

JEWISH COMMUNAL PROGRESS IN CLEVELAND

(1926-1927)

BY JOHN SLAWSON, PH.D.

Research Director Jewish Welfare Federation, Cleveland

ONE is apt to experience some misgiving in attempting to recount progress in one's own community for a relatively brief period of one or two years. This feeling is to be expected for at least three reasons: first, the meaning of "progress" is rather vague, particularly in the field of community organization where criteria for the evaluation of worthwhileness of endeavor and accomplishment are still so unsatisfactory; second, one is apt to indulge in an enumeration of relatively insignificant events due to the closeness and confining aspects of the job depicted which tends to result in a sort of provincialism; third, a year or two is surely an insufficient period during which significant events may be adequately appraised, especially from the aspect of the long-time trend.

However, regardless of these shortcomings, a meaningful interpretation of occurrences in one community should be helpful to those of other communities. Possibly a more accurate designation for a report of this nature would be "change" rather than "progress."

The financial affiliation of the existing orthodox agencies to which reference was made in our last report to the QUARTERLY has now been consummated through a special arrangement with the Cleveland Community Fund. The three agencies affected are the Orthodox Old Home, Orthodox Jewish Orphan Home, and Jewish Day Nursery.

The arrangement involves the attempt, on the part of the Federation, to corral the giving resources of those elements in the Jewish community that heretofore contributed directly to the orthodox agencies, but not to the Community Fund.

In this attempt, the Federation Auxiliary Board has been recently reorganized with the object of serving as a financial instrument, supplementary to the Community Fund, for meeting international, national, and local Jewish community needs. Although the "double-barreled federation" of Waldman is not as yet in operation in Cleveland, the trend in that direction is very evident.

Affiliation carries in its wake problems additional to financial, the most significant of which are those pertaining to standards of operation and community participation. A process of orientation with regard to a consideration of accepted standards of procedure, development of a communal outlook for concerted effort in addition to individual strivings, and a general recognition of the place of a particular agency in the general community structure, is being projected. This and other matters of community organization are being dealt with in the conferences set up by the Federation. During the past year there has been an intensification of the work of our community conferences through the mechanics of specialized committee interests. Thus, the Recreation Conference,

whose object is to co-ordinate the recreational activities of the community, operates through five committees, such as the Committee on Professional Co-operation, Committee on Studies and Surveys, and Committee on Jewish Education. The Family Welfare Conference also operates through five committees such as the Committee on Transients, Committee on Aged, Committee on Co-operating Family Agencies. The Health Conference operates through such committees as the Committee on Convalescents, Committee on Chronics and Handicapped, Committee on Medical and Non-Medical Co-operation. Each of these committees has a chairman and secretary, and each works in its specific field, reporting to the larger group which we call the "Conference."

The object of these various conferences and committees of the Federation is twofold: educational and joint planning. The membership represents a cross-section of the Jewish social service interests of the community and consists of 242 representatives involving 151 different individuals representing the lay and professional leadership in the various functions of the Jewish community. The work of these functional groups is being stimulated through the Department of Research and Community Organization of the Federation office; the Functional Relations Committee, which has recently been increased to include a membership of ten of our leading communal lay workers, being the guiding and review body for these groups. The activities of these conferences and committees are hampered considerably due to

lack of adequate personnel in the Federation office to handle the manifold tasks involved.

During the past year there has been created, under the auspices of the Federation, the Jewish Tuberculosis Committee which consists of representatives from the various auxiliaries of the national consumptive sanatoria operating in Cleveland, the family agency, the hospital, the city Department of Health, and other agencies. It considers all cases of the Jewish tuberculous coming to the attention of any of the agencies and disposition is made on the basis of the medical findings presented, the case work analysis being made by the family agency.

Studies have contributed a large share to the subject matter of the activities of the community organizing groups. This has placed the proceedings on a fact-finding basis. Thus, the study of the recreational resources of the community, recently made, is enabling the Recreation Conference to plan the community recreational program more effectively. The recent study on Jewish population revealed the Jewish population shifts, which in Cleveland are enormous, and is making prediction possible with reference to social service needs in various districts. The Jewish population of Cleveland was found to be 90,000. The study of the Jewish aged situation in various cities is assisting Cleveland in formulating its policy. Other studies such as child care trends, summer camp clientele, care of chronics in this and other cities, convalescent situation in this and other cities, the characteristics of our foster homes employed (in cooperation with the Welfare Associa-

tion for Jewish Children), the status of our foster children (in co-operation with the Welfare Association for Jewish Children), problem analysis of family agency clientele (in co-operation with the Jewish Social Service Bureau), are helping in our community planning. A number of our projects have passed the study and co-operation development stages but are retarded because of lack of funds. This is especially true in the health field in the development of care for chronics and convalescents.

Beginning with the fall measures will be instituted for the development of community recreation in Cleveland. Plans for a center under the auspices of the Council Educational Alliance are already completed for the Mount Pleasant District of Cleveland, the money needed being available. Shifts in the community recreational resources will be made in accordance with shifts in the population. The Recreation Conference is hoping to foster an aggressive community recreational policy utilizing to the extent possible the present enormous congregational facilities available in Cleveland. Several of the Cleveland temples have indicated a receptive attitude toward this approach conditioned, of course, by their individual congregational needs.

The new buildings of Mount Sinai Hospital have now been completed and the out-patient building, which is a four-story structure having a capacity of 250 to 300 patients per day and equipped with the most modern appliances, has been in operation for a number of months. A health clinic for our social

agencies is operating on a partial basis, although lack of funds is preventing the proper development of this function. The new nurses' six-story home has a capacity for 150 occupants and the new laboratory building is equipped with facilities for both research and diagnostic work. The erection of the three buildings, plus equipment, cost about one and a quarter million dollars.

The Jewish Social Service Bureau, the family agency, in addition to continuing its program of centralizing case work service on a community-wide basis, has been concentrating its efforts on technique and internal organization. Participation in study courses in social medicine, psychiatry, home economics, etc., has been encouraged. The relationship with the Western Reserve University School of Applied Social Science is being strengthened, the agency being utilized in an increasing measure as a training center. Summer courses at the Training School for Jewish Social Work in New York City have been pursued by members of the staff. The staff has been increased, including a statistical worker.

The Jewish Day Nursery has been provided with new quarters for its operation and has expanded in service since the policy on the part of the family agency with regard to the working mother has changed, resulting in a slow but gradual increase in nursery care.

The Welfare Association for Jewish Children, our child placing agency, is in the process of instituting study group courses for foster mothers in which the pediatrician and other physicians are to lead the

discussion. The association has intensified the individual approach with its children with special emphasis on the mental aspects of treatment.

The child care situation in Cleveland has taken a new turn in view of the recent request by the Jewish Orphan Home that the Federation approve Cleveland's participation in the campaign of over a million dollars for a new home for Districts No. 2 and No. 6 of the Independent Order of B'nai B'rith. Prior to this request, the Federation adopted the following principles on behalf of the community:

1. The consideration of the welfare of the individual child, dependent, neglected, or atypical, is a community problem and is logically the task of the agency designated as the representative of the community's philanthropic and welfare endeavors. The Jewish Welfare Federation is such an instrument created by the Cleveland Jewish community for its expression in the welfare field and hence the consideration of the child care problem, in its basic and co-ordinating aspects, is the duty of the Federation.

2. The family, being the primary unit of society should be protected from any disruptive forces and the home should only be broken up and children removed as a last resort after all other measures have failed.

3. The foster family home is the nearest approach to the normal family home for children where proper care under parental guardianship has broken down in the real home. Hence, in general, with respect to normal children requiring placement, selected and supervised foster homes should be utilized.

4. The institution has a distinctive service to render in the child care field by providing specialized facilities for the care of children who may be particularly benefited by a stay in an institution for a temporary or even a longer period by virtue of certain specialized benefits that may be derived from institutional treatment designed for specialized types.

In the first principle Cleveland's right to administer its dependent child care problem without interference from outside sources, national or otherwise, is indicated. The purport of the other principles is obvious. In view of the request of the Jewish Orphan Home, the cases of that institution, the Orthodox Orphan Home and the Welfare Association for Jewish Children, our child-placing agency, are now being studied with the object of determining what Cleveland's need is for the institutional care of dependent, neglected, and atypical children in the light of the principles the Federation has declared. The qualitative, as well as the quantitative aspect, with regard to facilities, is being considered on the basis of these principles.

The experiences of the Children's Conference during the past two and one-half years are also being analyzed. What the outcome of this study by the Federation will be and what the final decision is likely to be is impossible to foretell at this writing. It is fairly certain, however, that a different type of instrument than the present Children's Conference is being contemplated.

The situation pertaining to the care of the aged in Cleveland is being approached through an attempt at relieving the pressure on the two homes for the aged by making available facilities for the care of chronics rather than increasing the capacity of the homes, which are now caring in a measure for aged chronics. The possible use of properly selected and supervised private homes for the aged has also been discussed by the Committee on

the Aged, but as yet there is very little sentiment in favor of this approach. It is hoped that through an educational procedure it will be possible to convince a sufficient number in our functional groups to enable us to try the experiment.

Volunteer work has continued to receive stimulation. The Big Sister organization, which is affiliated in function with the family agency, the Jewish Social Service Bureau, has acquired a supervisor for its work and the Big Brother organization, which has had a director for some time, has instituted, in cooperation with the other agencies, a conference plan whereby the volunteer workers and the case workers are brought together and their efforts are focused on a given case. This organization is also affiliated in function with the family agency.

In addition to the Big Brother and Big Sister work, the Federation office itself, through its functional groups, is now in the process of developing volunteer service in such fields as visitation to the state and city institutions, centralized motor service for the use of various agencies, assistance in research work in the Federation office, etc.

Jewish education has steadily been gaining ground in Cleveland. This cannot only be determined from the financial trend which is indicated by the campaign results of the Bureau of Jewish Education, but may also be discerned from the extension and intensification of the activities of the Bureau, organized about two and one-half years ago by the Federation.

The campaign result of 1925 was \$42,000, of 1926 was \$62,000, and of 1927 was \$85,000. Although this is

a definite gauge of progress in the financial support of Jewish education by the community, the Bureau has by no means realized the amount needed for its extensive program. The Bureau of Jewish Education has been fostering, through the Cleveland Hebrew School and Institute, twelve daily afternoon Hebrew schools, and through the Council of Jewish Women, about seven one-day-a-week religious schools. In addition, the Jewish Teachers' Institute has been reorganized on a community basis for the purpose of training teachers in the field of Jewish education. Through the Extension Education Department of the Bureau, holiday celebrations have been conducted and adult classes in Jewish subjects organized. In addition, the Extension Department of the Bureau has provided facilities for Jewish educational instruction to a number of our social agencies. In general, the Bureau has been a potent influence in stimulating a desire for Jewish education in its various fields.

The relationship of the Bureau to Federation is a matter of importance and involves consideration of a fundamental aspect in Jewish community organization; and I trust that a slight digression to develop briefly this point will be pardoned. The Bureau is not an affiliated agency of the Federation. It was organized by the Federation, receives its moral support, and in the last campaign the Federation co-operated with the Bureau by putting at its disposal those members of the Federation Auxiliary Board (financial supplementary body of the Federation) who wished

to co-operate in the project. Of course, initially the Bureau was not made part of the Federation set-up because of the Community Fund relationship. The Bureau of Jewish Education co-operates whole-heartedly with the Federation's various functional groups in their activities. But the fact that the Bureau is not a member of the Federation family of agencies is, in the opinion of the writer, a fundamental defect in organization.

The existence of a situation of this nature creates a differentiation between a "federation of philanthropy" and a "federation of education." In the light of a positive approach to Jewish communal welfare which implies an all-inclusive approach to Jewish community life in all of its manifestations, be it that of philanthropy, social welfare, religion and culture—one that presupposes a functioning on the plane of positive values rather than restriction to negative ones, including in addition to cure and prevention, all-around enrichment in the realm of the normal as well as in the sphere of the abnormal—this situation is not only theoretically unsound but practically fallacious. The fundamental justification of Jewish social work as Jewish, supplementing general social work, is derived from the consideration of Jewish social service as an expression of Jewish community life. Considered from this point of view, activities in the realm of the normal, such as Jewish education and recreation, must not only be an integral part of a Federation set-up with a functional as well as a financial mission, but should be considered as the backbone of its very ex-

istence. Social pathology alone cannot serve as a potent Jewish community integrator. With changing conceptions of responsibility for social welfare efforts, group survival value of so-called "philanthropy" is doubtful.

From the practical point of view, it is fallacious to include recreation, for instance, in Federation, and to exclude Jewish education. Problems of inter-relationship arise that would not otherwise be experienced if the proper integration of the Jewish community's communal activities was effected. In addition, there is an overlapping of effort, both financial and functional. Furthermore, by confining the field of the Federation to the non-educational realm, its effectiveness, even in its delimited field, begins to wane.

It appears that in Cleveland, where the positive approach is being fostered by Federation, this separation of Jewish education from the Federation set-up is not valid, and it is hoped attention will be given in the near future to a reorganization of the relationship which when effected will yield the greatest amount of benefit to both the communal functions involved and the community, as such.

In an attempt to place our social work program on a footing more appropriate to this general ideal expressed in preceding paragraphs, a course in Yiddish language and literature for all of our social workers was projected by the Federation during the past year. This course, which lasted about four months, was not successful, the social workers not being inclined to be very receptive to this type of approach. However, suffi-

cient discussion has been created with reference to the Jewish attributes in Jewish social work to result eventually in an organization of courses in Jewish background, possibly involving an approach more extensive than that of the linguistic one attempted.

PROGRESS IN BALTIMORE

BY H. JOSEPH HYMAN

BALTIMORE, much to the joy of Mencken and his disciples, and to the sorrow of the Chamber of Commerce, the real estate operators and the Rotarians, still retains some of the charm of former years. The march of progress is slow in Baltimore, except for an occasional new building in the heart of the city and the usual rows of uniform houses springing up in the new suburban sections. There was a time when parallel with these rows of ugly houses there sprang up numerous equally ugly building associations, but in the past few years, owing to a decline in the real estate market, they have fallen into disrepute, many having ceased raking in the bonuses. Baltimore, like its sister cities, claims to be the City of Homes, such as they are; it is in reality the City of Mortgages, just as real as the uniform boxes which pass for homes. Yet, everybody is contented. Baltimore has its beautiful city parks, its benevolent city bosses, its tasty crabs and oysters, and its beautiful residential districts restricted against Jews. The city continues to grow in population, and, according to the estimate of the Chamber of Commerce, should be in the million class within a decade. The Jewish community now numbers about sixty-five thousand, this being the estimate of the Bureau of Jewish Social Research.

In the field of social service, the efforts of Baltimore at progress has been the formation of a Community Fund, which, at the present time, is limited to the Protestant societies; the Catholics and Jews preferring at this time to finance and manage their own charities.

The Jewish social work was dominated for many years by a very devoted, capable and clever personality, in whom the community had the utmost faith and confidence. A great deal that has been done in Jewish social work in Baltimore during the past twenty-five years definitely bears the stamp of Louis H. Levin. With his passing away in 1923, there was left a void which has not been filled, even to the present day, and the necessary readjustment has been, as might be expected, quite difficult. Louis H. Levin, during his thirty years in the service of the Jewish community, has developed a number of individuals, who, as volunteers, are faithful to his ideas and ideals, and continue in the community service. That is especially true in the child-caring field, where perhaps the greatest progress has been made.

Towards the end of 1926, the community decided to take stock of itself and to call in the Bureau of Jewish Social Research to make a survey of every field of social service. The survey was begun in No-

vember, 1926, and finished in March, 1927. Five volumes, as large as the five books of Moses, are the records of the survey, comprising reports on Family Welfare, Child-Care, Health, Jewish Education and Recreation and Community Organization. Efforts in carrying out the recommendations of the surveyors to date has been limited to those activities which required immediate attention—on the one hand, the child-caring problem, and on the other, the care of the aged. This extreme, from childhood to old age, was decided upon because of certain peculiar conditions. Even before the survey had been determined upon, the child-care situation gave us much concern. Ten years ago the community had embarked upon the placing out of children in foster homes, at first limiting the placement to normal children, and later including certain problem cases. At the time of the survey, one hundred and seventy-five children were so placed, as against forty-five children cared for in the institution named "Levindale," in memory of Louis H. Levin. In planning the institution (built in 1922), the method of care was centered about diagnosis and observation, and the keystone of the plant was the Diagnostic Cottage, where the child was first admitted, examined and observed by psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers for a period of time until a permanent placement could be made, employing the observations of the study made in the Diagnostic Cottage as the basis for placement. After several years of trial, this method was found wanting. It was learned that diagnosis, after all, is not a one-time or a short-time

study, but is a continuous process which can be and must be carried on even after the child is so-called "permanently placed." It was found, too, that having normal children admitted for the sake of diagnosis, in one part of the plant, at the same time having problem children in another building on the grounds, these children meeting on a common playground and attending school together, and especially since the problem cases predominated, there was a real menace to the normal children who came into close and frequent contact with the problem children. The placement in boarding homes, therefore, was the alternative, and as a result, the institution which was planned to care for seventy-five to one hundred and twenty-five children proved to be too large and too costly.

On the other hand, in the care of the aged, the survey focused the attention of the community upon a very bad situation with reference to a particular institution that cared for about eighty old people, this institution being inadequate to the extent of being a menace to the health and safety of the inmates. As difficult as it is to give up a new institution that had cost close to a half-million dollars, that is just the thing the Jewish Children's Society of Baltimore had the courage to do, and today Levindale, with the exception of the Diagnostic Cottage, is being used for the care of aged people. At the present writing, only sixteen children are cared for in the institution, and by September 1st this number will be reduced to perhaps ten or twelve, when a house in the country will probably be rented for their care. Such, at least, is our