we have become simultaneous One Worlders and nationalists, indigestible lumps on monolithic stomachs, but at the same time, geniuses at accommodation to widely differing cultures. Our stubbornness in being ourselves on the one hand, and global in our interests on the other lies close to the heart of both Jewish creativity and Jewish tragedy. How shall we apply all this history to our present situation? Is there some operating procedure we can extract as a guide to the perplexed for Jewish life in the seventies?

I think so. It lies in our talent for applying principle pragmatically. That is to say, whether our emphasis was outward or inward was determined strategically by principle but tactically by the conditions we faced at any given time . . . Are the people worshipping a Golden Calf? Stress the need for inward purity. Is a suffocating parochialism emerging? Emphasize that the people of Babylonia are also God's concern. To skip to modern times, during the peak of mass migration to America, Jewish community leaders understandably defined their prime duty as persuading the greenhorns to "look outward," to put behind them the narrowness of the *shtetl*, about which they were not the least bit sen-

timental, and to seize the opportunities of the new, open society. Their intent was to make Americans out of Jews.

And now? There is consensus, I believe, that *our* primary communal task is to make Jews out of Americans. It is not so much that the Melting Pot ideal is finished, since we never really wanted to be Wasps, as that Esperanto man is finished. The road to Ethical Culture and Unitarianism is a dead end; universalism unanchored in particularism can lead to the intolerance and the spiritual myopia of the New Left.

DUAL LOYALTIES

The Agenda of Jewish Federations in War and Peace
General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations,
New Orleans, Louisiana, November 8, 1973

It is time to take the old pejorative term "dual loyalties" and restore it to a place of honor, newly entitled "critical loyalty" or "multiple loyalties." The horrors of Watergate prove, among other things, the danger of uncritical singleness of loyalties. When only one candidate or only one party or only one race or only one nation matters, there will be "dirty tricks" and apartheid and Belfast bombings and Munich massacres and Yom Kippur invasions. To be human is to have many loyalties. A system of checks and balances is needed not only to restrain and civilize the competing claims of the executive and the judicial and the legislative; it is a necessary component of the human condition, enabling us to live with difference, to pursue our own dearly prized interests while respecting other loyalties that also have claims on our fellow men.

What the organized Jewish community has done to help bring the State of Israel into existence and to support its struggle to redeem broken lives and a broken land is a glittering chapter in

Jewish history, but it is also a significant chapter in American history, demonstrating how this polyglot nation can utilize its ethnic components—their loyalties, their resources, and yes, their pressures—to help nourish and recreate the waste places of the old world, physically and spiritually. We are often told that the struggle of the blacks has reshaped American life through forcing our institutions—business and labor and religious and political—to undertake a radical reappraisal of their procedures and their values. In the same way, our struggle for peace in the Mideast and the redemption of Soviet Jewry is forcing America to reexamine the values that underlie decisions about most favored nations, and the relative importance of oil and people, and our attitude toward human rights throughout the world.

It is a dangerous game we are engaged in. It is possible that America will finally see in the black struggle only its turbulence and upset and may finally turn to repression, just as it is possible that America will see in our struggle only the inconveniences of gasoline shortages or unwanted international responsibilities and turn to that part of our national heritage which nourishes anti-Semitism. Anything is possible these days. We are living in a world where risks and even deadly dangers are unavoidable . . . where both Israel and we must accept the bitter reality that the age-old virus of hatred of Jews may erupt with renewed virulence. But we have the comfort of knowing that in our support of Israel we are playing an ancient Jewish role in forcing moral issues and a new Jewish role in having a hand in how these issues are resolved.

For the outlook is hopeful as well as dangerous. Look at the record. Contrast the American response to the Mideast crisis of 1967 and that of 1973. Not only has Washington been firm in its support of Israel; so have, by and large, the American and Canadian people. You remember the frigid attitude of the Christian clergy in 1967. Now the clergy, the press, business and labor, political leaders and ethnic groups have been—with exceptions—more generous in their response. It is not only because we have perhaps done a better job of public relations, of interpreting our positions . . . a job we must now do much more effectively and

planfully . . . It is also due to our becoming partners in so much of the American social and humanitarian enterprise that we are listened to in those urgent moments of American decision, when our interests are at stake. Not despite our responsibilities overseas but precisely because of them—as well as because of our commitment to Jewish values—we must somehow find the time and the energy to remain a dynamic part of the larger society in which we now move.

And so, I find once again a relationship and a unity. Our work in insisting on better health and welfare standards, in improving changing and threatened neighborhoods, in insisting on equality and opportunity for all, in helping to raise the sights of American philanthropy, in remaining a model community providing high standards of service by our agencies . . . all of these form parts of the seamless web that knits together Jewish and American and human concerns.

We face then an agenda for war and peace more menacing but more challenging, more dangerous but more hopeful than ever before in our long history. Auschwitz proved that man can be a dangerous beast, murderous to all we hold dear . . . but man we have been told is also "little less than an angel," who is learning how atom is linked to atom and gene to gene—and should be no less capable of learning how brother is linked to brother . . . that is what we have been demonstrating in our agenda of the past month, as Jewish communities everywhere have been linked city to city and country to country, to face the problems of war and peace.

And in the process we have given renewed and profound meaning to the words *Am Yisroel Chai.* (The Jewish people lives!) We savor the importance of each of the three words . . . determined to act as an *Am* . . . a people whose destiny is bound up together . . . knowing that the name of that distinctive people is *Yisroel* . . . Israel . . . both in its meaning as a specific, precious nation and as a series of linked communities all over the world, . . . and finally . . . *Chai* . . . declaring that like all living organisms, we too have three vital functions . . . protecting ourselves against our enemies, which is the agenda of war;

the metabolic function . . . renewing ourselves through constant Jewish nourishment, building up anew and sloughing off the outworn, which is the agenda of peace; and reproducing ourselves, which is to say, passing on the heritage, which is the agenda for the future.

Whatever that future may bring, we will approach our day-to-day agendas with the confidence of those whose lives are dedicated to the proposition that in that profound sense . . . *Am Yisroel Chai.*

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

Jewish Communal Organization: An Instrument for Planned Change to Meet New Priorities

Third International Conference of Jewish Communal Service, Jerusalem, Israel, August 14, 1975

The first phrase in today's title "Jewish Communal Organization" is not at all new in Jewish history since we have had thousands of years of experience with many types of communal organization. But the second part is dramatically, profoundly new: "Planned Change to Meet New Priorities." In the universal tension that exists in all life between the forces of continuity and the forces of change, Jewish life was geared throughout the generations to insure continuity and resist change. It could hardly have been otherwise. The outside world was intent on changing us. Its constant theme was: "Give up your outlandish ways that scandalize us, and your absurd beliefs that deny us."

And we resisted. We built a fence around the law, convinced that change was mortal danger. Moreover, basic priorities, eternally valid, had already been established. The object of the good life was not to explore in new and uncharted directions but to return to the virtues and the commitments already defined for all time.

The constant theme of the holy writings is "Remember." The constant promise, if the prescribed virtuous life pattern is observed, is "Return." Therefore, the venerated figures in our tradition were typically the scholar losing himself in the pages of the Talmud "for its own sake", or the scribe insuring that no slightest emendation be made in the holy script, not the bold thinker striking out in new and unprecedented directions. We owe our very existence and preservation as a people to that essential conservatism of the community. Jews lived in a closed society and generation after generation they preserved the tradition, yielding only grudgingly to the slow shifts of history.

That is not to say that Jewish life was static. Of course there was creative accommodation to new conditions. From the time of the Mishna to the *responsa* that continue to our own day, learned and reasonable teachers were magnificent guides to the perplexed who came inquiring how timeless principles could be applied to timely situations. But *planned*, deliberate change? *New* priorities? These are not traditional concepts. The stress was overwhelmingly on continuity. No virtue was seen in change as such nor any compulsion to think in terms of relevance (a favorite modern concept).

Yet here we are this morning, gathered here from all corners of the world in Jerusalem, the very symbol of continuity, to discuss how we shall go planfully, deliberately about the task of conscious change, as if that were a desideratum. And indeed it is. For we are adjusting to the needs of our breathless times in the style of our day—which is to plan in the certainty of radical change, just as our fathers adjusted to their more ponderous events in the mood of their times—to conserve the past. My grandfather was born into a world not essentially different from that of his grandfather. And here am I, barely a generation removed from the *shtetl*, transported here overnight thousands of miles by jet, with my words instantly and electronically translated into other languages. And there are my grandsons, taking for granted space probes to the outer planets; and their grandchildren, what of them?

So change is upon us, willy-nilly, change with the speed of light,

upsetting nations and destroying social systems and murdering peoples and doubling and quadrupling human knowledge, all within one man's lifetime. If continuity is not to be overwhelmed by the sheer speed of a world constantly upended, it can no longer deal with change in the tidy, slow-moving patterns of the past.

The world of science has learned that hard lesson. Our understanding of the physical world moved glacially over centuries from the static concepts of an Aristotle to the mechanical concepts of a Newton; then, more quickly, to the dynamic concepts of an Einstein, and now—in the twinkling of an eye—to an explosion of insights and mind-boggling concepts of a dazzling array of contemporary conceptualizers. We who are concerned with community, its preservation and its continuity, are granted no exemption from that frantic pace of change.

THE HOLOCAUST

Anti-Semitism and the Holocaust

Cleveland Chapter of the National Conference of Jewish Communal Service, April 26, 1976

The other day on television, one of our most sympathetic TV personalities was quizzing two of our Jewish community leaders and asked, "Why do you Jews keep talking about the Holocaust so much? Why do you keep torturing yourselves and us too about such grisly matters? Isn't it time to put all that aside?"

I thought to myself, "How would I answer such a question?" What possible way can we communicate our horror at the prospect that millions of martyrs will be forgotten? It's not enough to respond that the world must be constantly reminded of what took place as the best guarantee that it will not happen again. Our responsibility goes deeper.

Even in the case of individuals, there is a profound need to

avoid obliteration, even when no injustice has been suffered. The last remark of Hamlet before he dies is to plead with his friend Horatio to "tell my story." In his last statement before killing himself, Othello says: "Speak of me as I am; nothing extenuate nor set down aught in malice." How overwhelming then is the responsibility of an entire people to keep its collective history from oblivion. The final abomination is the denial that the Holocaust ever took place. It is essentially a declaration that anything goes. We are a people enmeshed in history and we will not have it erased. Professor Falkenheim has said, "There is a systematic theft of the Holocaust by the outside world."

We need occasionally to refresh our commitment by reviewing the heritage left to us by those who endured the Holocaust. This poem, for example:

> O God of mercy, for the time being
> Choose another people.
> We are tired of death, tired of corpses,
> We have no more prayers.
> For the time being,
> Choose another people.

We must somehow retain the passion, the sorrow, and the anger of that poem and convert it, as the most fitting memorial, into fearless and constructive refashioning of Jewish life, if we are to play our roles in forging our link in the long chain of tradition that binds generation to Jewish generation.

THE GENERATIONAL GAP

Breaking the Generational Barrier
New Orleans Jewish Federation, April 21, 1977

Every generation views its successor with a mingled feeling of hope and concern. You have heard enough about our hopes for

you and our confidence in you so that there is no need for further easy compliments. I think more can be learned from our concerns. Basically, we have questions about you that have nothing to do with your commitment or your competence, but with your experience. Or rather, your lack of experience, because you are the generation that "knew not Hitler." You are also the first generation that has no firsthand knowledge of a world without a State of Israel. There is no way that I can fully convey what a gulf this creates between us. And I know that many young people perceive federations as grossly materialistic, long on pragmatism and short on idealism, self-perpetuating, understanding a dollar better than an idea, unworthy of the enthusiasm and the dedication of a generation seeking to reshape a world it never made.

How can these two views be brought into a single focus? What is the cement that makes it possible for your generation to build upon what we have created? What understanding must we mutually achieve to prepare the ground for your inevitable assumption of leadership and responsibility?

I believe the responsibility for communication begins with us. And our first job is to get rid of the idea that our generation has a lock on the experience of dealing with the world as it is, because the bitter truth is that all of us will be living for the foreseeable future in the continuing presence of both the Holocaust and the establishment of the state of Israel.

That is to say, the Holocaust is a particular horror, a specific monstrous event in the life of the Jewish people that took place in the early forties. In that particularized sense, only the generation that experienced it can fully savor its horrors. But the Holocaust is also a living, ongoing phenomenon attesting that man's bestiality is endemic in our bloody twentieth century civilization. We experienced the spirit of the Holocaust last month in Washington, when the Hanafi Muslims who took over the B'nai B'rith building threatened to cut off Jewish heads and divided their hostages, as our enemies have done from Auschwitz to Entebbe, into those who were Jewish and those who were not. I experienced the spirit of the Holocaust six weeks ago when I visited the Soviet

Union and underwent four hours of interrogation by half a dozen bully boys who cross-examined me on the purpose of my visit. How could I explain that my mission was an ancient Jewish one, to bring some ease and comfort and a sense of shared destiny to those astonishing refuseniks, the latest in the centuries-old line of Jews in trouble. We sniff the evil odor of the Holocaust in the reports from Argentina of attacks on synagogues and republication of "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion." We hear the voice of the Holocaust in the halls of the United Nations when logic is turned upside down and Zionism is equated with racism by formal pronouncement by an organization sworn to preserve the peace. No, the Holocaust as a single event may be frozen in time, but the Holocaust as a human mood, a potential for disaster is a continuing phenomenon of our times that you will have to deal with—better than we did.

And so with the creation of Israel. We remember the unique thrill of hearing its independence proclaimed 29 years ago in Tel Aviv and recognized within minutes by our own nation. But that was only the beginning, only a proclamation. It liberated those churning, creative forces within the Jewish people that are forever energizing us, so that Israel, not only in the sense of a land and of a state, but also as the name of a people, has continuingly been in the process of being re-created ever since.

That is no mere rhetorical over-statement. Israel would have long since disappeared if there had been a static approach to our life as a people . . . if we had said, in effect, "Now the state is established. Good luck. It's your baby now." As a matter of fact, the whole Jewish people would have disappeared millennia ago if communities and generations had assumed that Jewish responsibility was ever completed. The ancient maxim tells us: "It is not up to you to complete the task, but neither are you free to desist from it." And so, the creation of the state was only the beginning of a process, just as everything about Jewish life represents forever a beginning and a challenge that needs continuingly to be worked at. I take the Biblical declaration "I am a jealous God" to mean precisely that . . . that the work of Jewish commitment or Jew-

ish education and learning or Jewish responsibility can never be taken for granted; it requires constant refreshment and constant devotion. We are given nothing. The good Lord in His wisdom saw fit to plant a lake of oil under Saudi Arabia so that the riches of the world would fall into their laps with no effort on their part. . . . But it is the Jewish fate that our moral noses are kept close to the grindstone and that we earn our very lives as well as our bread by the sweat of our brows.

So I say to my generation, "Don't worry about the young leadership that will replace us. They will carry on, in their own way and in their own style, not because they are either necessarily better or necessarily less capable than we were. They will persist because they are Jews, and because the forces of creativity and the forces of destruction will attend and toughen and threaten them as they have inspired and hardened us."

THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY

Annual Meeting of the Jewish Vocational Service of Cleveland
November 22, 1977

We are inundated these days with best sellers warning us against being intimidated, encouraging us to "let it all hang out," assuring us that the only thing that counts in life is taking care of Number One, advancing our own interests, evaluating even friendships by what friends can do for us. The concept of life that underlies these vulgar and noisy volumes is that life is a jungle, that it is best to conquer because otherwise you will be conquered, that the only solid guide for life is to look out for yourself. It is a philosophy that has deep roots in our culture.

And there is a second philosophy which only seems to be its opposite but is equally destructive. It is the arrogant cruelty of

those so intent on correcting the ills of society, of building a new world closer their heart's desire, that they are ready to destroy both tradition and traditional individuals to have their way. They are not only the highjackers and the cultists and the third world ideologues who cannot distinguish Zionism from racism . . . They are also those who cannot distinguish between reforming establishments and destroying them. In both cases—those who preach the doctrine "Look after yourself and let others go hang," and those who preach the gospel of "Refashion society no matter the cost,"—the integrity of the individual doesn't count for much. The other guy is either to be exploited or to be fitted willy-nilly into a utopian scheme.

We must patiently, persistently avoid both these paths. As I understand your functioning, it is anchored in the proposition that each individuality is precious, that it flowers best when it finds satisfying work, but that all work takes place in a community, which also has needs we must meet. The mutual and continuing adjustment of the individual and society is your fundamental aim, not the individual *über alles* and the devil with society, or the society *über alles* and the devil with the individual.

It sounds so simple, so self-evident . . . and is so complex and difficult to achieve in practice. There are many ways to describe the unease that pervades this late twentieth century and there obviously is no one solution to our dilemmas. But the aspiration of this agency should be to create a community where each man and each woman has a sense of belonging, of doing work which is not only satisfying to the individual, but has meaning for society. To the extent we realize that aspiration, we are helping to create the family of man, a phrase that used to be more common than it is now. Of course, you are all in some degree meshuga. Who needs the meetings and the lunches and the minutes and the committee assignments when there are so many jolly things to do? Who needs it? You do, we do, as one way of demonstrating that life consists of more than Number One . . . that the best way not to be intimidated by life is to be a participant with others in activities and in objectives that enable us to see and to live beyond our own horizons.

COMMUNAL ACTIVITY AS CULTURE

Twenty Years Later: A Report on the Status of the Jewish Cultural Agencies
San Francisco, California, November 10, 1978

The term "culture" has a double meaning. In its limited sense, it refers to the world of books and music and humanities and the arts; but when we talk of a people's culture, we may also properly be thinking of its entire way of life . . . the basic patterns and concerns and aspirations of the community as a whole.

It is this definition, I believe, that points the way to a new understanding of the role of culture in our lives. Viewed from this perspective, our absorption with tasks of rescue and rehabilitation and our skill at fund raising and budgeting and planning are also Jewish cultural work. The great and constructive challenges of our generation have been the rehabilitation of refugees, the nurturing of Israel, the concern for Soviet Jewry, the building up of our own communal structures and services. It is easy to be patronizing, to have fun at the expense of "the Jewish establishment" but in the long view of history, what the "establishments" of our generation have accomplished despite occasional vulgarities are profound cultural contributions.

This is as yet not understood by our creative artists. Almost all of them either ignore the Jewish establishment as a serious locus for their creativity or are hostile to us. Maybe that's inevitable; maybe the artist and the community must of necessity be in tension with each other, like the media and government. Marcel Orphus, the creator of the fine documentary, "The Sorrow and the Pity," has written: "To some extent, the terms community and intellect should be mutually exclusive. Communities are not good for the creative intellect."

Maybe. But I don't buy that position. There is a quotation from President Kennedy chiseled into the outside wall of the Center for the Performing Arts in Washington that has the opposite thrust.

It states that there is an undefinable but real relationship between a vigorous national life and a vigorous cultural life, pointing out that the Age of Pericles was also the Age of Phidias . . . the Age of Elizabeth was also the Age of Shakespeare.

I should like to think that there is a Jewish parallel, that this extraordinary Age of Jewish Communal Organization, for which our federations are largely responsible, can be echoed by a comparably vigorous cultural life. To paraphrase Kennedy, the generation of the United Jewish Appeal and the Joint Distribution Committee and the Council of Jewish Federations is also the generation of Elie Wiesel and Isaac Bashevis Singer and Saul Bellow.

THE "SECULARISM" OF THE ORGANIZED COMMUNITY

Reaffirming Jewish Life: The Challenge of Change
Keynote Address to the Conference of Jewish Communal Service, Toronto, Canada, June 3, 1979

Despite our growing Jewish commitment, we are still often thought of as the secularists of Jewish life. We are perceived as the doers, the technicians, the men and women of the present, with shallow roots in the past and little Jewish vision of the future. By the accidents of history and through the impetus of practical necessities, we have been entrusted with too much responsibility and too much authority. As a result, Jewish life as a whole is in danger of being vulgarized or trivialized, because although we may be long on efficiency, we are short on passion and self-knowledge.

I would prefer to take such comments less as indictments to be refuted than warnings to be heeded. The criticism is overstated, but the sentiments we express do not always match our actual performance. The tone of these annual meetings is fervently Jewish in commitment. Our heroes at these annual conferences are

not the professional experts but those of large Jewish vision and Jewish spirit . . . the Irving Greenbergs and Harold Schulweises and David Hartmans, who stimulate us and amuse us and inspire us because of their combination of Jewish warmth and human warmth, honed by their powerful grasp of tradition. And yet, although all three are rabbis, we have developed no ongoing relationship with the rabbinical profession. Jewish life never made a sharp division between the so-called secular and the so-called sacred, but we live in substantial isolation professionally from our rabbis and scholars.

That goes for Jewish educators too. They are formally a part *of* our Conference, but much of the time they are apart *from* our Conference; we are only sometime colleagues, who do not really share the same world. Jewish education is for the most part unengaged with actual Jewish community life; the great challenges that torment us and uplift us in our professional lives are for the most part muted. We can help bring vitality into the classroom. And we, who are so frequently Jewishly ignorant, need them too. With the best will in the world, we cannot produce Jewishly if we do not know Jewish. And so, we both suffer a kind of spiritual anemia.

The future is impenetrable, but one prediction seems safe enough: Jewish agencies during the next generation will either present increasingly sturdy Jewish credentials or they will gradually drop out of the family of Jewish agencies as they rely more and more on third-party payments and as their program in fact becomes less and less Jewishly distinctive.

Will this emphasis on more Jewish content separate us from the general community? Some say yes. They suggest it is time for us to "look inward," since our prime obligation now is the opposite of what it was in the days of the immigrants. Most agencies then sought to make Jews into Americans; the need now is to help Americans be good Jews. Nevertheless, I think it is pernicious to talk about "looking inward" as if we could achieve our Jewish objectives only at the expense of playing our full part on the general communal scene. Again, I turn to the past for models. The great men of an earlier day—Abba Hillel Silver, Stephen S. Wise,

Louis D. Brandeis—all won their spurs in both the Jewish world and the general community. Immersion in one brought greater effectiveness in the other. In an open society, to be fully Jewish is to be fully American, fully human.

BROADENING THE BASE OF INVOLVEMENT

Address to the New England UJA Leadership Conference, Boston, Massachusetts, October 20, 1979

When we talk about "broadening our base," we usually have in mind sharing the responsibility fiscally and raising more money. But more is involved. All of us are committed to democracy by our entire training and our way of life. We mean it when we talk at annual meetings about how eager we are for more participation by our citizenry, even in decision-making. But all democratic institutions struggle with the problem of how to involve their constituencies responsibly in decision-making. America fought a war to ensure that we had a say in our governance, but at most elections, more of the electorate stays home than votes.

In Jewish life, involvement is even harder to achieve. All our institutions are voluntary; very little is decided by general elections, and no one needs to pay Jewish taxes. The great majority of our constituents know little or nothing about the great communal issues that absorb us. Indeed, the organized community is frequently perceived as a closed corporation, where the elite make the decisions. Many of us vigorously refute that charge, claiming that the portals of entry into communal service and promotion are open to all those willing to devote themselves to communal service. To claim otherwise, we say, is a copout, an excuse for failing to carry a fair share of the burden.

Some go further and claim it is naive to think that Jewish life—or democratic life, for that matter—can in the late twentieth century operate on a kind of Town Hall principle. Decision-making

is not to be taken lightly, they argue, at a time when such complex questions must be resolved, on which so much depends. It would be catastrophic, in this view, for voluntary structures like ours to give the ignorant and the uninvolved an equal voice with those who are both knowledgeable and committed—and demonstrate their commitment through practical contributions as well as through their gifts of time and energy.

Is this reality or excuse? Have we really been adept at broadening the circle of inclusion? In any case, women, the young, the Orthodox, and occasionally academia have all made clear that they want in—and we will have to find better ways to embrace them.

FEDERATION-SYNAGOGUE RELATIONS

Synagogues and Federations: Partners or Competitors?

Address at The Temple, Cleveland, Ohio, December 2, 1979

It is unproductive to think of synagogues and federations as competitors, to view activity in Federation as somehow decreasing the pool of leadership and of funds available to synagogues. Philanthropy doesn't work that way; neither does leadership. The person who is generous to the synagogue is more likely, not less likely, to be generous to community needs, and the other way around. The man or woman who is active in the congregation is apt to develop a talent for leadership in the community welfare as well—and again, the other way around.

The real problems are those who are apathetic and care little about any Jewish institution or any Jewish cause, who neglect both synagogue and federation. The muscle of *tzedakah* (philanthropy or righteousness) and leadership needs to be exercised, and it is significant that in most cities where there are good and solid congregations, there is also a good and solid federation. Of course there *are* problems. When issues come up, there may for

example be tricky questions as to who shall be the spokesman. "Who speaks for the Jewish community?" can best be answered by saying, "No one speaks exclusively for the community." because the community may speak with many voices. We are not a monolith. But some voices do speak with far more authority than others. In the long run, those who will be heard are those with something to say (often a rabbi) . . . or those who have taken the time and trouble to build a base of broad support for their views, so that they do not speak only as individuals.

That is where the federation derives its strength, because when the president of federation speaks on an issue, it is usually the last stage in a complex process of consultation. Where both rabbis and community speak out on issues, often they will agree. Sometimes they will not, and that is, with rare exceptions, no great tragedy. And if there are problems, there are also opportunities. We are breaking new and virginal ground in this question, experimenting with ways to give the tired cliches about "the sacred and the secular" and about "We Are One" new and vigorous and distinctively Jewish meanings.

FEDERATION-NEWSPAPER RELATIONS

Federations and Jewish Newspapers: Mutual Responsibilities

General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations, Detroit, Michigan, November 12, 1980

Controversy is the stuff of life to newspapers; they thrive on it. Controversy is the bane of existence of federations; they avoid it like the plague. And in that contradiction lies an essential and probably unavoidable difficulty in the subject assigned to us for discussion: "Federations and Jewish Newspapers: Mutual Responsibilities." As a matter of fact, even that title is itself controversial. It is assumed that there are mutual responsibilities, whereas the existential condition (to start off our discussion with a

really high-class expression) is that newspapers and community institutions traditionally don't live in a state of mutual responsibility but in a state of mutual tension.

But whether in mutual responsibility or in mutual tension, the question of the relationship of federations and newspapers remains. It is a question we in federations are only beginning to explore seriously.

Since one significant measure of the quality of the community is the quality of its newspaper, there is a community interest and a community responsibility to improve its performance. That breezy generalization is easy to make but explosive if we take it seriously. The fact is that we are a highly literate people who cannot face the day until we have read the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post*, but we have neither achieved nor aspired to excellence in our newspapers. Instead, many of our readers are perfectly content to turn the pages of our weeklies looking primarily for the rites of passage section: engagements, marriages, deaths, stone unveilings, etc. We have produced no *London Jewish Chronicle*, no *Jewish Daily Forward*, no *Christian Science Monitor*. It is not the fault of the newspapers; it is we who have not wanted quality enough to achieve it.

We have in the field of magazines. There we have produced thoughtful publications that serve both the Jewish and the general communities with first-class writing and articles that have helped shape our thinking. There are many good explanations of why this is so, but explanations do not change the fact. The starting point for change is for the community, which in most cases means federation, to recognize a responsibility to improve the situation without dominating it.

Those who are insiders in the Jewish community debate in depth problems of the relationship of Israel and Diaspora, what to do about the many dilemmas created by Soviet Jewry, how the Jewish Agency can be best restructured, whether we want a reworking of the relationship between Federation and its agencies, what position to take on affirmative action or any one of the other haunting emergencies in Jewish life. But the debate has little general participation or understanding.

Maybe that is inevitable. Maybe it is a flaw in any democracy that it cannot achieve the degree of input necessary to make it work properly. Maybe, for all our noble statements, we are and will remain something of an elitist society and there is no effective way to involve our constituencies intimately in decision making.

Maybe. I hope not. I hope we can give the other approach a good try . . . to join with the newspapers in striving for the same degree of excellence we have presumably achieved in other fields. Maybe it is romantic to think that past generations debated the great issues of Jewish life with passion and understanding: Zionists and anti-Zionists, Reformists and Traditionalists, Yiddishists and Hebraists, Universalists and Leftists, Socialists and Traditionalists. The debates that certainly took place created cleavages and factionalism, but they also produced fierce advocates and proponents and shakers of events. We need that too. And one path is through the newspapers.

THE PAST AS PRESERVER

The World of 1984
Annual Lawyers Luncheon of the Jewish National Fund,
Cleveland, Ohio, June 25, 1981

The critical aim of the world of 1984 is to obliterate the past. The past, say the rulers who speak in the name of Big Brother, is what we say it is. Not what it *was* but what it *is*, because in 1984 there is only one tense—the present tense. Nothing else exists, neither loyalty to a past nor responsibility to a future, which are obverse sides of the same coin. The past is malleable, shifting to accommodate whatever happens to be the objective of the moment. All records can be revised at will through the use of sophisticated computers which either vaporize what is no longer "useful" or invent new "facts." One day a given individual may be a

leader, and a given country may be a friend. The next day, that same individual is not simply deposed—he not only ceases to exist now—he *never* existed. No record is left of him. The formerly friendly nation is not simply a present enemy; it never was a friend. It was always an enemy, until such time as once again, with a shift in strategy, it becomes an eternal friend—temporarily. Fanciful? Ridiculous? Not at all. Have we not been told by scholars at leading universities that the Holocaust never took place? That it is all a myth invented by Jews? The Holocaust is not simply an exaggeration; it never existed!

The brilliant Czech novelist, Milan Kundera, now living in exile in Paris, wrote an outstanding account last year of how his country was systematically destroyed by depriving it of its past. He wrote: "Gustav Husak, the seventh president of my country, is the creator of a world without memory. He dismissed 145 historians from universities and research institutes in a massacre of culture and thought. (He knew that) the first step in liquidating a people is to erase its memory. Destroy its books, its culture, its history. He is the president of forgetting."

There can be no more deadly assault on everything that makes life worth living than such a stripping away of mankind's past. Not long ago, TV showed us nightly the picture of Jane Doe, a tragic victim of amnesia. What we saw on the screen was an empty husk, a nothing, because she had no memory of her past and therefore no personality, no humanity. In the world of 1984, mankind has become a race of amnesiacs.

Such manipulations of individuals and manipulations of the past are subversive of Judaism, subversive of Christianity, and subversive of democracy. All proclaim the sanctity of the individual, a phrase that we repeat so glibly and unthinkingly that it has become a cliche. We need to savor again how daring and radical a concept it is, as fresh and revolutionary today as it was when announced in ancient times. Both Judaism and Christianity conceive of each of us as fashioned in the image of God. Could there be a more overwhelming declaration of faith in the individual? If there is such a thing as a sin without forgiveness, certainly it ap-

plies to those who would reduce us, who are so divinely fashioned, to things to be manipulated.

From a democratic and secular viewpoint, what concept is more basic than that governments are fashioned to serve men—not just mankind or society as a whole, but very individual and very distinctive men and women and children, each with inalienable rights?

As for manipulation of the past, what protection for the individual is more precious than proper regard for the experience of the past, as formalized and codified in its laws? Law, in effect, declares that the past has meaning, just as the absence of law or the violation of law is a denial of history. And we have, so to speak, our own individual laws. All of us have been shaped by tradition . . . Jewish tradition, Christian tradition, American tradition, democratic tradition, human tradition painfully forged over the centuries. We sometimes forget that fact, even in America. That profound social thinker, Henry Ford, declared "History is bunk." It is no accident that he was for most of his life a violent, ignorant anti-Semite.

THE JEWISH FAMILY

Planning: A Long View

Planning Seminar of the Cleveland Jewish Community Federation
October 4, 1981

The family has been throughout history the essential preserver of our heritage. Family is the basic unit of all societies, but no other segment of Western civilization has so profoundly placed its collective hopes for the future in the family to the extent we Jews have. Maybe we have overdone it. At least that's the contention of much contemporary American literature, which is full of portraits of the suffocating intensity of Jewish family ties. Never

mind. Perhaps unconsciously, authors like Philip Roth or consciously, authors like Clevelander Herbert Gold, are testifying to Jewish family solidarity and centrality.

But like education, the family is also in trouble. You know the details, because they are our common experience. Our rate of divorce, once minimal, is now approaching the staggering general American level. Intermarriage is climbing to the 50 percent mark; single parent families are, if anything, more common than the standard two-parent family.

These are all developments of basic importance which we will have to take into account in our planning. But if my thesis today has merit, that the overriding concern is the Jewish quality of our work, there is a further issue: What are the *Jewish* implications of family erosion? We all agree that family breakdown is a threat to Jewish distinctiveness. But how about the other way around? Is the loss of Jewish distinctiveness a basic cause of Jewish family breakdown? If so, does it then follow that a stress on Jewish distinctiveness would be the best means of shoring up family life? And even if that could be demonstrated, can a community address itself to such a complicated and intimate task?

Another implication: the strength of the traditional Jewish family lay in its sense of discipline and respect for authority. There was a detailed, recognized set of regulations covering every aspect of family life. You could rebel against them or reject them, but they were tangible and all-pervasive as a standard. That whole approach is diametrically different from our modern libertarian ideas. We are dedicated to the pursuit of happiness, whose cardinal goals are development of the individual, self-fulfillment, the exaltation of personal experience. These are all goals that have become precious to us. They undergird and guide not only our personal conduct but much of our work in the social services.

But put that way, they are not traditional Jewish ideas. How do we square such deeply held drives with the stable, family-centered and community-centered ideals of traditional Jewish life? How can a Jewish family service agency play a role in striking some balance between these two seemingly competitive thrusts, toward family responsibility and individual fulfillment? Are they really competitive?

THE ROLE OF FEDERATIONS

The Jewish Federation: Reflections on an American Institution
Brandeis University, February 2, 1976

(The Philip Lown Graduate Center for Contemporary Jewish Studies of Brandeis University conducts an annual Milender Seminar in Jewish Communal Leadership. I was designated the Milender Fellow for 1976, one of my duties being to deliver the annual Milender address. The talk is reproduced here substantially as it was delivered since it summarizes many of the points made in the foregoing excerpts and can therefore appropriately serve as the connective tissue binding them together.)

The time is right to take a look at what we have been up to in our federation work. Our intellectual critics, who are particularly numerous and particularly articulate along the eastern seaboard, view the work of our federations with a kind of grudging respect. They usually give us good marks for meeting emergencies with business-like efficiency and raising money that is desperately needed. Sometimes they commend us for our belated efforts to establish authentic Jewish credentials, even though they usually couple the compliment with a reminder that our Jewish roots remain shallow and our methods remain inadequate and occasionally vulgar.

Sometimes the criticism is bitter. Rabbi Bernard Weinberger, an eloquent spokesman for Orthodox Judaism, claims that he finds it easier to build bridges to Puerto Rican and black communities than to his own federation. He states:

> The establishment for all its rhetoric about being sensitive and appreciative of the total Jewish community is dominated by a small aristocracy of rich, peripheral Jews, and those who are assimilated and Jewishly illiterate, who have arrogated to themselves, by virtue of their wealth, the right to speak for the Jewish community. Their Jewishness is expressed in pseudo-religious terms of a self-proclaimed liberal dogmatism that is somehow

> equated with prophetic Judaism. The Jewish establishment worships a humanistic, liberal value system that it defines in new terms daily, depending on the vogue of the day, and it calls that "Jewishness."

Dr. Leonard Fein surveys the work of our communities more in sorrow than in anger. He concludes that "Our present is so very spotted, uneven, problematic, that a future grown out of it has little of the magic we require for our sustenance." We have been skillful at saving Jews, he tells us, but there is serious question as to whether we can save Judaism.

That great lover of democracy, Rabbi Kahane, coins the slogan: "One Jew, One Vote" in protest against our alleged lack of representativeness in Jewish life. Other critics have mounted additional charges. We have become so dependent culturally on Israel that we have developed no truly indigenous culture. Our priorities are either badly awry or non-existent, as witness the continuing low level of support of education and culture. We have excluded the synagogue, which is the very core and preserver of Jewish continuity from communal support and even from communal concern. We are unresponsive to so crucial a Jewish responsibility as *aliyah*. You can no doubt make up your own list of further charges and unhappinesses. If you can't, either you haven't solicited enough cards at campaign time, or you haven't listened to enough sermons on Saturday morning.

How shall we deal with such criticisms? Shall we indignantly refute them? I think not. I think we have much to learn from our perceptive critics, because many of the criticisms are true, even though they certainly are not the whole truth. Moreover, we should be secure enough about what we have accomplished and what we plan to do so that we do not need to waste time and energy on apologetics.

What is the basis of that security? It lies, I believe, in how we have responded to the challenges of history. That is, the task of ensuring the survival of the Jewish people varies from generation to generation. During the long centuries when we were the puppets of history, powerless to shape our own political and economic life, our creative energies could find outlets only internally

and rarely in the world of action. With our marvelous powers of adaptation, we therefore produced generations of scholars who disciplined and shaped and deepened the cultural reservoirs of the people. To reverse Leonard Fein's analysis, we knew how to preserve Judaism, but we couldn't save Jews.

We sometimes sentimentalize those centuries of suffering. Those who lived through them did not; they protested bitterly that we had become an unbalanced people, unskilled in dealing with reality. Bialik, in his monumental poem "City of Slaughter," brushes aside with impatience the dedication and the passive saintliness of the scholar. He asks instead for a fist to fight back against the brutes responsible for the massacre. Of course, Bialik also wrote "The Matmid," where the swaying figure of the scholar absorbed in his study is portrayed as *the* preserver of a Jewish way of life.

Now where do we and our work in federations fit into this dual responsibility to contend with practical problems and to nourish the life of the spirit, to save Judaism and Jews, to do and to learn? I quite understand that doing and learning are not opposites; they are mutually reinforcing. But since our critics tend to stress the learning and suggest that the doing is a kind of necessary evil, I think we should remember that conditions since the end of the Second World War have made doing a first responsibility. And what a doing it has been! We are old hands at the game of rescuing endangered communities, but never on anything like the scale of the period since 1945, not only because there were millions of fellow Jews to be saved, but also because for the first time we directed the flow of refugees Jewishly. And we not only rescued; we rehabilitated. We helped create a State, we were midwives to whole communities in Europe that became established Jewishly. We helped create the Jewish institutions and the Jewish infrastructure that makes Jewish life possible.

If we had failed in this crucial Jewish task, no credentials of Jewish literacy or Jewish culture would have excused us. The times called for the wisdom of sometimes vulgar *baale-batim* (men of affairs) more than for the wisdom of the scholars.

Jewish tradition defined this order of responsibility from the beginning. The pledge made at Sinai at the dawn of our history

was "Naaseh V'nishma." ("We shall do and we shall hear.") There are many ways to interpret that pledge. Certainly the "hearing" means more than listening; it requires absorbing the teachings and the commandments or, to use modern terms, the culture and the tradition. But first comes the "naaseh," the doing. There can be no "nishma," no creative listening unless there is also—and first—the "naaseh," the doing. More than 3,000 years before John Dewey, our forefathers scooped him and his principle of learning by doing. And though each man will interpret for himself what is meant by "naaseh," I claim that the work of our federations, despite faults, has been extraordinary Jewish doing. But our critics are telling us, quite properly, that the reverse is also true. There is no point in knocking yourself out in busy Jewish doing if it does not lead to what the doing is all about—Jewish values and Jewish commitment and Jewish tradition.

I agree. I also agree that in this pendulum-like oscillation between the joined poles of naaseh and nishma, our generation has become unbalanced in the direction of doing. But—and it is this "but" that constitutes my disagreement with our critics and is the source of my security—these two seeming polarities in Jewish life are more subtly interwoven and interdependent than our critics contend. Their basic case is that you must learn Jewish to do Jewish. I believe it is equally true that if you do Jewish, you will learn Jewish.

Look at what has happened to our federations. They started out by being simple fundraising mechanisms. A generation ago, they developed into health and welfare organizations. Within my own professional life, which is, historically speaking, only a moment, they have again been radically transformed. Jewish education is now the largest local beneficiary of Welfare Funds. There has been an astonishing increase in support of day schools. *Dvar Torahs* increasingly begin federation meetings, and there are so many federation programs of self-education and retreats and projects of Jewish understanding that synagogue leaders ironically reprimand us for invading their turf.

This growth in the Jewish dimension is no accident; it flowed inevitably from the tasks of Jewish doing we assumed. Sooner or

later, the doers ask questions, of themselves, of us. Why such prodigious Jewish effort? What are the central purposes that drive us to such feats of doing?

The biological principle that "ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny," that experience of the individual and experience of the species repeat each other, applies to the community. Just as a child grows out of the stage of asking simple questions like "What?" and then "How?" to more mature queries about "Why?" so are our communities maturing beyond absorption in *what* is the community and *how* does it operate to questions about the fundamental and profound *why*.

From doing to learning is the process that explains why the passionate triumphs and defeats of dealing with the vivid concrete problems of day-by-day Jewish living drive the Jewish community to explore questions of purpose. It inevitably leads us as individuals and as a community (however erratically) in the direction of Jewish understanding. Is our responsibility to Soviet Jews limited to helping them get out, or does it include concern for continuing Jewish life there? How do we divide our funds between local and overseas needs? Do we have any function distinct from Israel's in the mighty international drama now being enacted?

The mix of Jewish considerations that necessarily enters into Jewish decision-making on these and other hard questions involves Jewish doing that is or should be shaped by Jewish learning. I therefore believe that the criticisms of us are valid and timely and serious but they are incomplete and unperceptive about the role that federations have played this past quarter-century, and about what the effects of that role have been.

Look at the kids. Despite their distrust of establishments—and federations are certainly establishments—life on the campus testifies to the astonishing number of talented young Jewish people ready to enter the field of Jewish communal organization. When the Institute for Jewish Life announced two years ago that a few scholarships were available for those willing to devote their lives to Jewish education, we wondered if there would be any applicants. There were—hundreds of them—for 12 grants. Salo Baron told me a generation ago that he dissuaded talented young men

and women from entering the field of Jewish scholarship because only he at Columbia and Harry Wolfson at Harvard could find faculty positions. Now we are overwhelmed with more than 500 courses in Judaica, throughout the country. You may be able to fool all of the people some or all of the time, but not if they are under 30 and in search of a life career. Youth can spot a phony every time and evidently communal work rings true to many of them.

So if things are so good, why are they so bad? There are assimilation and intermarriage and illiteracy and indifference. We don't know what to do about Jewish education, any more than we know what to do about general education. If some of our youth are attracted to participate in Jewish life, another substantial section views us as either reactionary or dull. There is simultaneously attraction to Jewish life and a drift away from it. In the whirl of Jewish existence, the forces are both centrifugal and centripetal, and since I have emphasized the positive up till now, I turn to an assessment of the problems ahead and the responsibilities ahead, to my fears and my uneasiness about the future.

I shall limit myself to five major concerns, in no order of emphasis.

First, the concern that we are not democratic enough. Let a federation spokesman so far forget himself as to make a public claim that he is speaking as "representing the Jews of our community" and he is likely to draw down a chorus of cynical dissent, sometimes from youth, sometimes from women, from the Orthodox community, and, less articulately, from the otherwise indifferent. The burden of the comments will be, "You don't speak for us." Of those four groups we have been most concerned recently with our young people. Most federations have taken one or another step, including membership on the board of trustees, to assure them of a place in our communal governance. I'm not opposed to such arrangements; they may do some temporary good but they usually dwindle off to tokenism and formal participation. Any real reaching out can probably be better accomplished functionally than structurally.

Maybe I can make the point best through reference to concrete

experiences. Last month we held our annual meeting and the view around the auditorium was of gray hair and bald heads. No youth. Two weeks earlier, at the same place, we held a meeting, called on very short notice to protest the Zionist-racist resolution at the United Nations. There were some grizzled veterans there too, but they were in the minority; long hair and blue denim dominated. Youth is easily bored with our talk and our reports and our long drawn out process. They prefer experience and action direct, heated, clearcut.

Shall we then re-design our annual meetings and our board meetings and our basic committee operations to bring them closer to the youthful heart's desire? If that's not feasible, shall we set up alternate mechanisms, somewhat in the image of the junior congregations that synagogues create for those up to the age of 35, and receive young input in that fashion? Have we done what we can when we provide constant rotation in office, promote vigorous points of entry for new leadership, and fund appropriate projects and activities youth suggests to us? Or should there be some mixture of all these approaches?

As to women, it is patronizing to assure them that they have come a long way, baby. It is we who have progressed to the point where rigid barriers are collapsing, as women throughout the country achieve top posts in our communal enterprises, including presidencies of several major federations. Every federation board has women members, sometimes in substantial numbers, sometimes in token numbers. Sometimes they have clout on key committees like budget committees or endowment fund committees; more often not.

Despite the progress, there is a long way to go. It isn't even a case of "Cherchez la femme." In federation, the problem is "Cherchez l'homme," since a woman's progress in communal work is still often conditioned by who her husband is. If he is a *schlemiel*, she is in communal trouble (to say nothing of personal trouble), but if he is a communal star, the red carpet is rolled out for her. No fair, the ladies cry; it doesn't work like that the other way around.

The challenge from the Orthodox community is of a more sub-

tle kind. There is a sense of isolation both ways. Federations often feel that the Orthodox community is needlessly difficult and has not yet pulled its weight in attaining crucial communal goals. The Orthodox community often thinks it is treated as a kind of communal stepchild, whose needs are viewed as nuisances to be accommodated as cheaply as possible. Beyond the surface irritation and tensions is the philosophical problem that Rabbi Weinberger defined. How can two value systems, one essentially based on authority and revelation and the other on a relativistic, humanistically-centered set of values effectively cooperate with each other? Can they? It is a problem in Israel and it is a problem here, but I am optimistic about future relations with the Orthodox community for both pragmatic and philosophical reasons. Pragmatically, life is bringing us closer together, as federations increasingly support day schools and generally emphasize the centrality of Jewish tradition, and as the Orthodox community becomes more affluent and more integrated into the general scheme of things and, I believe inevitably, into the Jewish scheme of things.

Philosophically, I do not believe the battle lines are actually drawn as rigidly as Rabbi Weinberger suggests. The Orthodox tradition is often in practice if not in theory surprisingly flexible, and those of us who are not Orthodox have long since discovered that Judaism is hardly synonymous with Ethical Culture or the American Civil Liberties Union. In the real world in which both live, Orthodoxy and non-Orthodoxy, establishment and non-establishment, can all be embraced within *Klal Yisroel* (the totality of Israel.)

The problem of the indifferent is the toughest. All the other challenges constitute creative problems. They generate differences of opinion and occasionally controversy and tension, but it is creative tension, the kind that exercises the communal muscles. We grow and we develop as we confront them. But none of us has yet learned how to deal with the indifference of our great silent majority. There is only *un*creative tension from those who at campaign time break your heart by dismissing you with a $10 pledge and the attitude that you are some kind of Jewish con

artist. There is only uncreative tension from those who know just enough about local agency services to assure you they all deserve boycotting because their wife's cousin's aunt was not immediately admitted to the old home. And there is, sadly, no tension at all from the still larger numbers with no particular complaint and no particular loyalty, who are untouched by the Jewish causes we live and die for, just as they are often anesthetized to the great human causes that are rending our world apart. Our sharp critics and even our enemies I think we can handle reasonably well, but about this great unwashed and unreached multitude, I don't know . . . We're still amateurs in dealing with them.

Concern two, priorities. It is a term often used as incantation, as if by defining priorities we create the power to turn the community around instantly. Life doesn't work that way, or at least federations don't. There is inertia in the communal world just as there is in the physical world. If there were no resistance to change, we would have rampant faddism and chaos. Closing out certain agencies overnight in order vastly to increase support of our agencies, as some of our enthusiasts demand, would fragment the community and decrease the variety of options open for Jewish experience. I have a perhaps naive faith that the woman who serves on the hospital auxiliary today is more likely to be involved in other Jewish concerns tomorrow.

Nevertheless, the responsibility of leaders is to lead. Community priorities do tend to be established with such deliberate speed that the deliberation usually overwhelms the speed. And since we live in an age of space travel and instant communication, change is a name of the game, as all of our institutions are learning. Of course for the foreseeable future we will want and we will need the services of our traditional health and welfare institutions, but if they are to retain our support and remain Jewish, they will have to escalate their Jewish commitment. The JCC's of the country have been doing that in Jewish depth ever since the Janowsky Study a quarter century ago, and the results are reflected not only in their expanded Jewish programs here but in their growing ties with Israel. The Jewish Family Service organizations are just beginning to explore the significance of the "J" in "JFS." Our other

agencies are in various stages of preparation for specifically Jewish journeys, but the future direction is clear: They will all become more Jewish or they will drift out of the network of interrelated institutions that form the core of federation work.

Jewish education is a special case. We really do not know with any precision how to build Jewish commitment, any more than we know with any clarity how to build good American citizenship. We have achieved some insights. We know that Jewish education is a far broader term than Jewish schools, and we must therefore look not just to the classroom but beyond the classroom if we are to build enduring Jewish commitment. Family retreats and innovative camping and trips to Israel are all symptoms of that recognition. So is the growth of the Chabad movement, reminding us that vital life-styles make great demands, that passion has no less a role to play than logic. We cannot have Jewish commitment unless we are ready to do some commiting of our time, of our resources, of our children's time, and most of all, of ourselves.

Concern three, dominating all our thinking and prayers and hopes, our relationship with Israel. So long as it is threatened, we are threatened, and while the sword hangs over its head, all other considerations fade. We and our children are in all but the legal sense citizens of two worlds . . . America and Israel.

Nevertheless, there are problems of relationship that keep erupting. We know we are bound to each other, but we do not know with any real confidence how to build a world Jewish life in which both Israel and the Diaspora are integral parts. We mean what we say when we pledge solidarity with Israel, but there are embarrassment and resentment when international conferences are called and resolutions are prepared in advance in such a way that we are limited to pledging allegiance rather than debating real questions. There is proper restlessness by Reform and Conservative Jewry at their non-status in Israel. There are thorny questions about what to do with Soviet *yordim* who do not make it in Israel, about how to close the gap between the two Israels, about how to conduct ourselves when Israeli and American interests diverge, about how policy is established and pressures applied when Israel's interests are at stake. The slogan "We Are One" makes a fine rallying point for a campaign but it is no *Guide*

to the Perplexed about how to divide campaign funds equitably between local and overseas needs, or what role Israel should play as we go about educating our children Jewishly.

Concern four: our relationship with synagogues. There should really be no cleavage, since Jewish tradition does not make sharp distinctions between the sacred and the secular, so common to other religions. Works of Jewish rescue and reconstitution which are major assignments of federations are certainly sacred, and one need only attend a rabbinical meeting to know that our spiritual leaders are perfectly at home with the secular. Moreover, all of us here move back and forth as leaders in synagogue and in community. It would be hard to think of a more secular figure than Herzl, and Brandeis University is one of many examples of how nourishment of the Jewish heritage can grow out of essentially secular impulses.

But there are real pragmatic problems. We are seen as "running the best show in town" and thereby diminishing the reservoir of leadership and energy and resources available to synagogues. There is the crucial matter of support for Jewish education. All the kids will grow up to be citizens of the community in one place or another, it is argued; therefore why should not the community support congregations, which educate most of them?

In theory, I find no objection. But there are reservations about the need to have community funds accounted for by the community, about the openness to supervision, about the effect on other communal responsibilities. Will synagogues stand for any modification of their absolute autonomy?

The facts of our Jewish lives are drawing synagogues and federations closer to each other and what may look now like confrontation may actually be rapprochement. Synagogues are under increasing fiscal pressures and need communal funds as never before. Federations have so broadened their mandates that we need the motivations and nournishment of the religious impulse that underlies all our work. We need each other, and in this case it is no mere slogan to claim "We Are One." But whoever claimed that members of the same family must necessarily see eye to eye?

Concern five: our relationship to the general community. We

have acted on the assumption that if the general society functions badly, Jews are in trouble, because we serve so conveniently as scapegoats to absorb social unrest. That's why we were such passionate leaders in civil rights campaigns. We were motivated not only by social justice, but by our belief that perfecting society was the best insurance of our own safety and progress. And we succeeded spectacularly, in the sense that laws were passed and we rocketed to the very top of the socio-economic ladder.

But there were contrary developments too. In this day of affirmative action programs and dilemmas about busing, we are not so sure about what constitutes progress. Life can no longer be reduced so simply to the forces of the Good Guys pitted against the Bad Guys. The roles of hero and villain tend to be intermingled, with now this group and now that playing both parts. Even our national community relations agencies are divided about where our Jewish interests lie in some of the basic issues confronting us.

Nor are we sure about just how far our own federation mandate extends. Like the general community, we too have our broad constructionists and our narrow constructionists. Liberals are inclined to view problems like hunger and pollution and gun control and welfare as proper claimants on our time and energy. Conservatives urge more caution . . . more insistence on defining a clear Jewish purpose before we fritter away our time and resources on matters that are controversial and divisive and not very responsive to Jewish input.

My own bias, as a product of the Depression, is liberal. Of course we must husband our resources; of course we should raise questions: How crucial is the issue? How effective can we be? What is the implication of our joining or not joining the suggested activity or campaign? Who will be our allies? Shall our role be primary, supportive, or merely testamentary? *Saichel* (common sense) is, after all, an important ingredient of every community decision.

But having established these tests and raised these questions, I believe that yes, we must be an active partner in the efforts of the general community. Jewish tradition demands it. It is the price we pay for use of communal funds, governmental services, and from

the United Way. Good community citizenship and the old argument about insurance against social disruptions are all part of the case.

And there is one further highly practical consideration. You cannot petition for support of Israel or for defense of Soviet Jews or for any other Jewish interest, and at the same time be indifferent to causes dear to those being petitioned. And their causes are complex and diverse. Some of our potential allies have as their top priority controlling abortion, or building closer relationships with western Africa, or raising the minimum wage, or cleaning up pornography, or a thousand other causes that we may be interested or uninterested in, in favor of or opposed to. It will test our wisdom and our skill and our integrity to chart our course among them, standing clearly for what we believe but at the same time playing a skillful political role, in the noblest sense of that term.

So what shall we say by way of summary?

The future is certainly heavy with menace. Violence has become an accepted method of solving problems as the value of human life goes down in a world that has demonstrated its taste for blood and even genocide. Democracy is everywhere on the defensive as problems grow so complex that men turn in relief from the responsibility of governing themselves. The mood is anti-intellectual and those who live by the book (spelled with or without a capital letter) seem out of step with a public bored with reading and uninterested in permanent values. The pace of change is so breathless that all traditions and all value systems are threatened by indifference and dry rot and hostility. The old bully-boy anti-Semitism may be out of date, but it has been replaced by a more sophisticated and more clever world conspiracy that strikes at the heart of Jewish people everywhere through use of the code word "Zionism."

What resources are there to pit against these massive and formidable forces of disillusion and dissolution? There is the worldwide yearning for ethnicity, the search for roots as a protest against the misuse of computers to homogenize particularity and sterilize individuality. We don't have to manufacture a heritage, as some groups do. Its riches are there to be mined.

There are the experience and the training that have toughened

us and hardened us as we have created a state and reshaped our own communities. Whatever the problems that lie ahead, these are dazzling achievements. Israel is a fact of international life and Jewish life, and so is our demonstrated ability to act like a mature community.

And finally, as is always the case with Jewish life, there is mystery. Our survival, a fact that Professor Arnold Toynbee could never forgive us, violates the conventional wisdom and the usual rules of history. We were an exception in how we emerged, we have been an exception in how we resisted assimilation, and we are an exception in how we are meeting our responsibilities.

An exception, but not necessarily and certainly not always an opponent. May we continue to be an exceptional people in both senses of that word—exceptional in being different, exceptional in being extraordinary, demonstrating how it is possible to live simultaneously in a world of particularism and of universalism; to be both doers and scholars; to achieve consensus without sacrificing initiative; to honor and preserve tradition without imposing belief; to retain the veteran without restraining the young.

For at least the near future, federations will have a large share of the responsibility for trying to achieve these paradoxical goals. May we have the wisdom to play our exceptional Jewish and human role in the passionate days ahead.

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American Jewish organizations. He speaks frankly about such experiences, serving as staff director of the study which gave birth to the National Foundation for Jewish Culture and as American secretary for the 1969 Conference on Human Needs in Israel. Writing of these years with insight and feeling, he recreates the Jewish scene and the personalities who were part of this worldwide communal drama.

Sidney Vincent has always combined thought with action. His provocative views and analyses of contemporary Jewish life are represented in "Reflections," a sampler from his talks and papers which make up the third section of this volume. His speech at Brandeis University in 1976, "The Role of Federations," is must reading for anyone interested or involved in Jewish community affairs. *Personal and Professional* is a lively and important narrative by an outstanding community service professional, who has contributed significantly to our society in the course of a most creative career.

Sidney Z. Vincent is executive director emeritus of the Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland.

Dust jacket design by Mort Epstein

