

has a large non-case work responsibility which also complicates the factor of comparability.

If we compare the twenty-three Jewish agencies and the corresponding most important family welfare agencies from the point of view of their rank in average monthly amounts of relief, we find but a negligible relationship between the standard of the Jewish society and its non-Jewish counterpart. This point is worth further study, particularly for those communities in which both are affiliated with the community chest. We hear a good deal of the difficulty of the Jewish agency in maintaining its standard in the face of a generally lower one practiced by the rest of the community. Mr. McMillen's study evidently concerns cities of both types and no separation of data is made.

I can only comment on one point in Mr. Hurlin's analysis—namely, average case load. As it now stands, the average is not a true one because it includes all persons dealing with case work whether they actually carry a load or not. It has always seemed to me possible for data to be collected in this respect so that the real average might become available. The additional labor involved on the part of cooperating agencies would be slight, and the resulting accuracy would be of real value because of the considerable discussion everywhere as to what is or should be the typical case load. This could then be supplemented from time to time with the amount of supervisory service being given which would furnish an additional norm toward which agencies could strive.

MAURICE TAYLOR

What Makes Jewish Social Service Jewish?

By SOLOMON LOWENSTEIN

This contribution is part of the series featured in our previous issue.—The Editors.

IN the desire increasingly manifest among American Jewish groups for more and more complete assimilation with American life generally, there is an increasing tendency even among Jewish social workers to question the desirability or the necessity for differentiation of Jewish social work from American social work generally. This attitude is even more prevalent among the larger contributors to the funds required for Jewish social service, and annually those responsible for the collection of such funds are met more frequently with the question why there should be increasing demands for money for Jewish social work when so large a part of the field is already or presumably ought to be covered by public effort.

It may be taken for granted that Jews should cooperate with all their fellow social workers, both lay and professional, in securing the largest measure of public support for those fields that are distinctly non-sectarian. Public health, housing, workmen's compensation, state aid to widows, general recreational and educational facilities, etc. are areas in which there is no distinction whatsoever between Jews and other groups of citizens.

There are however certain conditions in the European background of the masses of our people and in their own religious, cultural and social characteristics which make it equally obvious that for the present and probably for a long time to come, until at least the processes of assimilation shall be much more complete than is at present indicated, there must be distinctively Jewish social work under Jewish aus-

pices and supported by contributions from Jews, if justice is to be done to our co-religionists and if their needs are to be met with intelligent understanding and sympathy.

The chief problem of Jewish social service in its modern phases has been that of the immigrant and his adjustment to his life in this country. To make that adjustment complete, we must be aware of his European background and wherein it is differentiated from that of other immigrant groups to this country. In the countries of eastern Europe, from which come the great majority of our present American Jewish population, the Jews have for centuries been treated as distinct, separate groups. Their internal life in all its departments has been administered by self-sufficient groups and as a unity, without the differentiation that exists in this country between religious, social and other phases of communal life. The Gemeinde, or community was, so far as its internal affairs were concerned, an autonomous body. Thus there inevitably grew up certain attitudes towards these problems of communal organization and certain techniques for meeting them which were peculiarly Jewish.

Coming to this country with its intensive, individualistic life and with no comprehensive, authoritative form of communal organization, the Jew found himself cut adrift from everything that had given strength and reality to his life as a member of a closely knit community at home. New forms of organization had to be created and new relationships worked out suited to the new conditions in which he found himself. It was absolutely necessary that these organizations

should be of Jews, even though at the beginning of Jews who except for common religion and common racial origin were as alien to the newcomer as his non-Jewish neighbors. Nevertheless, just because of this common religion and this common race, presenting a common inheritance, there was a possibility of understanding, of sympathy and of mutual tolerance which afforded a hope of at least a partial solution of these problems and has actually resulted in a substantial achievement.

With the initiation of the policy of restriction of immigration and with the resultant cessation of an annual increment of large proportion of newly arriving immigrant Jews, profound changes will undoubtedly be effected in the forms of Jewish life in America. Those changes will undoubtedly be accentuated by reason of the fact that we have never developed any strong centralized control of our communal affairs. The complete divorce of the synagogue from other departments of communal life in American Jewry is in itself a most important and new development in the communal organization of our people. More and more we are associating ourselves with our non-Jewish neighbors in all forms of communal organization. The Community Chest, the Welfare Councils, Councils of Social Agencies and similar recent developments in American communal life unquestionably have had a great effect upon our own forms of organization and will have increasingly greater effects. The more complete individual assimilation of Jews to American standards and customs and the growing apathy among all groups in our population to strict religious observance will likewise play a part.

Nevertheless it will be conceded that there are still fields in which Jews as Jews must very definitely for a long time to come continue their separate and special activities, avail-

ing themselves of every advance in technical procedure that may be developed within the general field. In our case work agencies, family and otherwise, as long as their work is chiefly concerned with families of first or second generation of settlement in America, it will be necessary to have separate agencies, with workers grounded in a knowledge of Jewish tradition and Jewish culture. Without such knowledge, the worker will be completely ignorant of Jewish mores playing so large a part in the client's attitude towards life. These manners of life have been built up over centuries and no matter how changed the outward environment, their effects will persist and proper adjustment must be made. It can be done simply and understandingly only by a person profoundly conscious of their significance and at the same time thoroughly grounded in the new environment.

In our medical institutions, homes for the aged and child caring agencies, there must always be differentiations due to ritualistic, dietary and other religious requirements which still mean very much indeed to large numbers of our people. Conditions being what they are to-day, the Jewish medical agency alone offers opportunity for the proper post-graduate training and facilities for research for the vast majority of our professional group in that field.

As long as Jews gregariously flock to particular centers of residence in our larger cities, there must be recreational and educational activities with facilities for social life, physical education, etc. which are still inadequately supplied by our public agencies. As long as the perpetuation of Jewish religious training is a concern of our people, communal resources must be available for this purpose.

All these elements contribute to make Jewish social service Jewish.

Conference Notes

MR. SAMUEL A. GOLDSMITH of Chicago, Chairman of the Commission on Immigration, provided for at the Boston Conference, has as his associates the following: Isaac Asofsky, Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Society of America, New York. Dr. Maurice B. Hexter, The Jewish Agency, Jerusalem. Cecilia Razovsky, Dept. of Service for Foreign Born, National Council of Jewish Women, New York. Dr. I. M. Rubinow, B'nai B'rith, Cincinnati. Dr. Ben M. Selekmán, Associated Jewish Philanthropies, Boston. Morris D. Waldman, American Jewish Committee, New York.

The Commission is scheduled, according to the Boston Resolution, to present a preliminary report of its findings at the Minneapolis Conference in 1931. It is to study the changes in the immigration policies of the various countries of the world and the effects of these changes on Jewish life in European countries and in the United States.

Committee on Social Justice

Dr. Ben M. Selekmán of Boston has accepted the Chairmanship of a Committee to cooperate with the Committee on Social Justice of the Central Conference of American Rabbis which has been working for several years under the Chair-

(Continued on page 36)

CONFERENCE NOTES (continued from Page 21)

manship of Rabbi Edward L. Israel of Baltimore. Mr. Seman, President of the Conference, has appointed the following: Jacob Billikopf, Federation of Jewish Charities, Philadelphia; Benjamin Glassberg, Federated Jewish Charities, Milwaukee; Harry L. Lurie, Bureau of Jewish Social Research, New York; Dr. I. M. Rubinow, B'nai B'rith, Cincinnati.

Program for Minneapolis

The National Conference of Jewish Social Service will convene in Minneapolis Saturday evening, June 13, preceded by one day the opening of the National Conference of Social Work. This arrangement, like the one in Boston a year ago, will give Jewish social workers an opportunity of participating in both conferences, as far as time convenience is concerned. The discussion of the main sessions, excepting the opening meeting, will be centered on the solution of social work problems resulting from the economic depression. The Program Committee of which Jacob Kepecs is chairman, feels that this will be the most important question before the Conference even if the crisis shall have passed by June. The members of the Executive Committee of the Conference concur with the members of the Program Committee that this year, above all other years, the Conference of Jewish Social Service is most important and it is hoped that in spite of the distance of Minneapolis from Jewish centers, social workers and board members alike will find it possible to attend.

The opening session will be held on Saturday evening, June 13. The subject for the evening will be "Character Building Agencies—A Challenge to a Social Work Program," and Philip L. Seman, president of the Conference, will be the speaker.

On Sunday morning, June 14, the subject, "Jewish Social Work in the Economic Depression" will be discussed by professional and lay workers.

On Sunday afternoon, a symposium will be held on, "The Effect of the Economic Depression on Standards of Social Work Agencies," and participating will be representatives from the various fields of social work including family welfare, child care, health, community centers, Jewish education, the national agencies and intermediate communities.

The business meeting of the Conference will be held on Monday, June 15, at 12:30 P.M.

The noon hour on Sunday is left open for informal round-table meetings of sections and special fields, and additional meetings of this character will be arranged for during the general conference week by the various sub-committees. Suggestions in connection with the program will

be welcomed by the members of the Program Committee, consisting of Joseph Bonapart, Los Angeles; Alexander M. Dushkin, Chicago; Maurice Dubin, Chicago; Benjamin Glassberg, Milwaukee; Harry L. Glucksman, New York; Isidore Greenspan, Brooklyn; Harry Greenstein, Baltimore; H. Joseph Hyman, Indianapolis; Violet Kittner, Cleveland; I. Irving Lipsitch, Los Angeles and Anna F. Skolsky, Minneapolis. The Chairmen of the sections are: Family—Violet Kittner, Cleveland; Child Care—Alice L. Seligsberg, New York; Health—Maurice Dubin, Chicago; Care of the Aged—Julius Savit, Chicago; Intermediate Communities—Anna F. Skolsky, Minneapolis and Federation Executive—Harry Greenstein, Baltimore.

Transportation Rules

The members of the Conference received last spring, a copy of the proposed revision of the Transportation Rules prepared by a joint committee representing the Conference and the Committee on Transportation of the Allied Agencies. An attempt was made at that time to consolidate the Transportation Rules of our Conference and the Transportation Agreement of the Allied Agencies, into one document which will serve both groups.

At the Boston Conference, the following resolution was adopted:

"Having considered the report of the special committee which has been working with the Committee on Transportation of the Allied National Agencies, looking toward a revision of our Conference Transportation Rules and of the Transportation Agreement of the Allied National Agencies into one document, we believe that the basis for the proposed revision is sound but that further study should be given to the situation.

"We therefore recommend to the incoming Executive Committee of the Conference,

- "1. That the Committee on Transportation of the Allied Agencies be notified of our continued interest in the subject of the revision of the Transportation Agreement,
- "2. That some arrangement be effected to continue the joint consideration by the Allied Committee and representatives of our Conference,
- "3. That the Conference provide for a study to be made of the experience of local Jewish family welfare societies with problems of Transportation and Residence during the coming year, with a report to be presented at the next meeting of the National Conference of Jewish Social Service."

The special committee of the Conference, together with the Conference Transportation Committee, is now collecting information from the local Jewish family welfare societies in order to prepare the way for further action.

Five Years of the Trade Chest

By DAVID CITRON

WITH the Welfare Council of the City of New York so deeply concerned with the question of central financing, it will be of particular interest to the social service world to receive first hand information on the workings of the most recent development in the process of central financing of philanthropic endeavors.

The Charity Chest of the Fur Industry of the City of New York has, during the past five years demonstrated the superiority of this method of securing funds for social service work, over those previously in vogue. While the community chest and the federation idea represent a long step in advance of the effort of the individual institution to secure this objective, the experience of the Fur Chest indicates that it is *as much superior to the federation and community chest* idea as they were to the primitive methods in vogue before their conception.

With the thought in mind that an industry as a whole must assume its full responsibility to the community in its social service endeavors; with the thought in mind that the trade should hold itself responsible for the raising of the funds necessary in this work; and with the further thought that the trade itself should set up a central distributing agency which would carefully study the needs of the various applicant institutions, and make an equitable budget based on the actual financial reports of such institutions, the Fur Trade proceeded to the erection of the machinery that would properly effectuate these ideas. The result was the Fur Charity Chest.

Not only have the past five years demonstrated the possibility of effectuating the above mentioned ideals, but so successfully has the Fur Chest done this, that it is with satisfaction that the Fur Industry points to this organization as its proudest achievement.

Aside from the financial advantages which this method of raising funds has brought about, the industry feels that the Fur Chest has been instrumental in laying the ghosts of some antiquated fallacies which have hitherto considerably interfered with the successful operation of central financing.

Organized charity has been criticized for the reason that it goes in the face of the ancient mandate, "Thy right hand shall not know what thy left hand doeth." It has been brought to task as an attempt on the part of the donor to use his gift as a means of advertising himself. And again, organized charity has been criticized for its tendency to eliminate the personal touch of the giver, the close relationship of giver and receiver, and that giving is simplified for the giver. Instead of giving according to the need, one gives on the say-so or recommendation of a third person.

These critics insist that beneficence cannot be delegated, that it must be the personal act and feeling of the donor and that it must be his intimate knowledge of the circumstances and the needs of the beneficiary that should move him in making the gift.

The proponents of the Charity Chest of the Fur Industry were fully aware of these objections at the time when the suggestion to form the Chest was being considered. These were the very objections that were then raised at the various committee meetings held to discuss this problem, and yet after carefully considering these various objections on the one hand, and the great many reasons why the Chest should be formed, the organization committee unanimously agreed that the Chest was needed and that the sooner it could be organized, the sooner would the giving of the Trade be put on a scientific and just basis.

What could have been the reasons that would overcome such fundamental objections? If it is religion which exhorts so many to do their duty in the matter of giving, religion should surely have a sufficient influence to enforce this other dictum that the giving should be done in an unobtrusive, secret way. If society casts its odium upon the individual who advertises his beneficence, surely its power for ostracism should be sufficient to make such ostentation impossible. And if it requires a personal contact with the suffering of the beneficiary to bring forth the donations, an organization like the Chest without the benefits of such personal contact should, of necessity, be a failure, and therefore, central financing, apparently, the impossible undertaking.

The fact remains, however, that the Fur Chest, organized in the beginning of 1925, has now been in existence for five years, and has demonstrated its usefulness. What then have been the changes in the social aspects of the community that could have made such a revolution possible? What are the factors that have been responsible for this change?

The answer is simpler than would at first appear. The tremendous increase in the population and size of the various communities, and the immense increase in the area occupied by them, all have tended to reduce the possibility of carrying out the dictum of secrecy.

It was easy enough in a small community for the individual ministering angel to visit the few individuals who are sick or needy, or otherwise required assistance, to render this assistance. It becomes quite a different question when the effort is made to apply this system to a large community like New York, Chicago or San Francisco. How do we know that for the few cases which we are able to care for individually that there are not hundreds, nay, thousands of