

National Social Work Planning with Reference to the Local Community

By GEORGE W. RABINOFF

Associate Director, Bureau of Jewish Social Research, New York

THE field of national agency-local community relationships, like the Hope diamond, has numerous facets, not all scintillating, but nonetheless interesting to examine. The Conference Proceedings carry many pages of the story of those national agencies giving direct service to clients, explorations into their costs, the pros and the cons for organized community support.

For those national agencies which work with social agencies and communities, the Proceedings reveal the efforts of the Conference Committee of Nine (reported 1923 and 1924) to create a National Council of Jewish Social Service, to be the one service agency, with Conference, Training School, Research, and if necessary, other arms,—all things to all communities, flexible, adjustable, simple. That report reflected the confusion of the social worker who looked upon the pattern of national Jewish social work and found it unfathomable.

It has been suggested that the present analyses depart radically from past performances and approach the national agency from the standpoint of the local community and its needs.

There are many varieties of national agencies, each with a special function or a special interest sponsorship, just as there are all manner of local communities, problems and agencies. Fundamentally, local and national agencies have the same common objective, service, though the former deals principally with individuals, while the latter may cater to communities, to peoples and to agencies, as well as to individuals.

A local community is interested in national social work for one or more of the following reasons:

1. National agencies (and the same holds true for regional agencies) offer a service which the local community cannot provide for itself.

2. The problems, especially those within the civic-protective, the vocational educational, the immigration and the educational-cultural fields, either arise in sections beyond the reach or capacity of local groups, or they represent broad movements requiring the combination of the strengths of the Jewish citizenry of the country.

3. The local community requires the advice and experience of a national body for the organization of its own local activities.

These motivations vary in the different communities, according to size, location and stage of development and in the different national agencies, according to their functions and attitudes. It might clarify the problem if we examine its incidence in one or two typical communities.

City "A," an industrial town with a Jewish population of about 5,000, has a functional Federation with one trained worker, an untrained assistant and a stenographer-bookkeeper-clerk. The Federation joined the Community Chest, organized just after the Great War closed. It carried a small load of family welfare cases, it served an occasional transient, it maintained a small Community Center directed by the Federation executive and manned by volunteer leaders recruited in the community. It contributed to an old-style Talmud Torah. It contributed to a few of the national agencies, those which had been raising funds in "A" prior to the establishment of Federation. It maintained no hospitals, no children's institution and no home for aged dependents. A reform temple, a conservative synagogue and three orthodox synagogues provide for their religious needs, and they have the usual range of fraternal and kindred organizations in which their men and their women find social satisfaction.

During these past three years the Jewish community of "A" has gone through a most disturbing experience. A number of the prominent Jewish leaders have lost their wealth and have withdrawn from communal affairs, relief needs increased greatly and, for the first time, the Federation turned to the non-sectarian family agency and the City Department of Public Welfare, to secure public subsidy for Jewish families. It joined the agencies working with transients and homeless in a Central Bureau using public funds and serving Jew and Gentile, it cut its appropriations for non-local activities, cut staff salaries, cut the Talmud Torah subvention, kept the Center active only because it required no direct financing. The Federation officers kept the essence of their program, retreating before the pressure of overwhelming forces.

How has "A" used the national agencies, what services are available, what does it need, what is it getting?

For direct service to its citizens, "A" has access to many resources.

Although the Federation executive is an imported product,

with experience in several other communities, the family service work has been of a simple, unscientific calibre and the child from a home apparently broken beyond repair is dispatched to a regional Children's Home within a few hundred miles of "A", where he receives excellent physical care and fair vocational opportunities.

The Children's Home (there are about a half dozen such in different parts of the United States) has loyal friends in "A" and the Federation has contributed to its upkeep these many years. It is an economy to send the child to the Home, and most of the residents of "A" would think it unfair if the child were boarded out with foster parents, and deprived of the advantages of being brought up in the fine atmosphere of the Home. "A" happens to have an excellent non-sectarian children's program, with a well-managed institution, the range of diagnostic facilities and a rounded-out foster home department. The Jewish agency and workers have looked on and admired, but have not changed their course.

Aged dependents in "A," particularly those without close family ties, especially if they are beginning to show signs of debility or the other infirmities, are encouraged to enter a Home for the Aged, serving the region in which "A" is located and supported by the federations and unorganized communities in the region.

If a resident of "A" is suffering from arthritis, or rheumatism in certain forms, or other diseases in which thermal springs treatment is indicated, the Hospital at Hot Springs, Ark. is available and free. "A" uses the Levi Hospital when some town physician tells the Federation that a patient would be benefited by treatment at Hot Springs, and an endorsed application brings a ready and sympathetic response.

For tuberculosis patients, the problem is more complicated, since there are two national hospitals in Denver, a third in Duarte, California, an ex-patients home in Denver and another in Los Angeles affiliated with the Duarte sanatorium. (Two of these institutions receive annual contributions from the Federation in "A" and the other two send in solicitors.) The State TB Sanatorium, to which "A" has access, is generally crowded, but patients are readily admitted to the County Sanatorium near "A." The County Sanatorium is modern, well managed and has progressive policies. Most of the physicians in "A" are convinced that the County Sanatorium is better, especially if a patient is without resources, than one of the western Jewish sanatoria and the Federation generally urges its clients to accept treatment there. Occasionally a patient does not adjust and leaves for Denver (or Los Angeles) sometimes with, more often without, the blessing of the "A" Federation. There is no special animosity

between the national sanatoria and the "A" Federation, but the sanatoria, conscious of the forces which are urging Federation support of local treatment, prefer to deal with applicants and their physicians without the intermediacy of the social agency.

A fifth national agency in the tuberculosis field is the National Home for Jewish Children of Denver, dedicated to the care of children whose parents have come to that city for the cure. "A" would not ordinarily send children to Denver, but tuberculosis patients, especially as their disease becomes more advanced, do "grasp at straws," and many of them drift from one sanatorium to another, so that it is quite possible that children from "A" may at some time be found in the Children's Home. The sanatoria officials have talked of checking this drift between the hospitals, and this is one of the tasks to which the Council of National Jewish Agencies, made up of this tuberculosis group, may address itself.

The other direct-service-to-client national agencies available for the people of "A" are the Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), the National Farm School (N.F.S.) and the National Desertion Bureau (N.D.B.) HIAS deals with immigration problems, using European correspondents to trace lost family connections, using its workers at the United States ports of entry to meet and assist immigrants, maintaining a Washington Bureau to intercede with the Federal departments on behalf of complicated immigration cases. In addition, HIAS uses some of its funds, raised in "A" and other American cities, to cooperate with ICA and Emigdirekt in maintaining Hicem, the organization which represents the interest of World Jewry in problems of immigration and emigration throughout Europe and South and Central America.

The National Farm School similarly performs a double function. On an unusually well equipped farm in Bucks County, Pa., it maintains a school where young men who have completed the elementary school grades receive training in the several branches of agriculture. Some of the children for whom the "A" Federation is responsible may welcome this particular vocational training, but the good citizens, in contributing to the Farm School, are answering an appeal originally conceived as a means of attracting Jews from the urban centers to the greater satisfactions of life on the farm. The School is good enough to warrant an appropriation from the State of Pennsylvania, but there is doubt as to whether it provides the fundamental answer to the "Jewish question."

The National Desertion Bureau is not well known among the people of "A." They may see the "Gallery of Missing Husbands" if they happen to read the Yiddish

press and they may even have experienced the thrill of identifying one of these alleged deserters and reporting his whereabouts. But the N.D.B. is useful to the Federation, whose workers use its skill and experience and its contacts with social agencies throughout the world, in tracing men who have abandoned their families to the tender mercies of the charitably inclined. The N.D.B. has concentrated attention on the seriousness of family desertion and devised techniques for locating missing husbands and bringing them home, either for reconciliation or punishment. The N.D.B., with its record of achievement in one approach to the problems of family life, might again take the leadership, and, through further experimentation and study of methods, bring interpretation and help to the agencies in such communities as "A," which lack the facilities, yes even the need, for independent experimentation. Work in this new approach in several sectors of the non-sectarian field might well be scrutinized and adapted to Jewish needs.

To the men of "A," B'nai B'rith for several generations meant an alliance of Jews for the amelioration of distress wherever it occurred among Jews. The encouragement and support of such institutions as the National Jewish Hospital at Denver, the Levi Hospital at Hot Springs, the District Orphanages and Homes for the Aged, the Anti-Defamation League, the Mexican Bureau, have given the members a sense of human service well done, and although the local lodge is only intermittently active, the announcement of the Wider Scope Movement of the B'nai B'rith some eight years ago, elicited much enthusiasm in "A."

"A" knows of a number of other cultural-educational national agencies, through letters of appeal for funds, occasional representatives who visit the city and plead for support, or through their young men and women attending the colleges and universities, who tell them about sections of the Intercollegiate Menorah Society, or the Avukah. Some of the "A" leaders have belonged to the Jewish Publication Society for years, a few send checks to support the college lecture program of the Jewish Chautauqua Society.

The theological seminaries in Cincinnati, New York and Chicago, all receive support from "A," several from their affiliated congregations, the others by direct solicitation. Sisterhoods and brotherhoods have grown up in the congregations, through the stimulation of the national bodies, serving social as well as congregational purposes, and in a measure competing for leadership and programs with the fraternal and women's groups.

For years, the "A" section of the National Council of Jewish Women was torn between the urge to help fi-

nance the national program, particularly immigration and farm and rural work, pressures for local development through social, educational and civic activities and the wishes of the officers for local reflections of the national patterns in committees for peace, social legislation, naturalization, the blind, religious education, etc. Since last year, part of the conflict has been resolved by the decision to eliminate its detached national activities, and to concentrate on the local sections, advising them on programs suitable to their local needs and wishes.

Hadassah is another group which has developed considerable strength in "A," drawing largely upon the same people as the Council for its membership, but with a more central purpose. Its nationalist objective brings money into the local coffers for Palestinian purposes, but its membership expect some social functions as part of their activities.

One other group of national agencies in this general field offer no direct service to the Jews of "A," but merely look to "A" for the sinews of war, the means with which to carry the combat for American Jewry into the battle areas wherever they happen to be. The American Jewish Committee has long been the spokesman in civic protective work. In recent years, the American Jewish Congress has challenged that leadership. The last few months have seen much new vigor injected into the situation. Under the lash of the German whip, lines of opposition have been drawn within the community, despite the intense desire to avoid a rift in the Jewish ranks at this crucial moment.

The Joint Distribution Committee has depended on "A" for favorable response to its appeals for relief and reconstruction work in Eastern Europe. The American Palestine Campaign has likewise found friends among the leaders in "A," and has raised some money there year after year. Hadassah raises funds for Palestine through its local chapter, small sums are raised by local devotees for the Jewish National Fund, occasionally the Hebrew University succeeds in an appeal, even more occasionally letters or a visit from a Mizrahi leader bring in money for that cause. From twenty-five to fifty solicitors come through "A" year after year, collecting for one or another of the numerous European and Palestinian religious or charitable institutions, and each gets something.

This completes the picture of the outside agencies which contact "A" directly, either for service or for money. The picture is not entirely typical and a few exceptions may well be noted.

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1. If we had taken for our illustration a city smaller in Jewish population than "A," we would have found a

simpler form of communal organization, with either no Federation at all, or a Federation built around a Jewish Center generally manned by an untrained local person, or a "Jewish Chest" organized to finance non-local appeals.

2. As we go up the range of Jewish population, we find a gradual intensification in the provision of local services. Most of the cities of 10,000 Jews or over have Federations, and experienced executives, experienced family case workers and center executives. There is less dependence upon regional and national agencies for direct service to clients.

The intermediate community has been the scene of development of the Welfare Fund to finance non-local appeals. More and more of the interest of the local leaders in such activities is being concentrated in the annual Welfare Fund campaign.

3. The professionalization of Jewish work increases, probably in geometric or even greater ratio, with increasing populations. "F" has a Jewish population of 40,000 and has everything in the way of social service that its people require. It has a Federation which raised its own funds until several years ago and joined the Chest only under the stress of the emergency. It has a well-staffed family society, a local children's institution, a foster care program for children, an institution for the aged, a modern hospital, a Bureau of Jewish Education, a Jewish Center and a Jewish settlement. "F" has no Jewish Welfare Fund yet. Its Federation contributes to a few of the old-time national organizations, the others come in and solicit funds directly. The Federation leaders want a Welfare Fund. National agency collections in "F" have dwindled seriously and local leaders may get their Welfare Fund under way this year in order to conserve for national purposes what little money is available, rather than subject it to the competitive solicitation now necessary.

One of the obstacles to immediate organization in "F," an obstacle which has been faced in all of the communities which have organized Welfare Funds, is the complicated question, which national organizations should be supported and how much money should they individually receive.

Although even in local communities the effectiveness of these tests is marred by established traditions, vested interests and personality conflicts, yet it has generally been accepted that community planning for social work involves measurement of each agency by these tests.

The National Appeals Information Service—and now the National Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds—planned national machinery to apply these and similar tests to the national agencies, taking into consideration the complexities of attitudes, practices, geography.

The Council of National Jewish Agencies of Denver

is another medium through which planning may be introduced into the national service, either on its own initiative or in co-operation with the Federation Council.

4. In the cities in the largest population class, New York, Chicago and Philadelphia, there has been practically no working relationship between the Federation and the group of national agencies which we have thus far been considering.

On the other hand, it is these three cities, particularly New York, on which this group of national agencies lean most heavily for support. Each maintains intensive solicitation machinery, and although there is occasionally a flurry of opposition from the Federation against some particular financial effort, solicitations and campaigns proceed without much effort at control or coordination in time.

Furthermore, it is these large cities which supply most of the leadership, particularly for those agencies in the civic-protective, foreign relief and Palestinian fields.

5. Geography plays a part in the service requirements of the communities and their relationships to national service. To illustrate, the Los Angeles sanatorium draws a large proportion from the Pacific Coast; the Levi Hospital serves the surrounding states more intensively than distant points; the communities in the Southeast, being less developed in their local resources, depend more upon the Denver sanatoria for the treatment of their residents. HIAS gives more service to the larger centers of immigrant populations, the Farm School is closer to the Pennsylvania cities, the B'nai B'rith places more emphasis in the Middle West where most of its membership is located.

There is another group of national agencies which present quite a different picture. These are the organizations in the co-ordination and research field: 1) The National Conference of Jewish Social Service, an open forum meeting annually, no staff; 2) the Bureau of Jewish Social Research, a study and research agency for the general field, with staff and field service; 3) the Jewish Welfare Board, consultation and administrative service to Jewish Community Centers, with staff and field service; 4) the Graduate School for Jewish Social Work, recruiting and training workers, with faculty and some field staff; 5) the National Council for Jewish Education, an annual conference, with technical committees but no staff; 6) the National Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, recently created by the Federations for service to that field, with some field staff.

In the smallest cities, those with Jewish populations of 5,000 or less, the problems with which the coordination and research agencies deal represent the elementary community organization needs.

Through its reporting system for Federation financial experiences, the Bureau has acquired considerable knowledge

of use of these towns. The Graduate School for Jewish Social Work occasionally draws a student for professional training and presents to these cities the possibility of supplying them with trained workers. The Jewish Centers are in close contact with the J. W. B., particularly in the cities near the eastern seaboard and look to that agency for direct service in planning their work and in interpreting their philosophy to their people. The newly created N.C.J.F.W.F. is trying to build a program of direct usefulness to these federations on the basis of planning participation by both professional workers and officers and is establishing principles and policies and field service to introduce them into the community patterns. In these communities, there is another group of national agencies at work, approaching the problems of community organization from a congregational rather than a social work angle. They are the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the United Synagogues of America and the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America.

No one has yet found a formula for the effective development of services to meet the communal needs of the smaller community. Even for the smallest town, it would seem possible to provide one well trained person to take care of all of the situations which require communal attention, whether these be in family service or relief, in child care, health, education, recreation, fund raising, or what not. Such a person could use the non-sectarian local agencies for specialized services, interpreting the Jewish needs to them and could, on the other hand, be the liaison to bring into his community whatever is being nationally developed.

Differentiations in the communal programs of the intermediate cities make more definite the types of national service their agencies require and the points at which it can be secured. Congregations become more limited and less involved in communal affairs, with the result that the national congregational associations similarly step out of the area of community organization concern. That field is thus left to the Jewish agencies to which are added a number of non-sectarian national service organizations with specialized interests and services. The Conference becomes more useful, for its sessions present more material of pertinence to these cities than to the smaller ones. These cities use more trained workers and are therefore closer to the Graduate School. The field visits from the B.J.S.R. have more direct utility, for the problems in these cities begin to approach in extent and in nature, those in evidence in the larger cities and which are subjected to study by the Bureau Staff and by functional groups of workers meeting under Bureau auspices. The Jewish Welfare Board can concentrate more on Center and recreation requirements, without touching too closely the communal organization aspects.

In principle, each community which is large enough to organize its Jewish work, to the point of employing professional personnel, should be administratively self-sufficient. Of all the poorly organized communities, however, the worst example can be found among those which have isolated themselves from contact with the national agencies and limit their efforts to their own experiences. The national agency is the clearing house which picks up information from numerous places, works it over and formulates principles which it then proceeds to disseminate. If it is accepted that a local agency, to maintain its own effectiveness, needs to broaden its horizon through the use of national agencies, then we can inquire into the particular problems on which the local units need service, and the availability of these services.

1. Problems of agency or community organization—The B.J.S.R. has specialized in community and agency studies and has had a limited field staff on duty during the past five years, going into communities on call, to consult on the organization of work to deal with their local problems or reorganizations to meet changing needs or conditions.

The National Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, constituting as it does, a league of federations for mutual benefit, has accepted a field service responsibility, and will be the medium for bringing federations into closer and more intimate association with each other, promoting new federations, helping established federations keep up with the current. The four committees with which it has initiated its activities are working on four fundamental issues, first, problems of financing Jewish social work, second, the effects on Jewish social work of the extending activities of public welfare activities, third, federation support of Jewish cultural programs, and fourth, the financing of national and international Jewish work. Negotiations are now pending for a working relationship between the Council and the Association of Community Chests and Councils, particularly for the more direct utilization of the Welfare and Relief Mobilization, and for joint consideration of the problems on which the A. C. C. has already developed much valuable material, campaign methods, budget and accounting practice.

The Jewish Centers use the Jewish Welfare Board for manifold purposes, starting when the townspeople decide that they want a Center. Organization set-up, campaigns for funds, staff, building plans, activities program, membership practices, are all within the gamut of J.W.B. services to its local units. Although the concentration of the J.W.B. on the promotion and development of Jewish Centers has resulted in almost complete coverage of the country with functioning centers which have withstood the blasts of economy barrages, continued interest in its own

special field may require that it give some attention to the fundamental problems of federation organization.

It would seem that some of the general field service sorely needed, but not available in sufficient quantity from the Bureau or the Council, might be supplied by a better integration of the services of these three organizations.

The National Council for Jewish Education maintains no staff and therefore undertakes no extension or promotion activities. Its members have been called into consultation by individual communities, by the B.J.S.R. and the Council of Federations, on community programs and on the development of standard practices and principles for community support of Central Bureaus of Jewish Education. Would it be feasible for the J.W.B. to assume responsibility for service to local agencies in the Jewish education field, to expedite the process of modernizing their programs, doing the interpretation job for Jewish education to the communities, and bringing about a closer working relationship locally between the Centers, the Talmud Torah and the Central Bureau of Jewish Education?

2. Problems of Standards, evaluation of the work of functional agencies—In this sector, the B.J.S.R. has done effective work. Through its studies of agencies, the encouragement and guidance of self-studies, the gathering and standardization of service statistics, conference groups for the analysis of trends in the functional fields, it has developed and prepared for local adaptation a considerable amount of basic material in the family welfare, child care, hospital and clinics, homes for the aged and federation fields.

The effect of the activities of the N.C.J.F.W.F. upon the standards of the functional agencies is still to be determined. It is an unexplored area, with the probability that the demarcation between the B.J.S.R. and the Council will be drawn on the line of study and research functions in the former with adaptation and promotion the province of the latter.

Indirectly, standards in the field are influenced by the work of the Graduate School of Jewish Social Work. The School places its students for training in agencies which maintain high standards, its graduates carrying these standards back to the agencies with whom they take employment.

3. Problems of personnel, recruiting and training—The Graduate School has primary responsibility in this area, exercised through the selection of students for training, the placement of its graduates and its policy of continuing contacts with the graduates to assure their professional advancement. Jewish students are also found on the rolls of several of the non-sectarian professional schools, particularly Chicago, New York and Cleveland.

The B.J.S.R. is interested in personnel, inasmuch as it is conscious that adequate local work depends upon the

calibre of the employed personnel. The Bureau set up a Personnel Advisory Committee, for the use of local agencies, particularly in the filling of executive and other key positions. The Bureau has worked closely with the Joint Vocational Service and is now endeavoring to further increase the effectiveness of the J.V.S. to the Jewish workers and the Jewish field through an agreement to which the Bureau, the School and the J.V.S. will be party.

The National Conference of Jewish Social Service maintained an employment service for a number of years, but merged this activity into the J.V.S. when that service was established in 1927. This year a Committee of the Conference has been working on the Status of the Social Worker and has developed some elementary principles on personnel practices, for the guidance of local agencies.

The J.W.B. maintains a Personnel Bureau for service to its own field, including recruiting, training in conjunction with the School, and placement.

4. Problems of co-ordination and planning—These problems are becoming increasingly serious, due to general conditions. The B.J.S.R. and the N.C.J.F.W.F. are the organizations most directly concerned and it is to them that the local agencies look for leadership in the establishment of policies which will determine the future of Jewish social work. The extension of the Community Chest movement and the liberalization of governmental attitudes towards social problems are probably even more important than activities within the Jewish field itself.

Jewish social agencies in all except a half dozen cities are drawing sustenance today from Community Chests. In addition to the "normal" problems of any Jewish organization today, questions of internal adjustments, of relationships to an expanded load, a decreased income and to the new forces which the government and emergency groups have thrown into the breach, these Chest-affiliated agencies are confronted, under the same budgetary pressures and in common with all agencies under Chest support, with the necessity of justifying their every activity, their very existence. In the technical processes at least, Jewish and non-sectarian agencies have much in common, and in several cities the question of merging Jewish into non-sectarian agencies has already been raised.

It becomes a matter of choice. It has been demonstrated that wise planning can effect economies and improve service. It takes courage as well as skill. In local communities, differences in point of view, established traditions and personalities may block social planning, to the dread loss of organized social service. The total community picture will have to be the perspective, rather than the individual agency, even if that involves substantial reorganization within the Federation itself.

The local communities need the national agencies, in this

crisis, but the national agencies have a problem of the organization of their own services. Now, more than ever, the plea of the old Committee of Nine must be heard. Jewish social work will continue, for a long time to come. How it will continue and what its contents will be, no one can tell. We can tell that it will suffer more severely than is

necessary unless the national service agencies, the Conference, the Bureau, the School, the Welfare Board and the Council of Federations can find a platform on which they can integrate their services, and unite their energies to shape a course for the guidance of the future of Jewish social work.

DISCUSSION

By DR. CHARLES S. BERNHEIMER
Jewish Welfare Board, New York

THE question which Mr. Rabinoff has raised as to the feasibility of the Jewish Welfare Board assuming responsibility for service to local agencies in the Jewish education field, including program, interpretation of Jewish education to local communities, and bringing about closer working relationship among Centers, Talmud Torahs, and the Bureau of Jewish Education, involves a policy which, in my judgment, the Jewish Welfare Board is not in a position to determine, in view of its responsibilities with reference to Jewish Center work, to which it is distinctively committed, and more particularly because of the fact that the plans and problems of Jewish education belong to a field which the Jewish education group may definitely claim as coming entirely within its province.

Mr. Rabinoff referred to the desirability of national agencies integrating their services. I should rather say that they should endeavor to coordinate, inasmuch as each occupies a special field, and the endeavor should be to get together on such parts of the field where there is comparative identity of purpose, each organization continuing to maintain its own autonomy.

It should be added to the picture which Mr. Rabinoff has presented that the Jewish Welfare Board has continu-

ously maintained a Research Bureau, which, it is true, has been practically confined to research along cultural and recreational activities of Jewish communities. But it has necessarily touched upon the various aspects of Jewish community life in their relationship to the Jewish Centers of the respective local Jewish communities. In its research work, the Jewish Welfare Board has also at times cooperated with the Bureau of Jewish Social Research, with the view to promoting Jewish community development, especially where the matter of Federation was involved.

It has been the experience of the Jewish Welfare Board that although several of the larger cities, especially New York City, present problems which make the relationship of the national organization to the local organization somewhat different from the relationship to local organizations in communities of smaller size, it is perfectly feasible to maintain a relationship between national and local organizations which is of considerable service to the latter in its plan and programs. The history of the Jewish Welfare Board during the past decade has proven the effectiveness of such relationship as a most valuable factor in the enrichment of local Jewish community life.

Report of the Committee on the Status of the Jewish Social Worker

DR. SOLOMON LOWENSTEIN and DR. MAURICE TAYLOR, *Co-chairmen*

INTRODUCTION:

IN 1931 there was created within the Conference of Jewish Social Service an Emergency Fund Committee with the primary purpose of raising funds with the aim of meeting situations in which Jewish social workers required emergency aid. A special committee was appointed by the President as a result of action at the Minneapolis Conference to consider the advisability of continuing this fund, and at the Philadelphia Conference it was voted that the Committee be continued with such additional members as it chose to add not only for the study of the particular problem of assistance to Jewish social workers in financial difficulty but also to consider the wider implications. This Committee was consolidated with another Committee appointed by the President of this year's Conference to deal with the status of the Jewish social worker.

The Committee, which was appointed by the National Conference of Jewish Social Service, proceeded to develop its task through the medium of four local sub-committees to whom were assigned responsibility for a particular aspect of the general subject. Special reports were then considered by the Committee as a whole and the following statement has been formulated on the basis of the sectional reports. The Committee requests that it be continued for another year for additional study and recommendation and offers this preliminary report which contains conclusions reached by the Committee on a number of points as well as recommendations for further Committee activity.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

The following standards are set forth for the guidance of Jewish agencies employing personnel for social service tasks. The qualifications which should be held by members of the professional staff of Jewish social agencies are set forth in the order of desirability, as follows:

1. Holders of a bachelor's degree, including a major in the social sciences plus graduation from a two-year course of graduate study in an approved school of social work (which holds membership in the American Association of Schools of Social Work).

2. Holders of a two-year certificate from an approved school of social work in addition to at least two years of satisfactorily completed work in an approved college or university and a minimum of two years satisfactory experience in approved social agencies.

3. Holders of a bachelor's degree with a major in

social sciences plus one year of professional training in an approved school of social work.

In considering professional education in a school of social work in classes (1) and (3) it is recommended that preference be given to graduates and students who have received their training in the Graduate School for Jewish Social Work.

4. Persons with satisfactory experience in social work who are eligible for membership in the A.A.S.W. who may or may not have completed their academic education or professional study.

5. Holders of a bachelor's degree from a school of social work which offers a curriculum for social work education available to under-graduates.

In general preference should be given to candidates who possess an understanding of Jewish life and of developments in Jewish social work.

Training during employment. While a liberal education and professional training are essential equipment for the modern social worker they should be considered both by the individual and the agency as only the beginning. In a rapidly developing field such as ours sound professional attitude and capacity can be maintained only by continuing study after the social worker has commenced his actual career. To this end the following are recommended:

- The setting up of a training program within the agency or in conjunction with other agencies to include (1) A systematic course of reading; (2) Review of current literature; (3) Lectures and case discussion.
- The requirement that staff members shall take advantage of courses offered in local schools of social work and colleges dealing with subject matter affecting their work.
- Agencies should not only grant the time necessary for such courses but should also contribute in whole or in part toward the expense.
- Leaves of absence for study should be granted in accordance with the latter recommendation of the subsection on "leaves."

STAFF REPRESENTATION

The subject of staff representation presents two major aspects:

- That of staff participation in the formulation of agency programs and policies, and
- The question of administrative control of social