

# In Memoriam

HARRY H. LAPIDUS      BERNARD GINSBURG  
MILFORD STERN          LEE K. FRANKEL  
CYRUS L. SULZBERGER

By SAMUEL A. GOLDSMITH  
*Chicago*

MANY who have attempted to build the Jewish communities of our country have, in the recently passing years, been subjected to repetitive assaults and shocks. They have been witnessing the passing of a generation of Jews, through whom the communities and their institutions have been built. Doubtless, the very forces of nature will continue to subject us to these increasingly frequent assaults. The fact that the community, as such, is eternal, and the fact that, wisely or unwisely, we are building up a new leadership, does not in any sense lessen our grief, nor does it often replace fully and adequately the pillar of the House of Israel that has crumbled back into the dust.

We are about to memorialize the signal services that five men have rendered to their Jewish communities, or rather not merely to their individual Jewish communities, but to the cities in which they dwelt, their country, the Jewish community of the world, and to humanity. Three of these men lived and worked in the Middle-West. They represented a pioneer and catholic Jewish spirit. They were part of that secondary immigration that did not settle in New York, or Philadelphia, or Boston, but left the port of entry and pushed on into the country itself.

One of these men, Harry Lapidus, became, in the course of a vigorous and courageous life, the outstanding Jewish citizen of the state of Nebraska. He lived in Omaha for 40 years. He died there at the age of 49. So far as our own particular interests are concerned, it was upon his rugged and enduring personality and power that the Jewish Federation of Omaha was established; that the Jewish Community Center was built and maintained; that the Jewish Welfare Fund was established. Beyond this, he looked to participation and did participate in the Community Chest. Nationally, he was extraordinarily active in the I. O. B. B.; he raised large funds for the National Jewish Hospital; he identified himself, organizationally, with all of the Jewish religious movements, although his religious affiliation, as such, was with the Reform group. One of the most powerful political leaders in his state, he had never held office. He apparently never desired to hold office.

Lapidus did not represent the serene and cultured type

of Jew. His reactions were elemental and vigorous, sometimes as wholesomely crude as the very earth from which the people of Nebraska tear their livelihood. Honest of purpose, clear of vision, straightforward and aggressive in action, he was a real source of strength to the Jewish community of Omaha, and to those national movements that were beginning to enlist his interest in the general betterment of the Jewish situation throughout the country.

Milford Stern was a gentle spirit. He loved books and he loved music. He was cultured; formally cultivated in the sense of academic instruction, because he was both a teacher and a lawyer, he was essentially cultivated because he had a receptive mind and heart. For 25 years he lived in Detroit, until he died there at the age of 50. He had come to Detroit from the East. He, too, represented, in a sense, a secondary migration—the Jew who leaves the East to build new communities. He became president of the outstanding Reform temple—Temple Beth-El—served splendidly in the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, particularly in the Social Justice Commission. At the time of his death, he was president of the Jewish Welfare Federation of Detroit. This kind and capable person, this lover of men, music and books, represented, essentially, the type of American Jew on whom our present day Jewish community programs must be built.

Bernard Ginsburg had lived most of his life in Detroit, until his death at the age of 67. He was a pioneer not only as a Jewish citizen in Detroit, but in some of those industries that built his city. He was a pioneer in the building of auto trucks, and in the iron and metal business. He lived a long and a very useful life. He had served as president of Temple Beth-El, president of the I. O. B. B., and as an active member of the Jewish Welfare Federation. The Hannah Schloss Building, which served as the administrative center of the Jewish Charities of Detroit, was his gift to the Jewish community. He was active in the organization of many national organizations and funds.

There were, then, these three men of the Middle-West. Through two of them Detroit Jewry had built much of its progress; the other was a recognized leader of Nebraska's Jewish community. They represent varying types of persons—strong-willed, strong-bodied, straightforward Harry

Lapidus; clear-visioned, mild-mannered, cultivated Milford Stern; somewhere in between stands the Jew of the type of Bernard Ginsburg. All of them, in a sense, were pioneers, and all of them builded well.

There are also two men of the East whom we are to memorialize today. They represent a cultured and settled participation in Jewish affairs—a balanced participation that did not permit mawkish sentiment to fire the head as it did not permit a clutter of so-called objectivity to chill the heart. About them it might be said that not so much was builded upon their efforts, as their efforts, conscientiously exerted, did the building. Their balanced participation in Jewish affairs was not only a balancing of intellect and emotion—it was also a balancing of cause against cause, of public social work against private social work. They represented the incursion of science and of critical intelligence into social work. Both were liberals in political and economic philosophy, both were seers, and both were able to prognosticate the future development of much of our Jewish social work. One represented the great steps forward in the humanization of great industry and business, and the other was always humane in his business.

It is impossible, at least for one like myself who has worked for both of these men, and with both of them, to disassociate the two.

Lee K. Frankel came to New York from Philadelphia. He served in the United Hebrew Charities at a time when Cyrus L. Sulzberger was the President. From that time on, it was very difficult to think of one without the other, true though it is that in ordinary, every-day, worldly affairs each walked his own way.

Read the Proceedings of the National Conferences of Jewish Social Service and see how much of what both

Frankel and Sulzberger have said has come to pass—how clearly they planned the then future, and how well they built their thoughts into the actual mechanics of organization. I have already mentioned the great contributions which Lee K. Frankel essentially made to Jewish social work. In many of these contributions Cyrus L. Sulzberger participated. Liberal, critically intelligent, scientific in approach, discriminating in determining the government of non-sectarian, as well as of Jewish social work, balancing always the claims of one national or local cause against the other—it really is true that Lee K. Frankel and Cyrus L. Sulzberger did illustrate admirably, beyond most men, the Jew as a citizen and the Jew as a humanitarian.

Quite unlike the petty men of their day, or of this day, they did not feel that any one particular form of activity or cause was so superdominant in its importance or its desirability over others that all others should fade and vanish. Life to them was truly complex, and because of its very complexity, required fine mechanisms to make it function and many mechanisms to make it survive.

Lee K. Frankel died as a social worker. He died while pursuing an investigation in Europe into various forms of social insurance. He showed us, the social workers, not only how to live, but how to die—at work at the essentially righteous task of struggling for somewhat better and more humane conditions for our Jewish communities and our fellow-citizens.

Both of these men of the East, with their culture and balance, and the three personalities of the Middle-West, gave us those kinds of lives that built for us of the present and enabled us to build for the people of the future. It is sad, but true, that over their very lives we must climb in our struggle to maintain the Jewish communities.

**BUSINESS SESSION**