

## SOCIAL CHANGE AND THE JEWISH CENTER \*

by MORRIS LEVIN

*Director, Bernard Horwich Center, The Jewish Community  
Centers of Chicago, Illinois*

ALL discussions of change note its rapidity and intense character. Such discussions can lead us to a feeling of being a straw in the wind unable to follow a course which we will determine. The truth of the vastness of change cannot be denied. It probably is not helpful for us to speculate that the advent of nitroglycerin may have had in its age as substantial and as emotional an influence as the atomic bomb, and the release from Victorian restraints was as significant a psychological development in its day as the meaning of the motor car in our day, and that the current race for scientific enlightenment could be compared to the Renaissance after the Middle Ages. All such relative comparisons become meaningless because they did not occur to us. Therefore, in our day, we take the position that change has been more radical, more rapid, and more omnipresent than at any other time in history.

Faced with such cataclysmic change, we may refuse really to accept its total significance and resort only to that with which we are familiar. Disregarding the need for new methods and new principles to face the realities of social change today we may revert to the old formulae.

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Social change certainly is the result of more than one force. The interaction of economics and politics is a significant cause in determining the direction of social change. How the individual influences or is influenced by these forces is crucial to understanding how society is or can be modified. We can well say that the kind of people there are in a society will help to determine whether the bomb is used for peace or war, whether automation is used for the mass welfare or the small group, and whether the population explosion is regarded as a reason for the broader dissemination of the wealth of the "have nations," or not.

To this extent the Center must look to its specific function and beyond. Society as a whole is a consequence of *interacting* forces. Action is the fundamental requirement.

We do not assume as our responsibility the preparation of individuals for the society as we currently see it today. To do this would be to prepare individuals for constrictive living, for subservience, for meaningless drudgery, for faith without meaning, and for a pleasure-bound existence awaiting the day of destruction. It is rather, our responsibility to help individuals grow; to change the society of which we are currently a part; to reflect common human values; to establish a universe of morality; to

find meaning in life and in faith; and to feel a sense of common destiny with our fellow men.

We now look at various social problems to see what the Jewish community center can do in relation to them. One of the first things we need to do is to review our own feelings about permissive child-rearing that is deliberately assumed rather than resulting from parental withdrawal or default.

Current evidence indicates that the nature of child rearing determines the kind of adults we have. Some studies indicate that the permissively raised child tends to be more independent, more creative, and more spontaneous in his relationships with others. Additionally, studies across cultures indicate that there are personality attributes significantly dependent on the severity of climate, the severity of parental authority, and the abundance of food, these factors even affecting the nature of the economic system of that society to an extent.

A problem in Jewish community center practice has been its growing preoccupation with "limits" as they apply to the relationship of Center staff to membership, replacing the former emphasis on the giving of support and affection. We are also beginning to place a much greater emphasis on product than on process; on content rather than providing opportunities for relaxation. We are also very concerned about whether those whom we attract are the status-people and we have some strong feelings that we should be serving the status-people. Further, we tend to support the posture characteristic of some adults in the community that the children are spoiled and overindulged. This very often takes the form of envy of the child who has the good car or who goes on vacations to Mexico, and of other attributes of middle-class status. If we really understood that the classically

overindulged child is really the rejected child, we would begin to see that the need for love and affection is really the more prevalent need of our society today. To some degree overindulgence is partial neglect and partial rejection. The answer in Jewish community center practice would seem to be an increasing emphasis on giving affection and warmth and helping people to feel a capacity to solve their problems and to gain a creative view of life.

Many contemporary educators state that they cannot possibly conceive of the kind of curriculum that should be designed now in order to prepare people for the future. They say this because the complexity of knowledge that will be required in the future seems to be beyond our comprehension to grasp at this time. If such indeed be the case, then it would follow that the only thing for which we really can educate is the capacity to solve problems. It would therefore seem that a child-rearing practice which helped children to develop a sense of inquiry and a sense of dedication to the solution of problems and tasks would be most appropriate in view of these questions about education and the uncertainty about the society of twenty or thirty years hence.

Sociologists, psychologists, and psychiatrists have said about the nuclear family that the absence of grandparents, aunts, uncles, and extended family groupings deprives the individual child of relationships with significant adults. If such indeed be the case, then collateral adults in the form of group leaders, teachers, social workers, executive directors, and a whole series and range of people in the educational and informal educational and recreational fields become important as collateral adults in the life of the individual child.

Further, if the concern of the psychologist and sociologist is that personal

relatedness and identity were once more securely worked out when the nuclear family was more securely anchored in a kin network, we certainly should be providing reinforcing experiences in primary group experience. Since the nuclear family provides opportunities for relationships with very few people, here again more group experience would seem to be necessary to support and enrich the nuclear family.

One of the other major problems of our time is sex education. While for some time we were seemingly released from the restrictions of Victorian morality, it would seem that we are now very concerned as to whether sex has run away with us. Studies indicate earlier marriages, more instances of premarital intercourse, and a general acceleration of co-ed relationships. We have seen severe personality problems caused by sex frustrations of various kinds. The preference we had for freedom and frankness seems now to be clouded by all kinds of hidden reservations. It even reaches the point that a university professor is dismissed because he states the obvious fact that premarital intercourse is on the increase and that any intelligent young adult should understand and be prepared for this.

In the Jewish community, our concern about sex education is extended by the fears we have regarding intermarriage, both in courtship dating and in marriage itself. We do not really seem ready to discuss this question frankly and honestly with our members. We have very often used the standard answers that interfaith marriages don't work and that statistics have shown that homogeneity of marriage has more chance of success. If this approach is not effective, we then raise the issue of "well, it may be all right for you, but what about the children?" Certainly if we assume that only neurotic drives are involved in in-

termarriage, we neglect the obvious reality that it is very possible for two mature people of different backgrounds to live happily together, each respecting the other's and his own faith or with both merging faiths. The more important part of this problem is the Center's ability to face this question openly, to discuss it honestly, and to help people deal with the real questions and real feelings that they have.

Another major social problem stems from the increase in the number of working mothers. Also, the upper middle-class father spends more time at work than his lower middle-class counterpart who is salaried. Both mother and father are out of the home for a greater amount of time. The Center, the school and other institutions in fact are partial parental replacements and do assist in child rearing. Excessive parental absenteeism may be accompanied by some emotional deprivation. Emotional deprivation cannot be answered by the setting of limits. This is another social phenomenon which creates a need requiring an increasing capacity of the Center and of staff to give warm affectional responses to people.

There is abundant evidence that work provides limited gratification to the majority of working people. They feel a sense of social futility. What, then, can be the role of the Center in meeting this social problem? We could be helping people to determine the kinds of things in which they are interested and from which they can derive some sense of satisfaction and accomplishment. As we work with individuals and groups in this direction, we will be planting the seed for a future self-determination which is based on recognized capacity and satisfaction. This can be done both through a self-determining process for people who are met with the challenge of achieving skills at progressive levels

so that persons wishing to pursue interests might progress from stage to stage to relatively high points of achievement. We can encourage these people by helping them identify the nature of the skills they have so that they can feel some security and satisfaction and then may be able to utilize such skills in the selection of an occupation.

We note the problems of bigness in our contemporary society and the problems of the corporation man. The Jewish community center is, in our day, another big corporation. We have a big building with a big program and a big bureaucracy. The informality of the small Center is lost and the Center really becomes the cafeteria where you buy the kind of service that you want rather than a membership organization to which you belong.

All the more, small groups with their intense personal relationships and greater warmth and affection become mandatory to offset the coldness of the big building. In fact, we should be helping people to break through the bureaucratic bonds of the Center. This, of course, would upset and disturb our administrative structure and functioning but would be extremely helpful to staff and to the membership.

Self-determining groups are of critical importance to give people the feeling that they can influence big bureaucracy rather than be over-awed by its size, complexity, complicated personnel and administration machinery. Our object, then, in the Jewish community center, as well as in the larger society, is to reduce the bigness that the individual sees around him to a size with which he can cope.

Another social phenomenon is the increase in leisure time. Certainly more thought should be given to a "participative" rather than to a "spectator" type of leisure activity. This follows from the decreasing interest of people

in their jobs, jobs which in their judgment have limited social utility and the obvious need in our contemporary society for a creative approach to life rather than a mere following of routines and formal procedures. The Jewish community center must favor in its arts programs an artistic expression by numbers which is abstract and which is at least the product of the individual's own thought and feeling rather than their painting by the numbers.

If, as we have noted, the occupational life of individuals is becoming less meaningful to them, then a greater portion of professional attention should be devoted to helping them develop avocational interests through hobbies of various kinds. Such hobbies should not be permitted to rest at the low elementary level but should be carried as far as the Center's instructional staff can take them. Another question in the provision of leisure-time activities relates to physical exercise. The President's Committee has noted the severe problem caused by inadequate physical fitness of young people who are inducted into military service. Our big bureaucratic society creates "paper exercise" rather than "physical exercise." The Jewish community center, together with other institutions in the American community, must place an emphasis on physical activity, not merely of a competitive kind but rather of the kind that can be carried through in later life. Therefore, we should be giving more attention to the kinds of activities that middle-aged men and women can continue to enjoy and from which they can derive physical benefit.

It is very easy to fall into the current pattern of condemning the organization man. The dilemma of individual versus group is not resolved by hope alone. As our organizations have increased in complexity, and interdependence has become a necessity, both teamwork and collec-

tive agreement are requisites for fulfilling organizational purpose. The excesses which cause the concern are not the fact of the organization's committee decisions themselves but the kind of process whereby deference to status and anxiety permit committee decisions to be corrupted by the most vocal or most prestigious person, and by the default of the timid. Social science research supports the conclusion that often more efficient and more creative decisions are made by the individual rather than the committee. Also substantial recognition has been given to the failure at implementation of decisions arrived at in the group or committee, because the committee members did not feel fully part of the decision that was made. Of course not everyone can be equally instrumental in, and feel equally a part of, a decision. It becomes a challenge, therefore, to strive for the "integrated decision" rather than mere compromise. In order to achieve this, all participants must be accepted as equals.

The role of the creative person and independent thinker has been highly valued. Without doubt these persons will continue to demonstrate their uniqueness. We would like to have it both ways. We want the gift of genius and the cooperation of common agreement. We do not need to make a choice between these but rather to create the opportunity for both to flourish and if possible to provide for interaction between them.

The challenge is to make real the premise that the Center belongs to the community and that it respects each person's integrity and uniqueness. We need to maximize the opportunities and powers of membership to make decisions on matters which concern them. On the other hand, programs geared to highly individualized needs should also be encouraged and supported. As Center workers we are "corporation men,"

bound by our narrow day-to-day concerns, not seeing the forest for the trees. As we move outside the Center we may be able to see the "whole forest."

One of the most pressing concerns of center workers, educators and other persons in the field of human relations is the so-called "valueless society" of today. We can only intellectually accept an anthropological concept of relative values. In our religio-humanist-democratic society we stake our beliefs and define our goals in the fundamentals of Jewish faith, the Declaration of Independence, the Emancipation Proclamation, the Four Freedoms, and so forth. What has happened to this morality? There are those who would say it is only inspirational material for speeches and others who would hold we are closer to its implementation today than ever before. We favor the latter view although at times we must strain to see and believe it.

In Center practice we seem to be moving toward a teaching approach to values, and even a preaching approach. Neither will be effective. Center staff and board must live values. In small group practice we know that these values must be experienced by the member rather than be talked about, and insofar as possible the member must attempt to re-evaluate his society in the light of his experiences and then to make a choice. We can decry the immorality of lying to children, of cheating on expense accounts, of valuing things rather than people, of racial discrimination, and so on. Such breast-beating does not result in action change.

We are moving to a "leadership role" and to a "judgmental role" which are foreign to social work practice. If we were more active ourselves and more certain of our own values we would have less need to judge others and direct others. The challenge in Center practice is to help people think through and experience things for themselves. This re-

quires a freedom to range beyond the conventional. It certainly means that the Center must have a free platform and that nothing which is a member's concern can be foreign to our concern: neither his ambivalence about being Jewish, his relationship to non-Jews (both white and colored), his belief or disbelief in religion, and other sensitive aspects of life.

We are ultra-sophisticated in our capacity to intellectualize and rationalize. We say there are no blacks and whites, there are only shades of grey. It seems to me there are blacks and whites which stem from our faith, from our democratic traditions and from our common humanity. They are basic values and should not be violated. Yet there seems no way to guarantee them in the hearts of men. Given man as he is, our job is to help him to see these things for himself. It is the function of others to press for a guarantee of these rights through law and collective action and we should support them. As citizens, we belong in the forefront of this movement. As professionals in a collective body, we have a responsibility for influencing the Jewish and general environment. As Center workers working with Center members, our role is less direct. Nowhere are our values more truly tried than in the area of respect for people regardless of their religious or racial difference. Currently our society is in a turmoil set off by the striving of the Negro for equality. Whether the character of our democracy is a melting pot or is one of cultural pluralism, there is need for the merging and interaction of peoples. Both require respect for the contributions of each and the capacity for all people to be absorbed within a general form.

In religious faith, the Herberg formulation of the parallelism of Catholic, Protestant and Jew has become widely accepted as a basis for the establishment

of many organizational forms that are designed to preserve the differences. Our task in the Jewish community center is different from that of a formal religious organization. Part of Center purpose is to provide opportunities for an understanding of people other than those of one's own faith, and that understanding must be sympathetic rather than competitive. This would challenge the reading of any religious belief as superior to or inferior to another religious belief. If such a proposition is accepted, then Center program should be doing much more in the area of helping people to understand their faith in relation to others. We present the Old Testament value system as superior to the New Testament value system. Some people adopt a position that social legislation has its origin in Old Testament and Rabbinic literature. The Jew has made a most significant contribution to the general civilization. Other faiths and ethnic groups also have contributed materially and substantially. The code of Hammurabi, the Sermon on the Mount, the protest of Martin Luther, and the thinking of Reinhold Niebuhr and Karl Barth in our own day have added to the social thought and legislation of our time.

We should be prepared to accept such an approach to living with others, understanding others and appreciating others in their difference. The Center program would need to reflect this approach. The implementation of such a program is not difficult to foresee. It does mean that adolescents and young adults who are striving to find their way are helped to see the roles of Judaism and of the other faiths as part of our universal civilization.

There are, of course, those for whom their Judaism is *more than right for them*. It is, in fact, the word of God and, as such, the word which the Jew

must bring to the other nations of the world. Those Jews who have a sense of mission to bring Judaism to the world will engage in a process of interchange with other people in an effort to influence them. Our greater concern should be for those who adopt an attitude of self-righteousness and superiority. They remain removed from the competitive stream of ideas, insulated and isolated from contact with others.

The functions noted reflect many questions about agency purpose. However, there is one more fundamental question that establishes itself particularly in today's climate and that is the question of the relationship of the white to the colored people. We are all familiar with the tremendous anxiety of our membership—or at least some of the most vocal parts of our membership—when a Negro sets foot into the building or goes swimming or in some way participates with other white children. We have been very tenuous and uncertain in our position. Those who stand on the platform that we are a Jewish agency and open only to Jews are at least honest in their approach. Other agencies accept Gentiles who are white without implementation of the policy that all non-Jews should understand the purpose of the agency. Upon the arrival of the first Negro applicant, we go through a lengthy process of discussion and make the matter a question for Board determination.

We cannot take a completely judgmental position on what is an obvious fact of today's society. The presence of two, four, ten, twenty, non-Jewish whites arouses little question among the membership of the Center. The presence of one or two Negroes evokes a considerable problem for the agency. In the current racial situation in this country, the Center cannot remain complacent. The Center has a responsibility along with all social organizations of this country to

help people to shed prejudice. We say we are concerned with the value systems of people and certainly their attitude toward other persons' religion and race is a value. This kind of value cannot be preached—it must be experienced. The obvious is suggesting such programs as bring people together. The role that Center leadership takes within the agency and outside the agency will assist in this process. The clarity of our membership policy and the opportunities that exist for others to participate is another way in which we can meet this situation.

A quotation from Kurt Lewin is often used to establish the purpose of the Center. Most often that quotation is never given fully. Lewin states that we must be certain of the ground on which we stand as a basis for our relationship with others. He also goes on to say that these are not two sequential steps and that the communication with others should be simultaneous with our establishment of our own identity.

It would be progress if we were to internalize in ourselves and build into our agency program not this either/or value, or first and then second value, but a combination of the two in a simultaneous process. There are, of course, those who say that some of these matters are dealt with by other institutions and, therefore the Center can restrict its role. If we are really convinced of the vitality of voluntary groupings and the significance of what is achieved through voluntary group association, we will adopt a much more purposeful view of what we do and we will see it in more than one dimension.

Within our own professional circles we are saying Jewish Center workers should have "Jewish commitment" and that our purpose as a Center institution is to enhance "Jewish commitment." There are multiple definitions of what

constitutes Jewish commitment. For ourselves as Center workers, working with others, we should be prepared to accept the statement from any of our members that "I am committed to Judaism because I am a Jew." Go further and say we accept from our membership the statement that "I am a Jew and sometimes I wonder why I am a Jew and what it means." We certainly accept all kinds of Jews. It is, of course, our major concern to determine how we translate our Jewish purpose into program. If, as previously suggested, this is done within the context of the general American culture, we stand the best chance for preserving a vital Jewish faith. Faith preserved with an aura of superiority or separated from the main stream of American culture can be no more than superficially meaningful to the majority of Jews. There is no question that it is possible for the "saving remnant" to preserve Judaism and to preserve it throughout the ages. The influence of the "saving remnant" on the lives of others has been substantial. The significance of that experience for the majority would be superficial and, in general, chauvinistic and isolationist.

What is proposed is a cross-fertilization of ideas in the religious realm as well as in the general social science and philosophical realms. There is substantial evidence of Jewish tradition being modified by the church culture. There are indications that Jewish thought has influenced Protestant and Catholic thinking. If we have conviction about our own belief in Judaism then we would seek to be willing to share and communicate with others. Further, as we talk about the evolution of Judaism we must look to see how it can evolve. As we search around the world and look to see the sources from which Judaism can be further enriched, we must certainly eliminate as prospects a major portion

of the world. The seats of Jewish learning that were once in Eastern Europe have been exterminated or are now being repressed. The isolation and fear of Jews in South Africa certainly does not make them an influence on world Judaism. An increasingly assimilationist trend in Western European Jewry holds little hope for the further enrichment of Jewish life. An obvious answer to some is Israel, but is this so? We are not really interchanging ideas with Israelis. What is being exported back and forth is the impression that Israelis are either atheists or ultra-orthodox and that Americans are either assimilationists or adherents to Judaism for social and philanthropic reasons. A real interchange between thinking people in Israel and the United States as to how they have adapted their Judaism to meet current life situations remains remote, yet it seems to be one area of hope.

The greatest source for the enrichment of Jewish life and Jewish faith, for American Jews, is the current evolution of the American tradition. Here, of course, I identify my own Judaism. I find more opportunity to give meaning to my Judaism out of the democratic traditions of this country, our concern for social justice, our concern for respect of other individuals regardless of their race or religion and our concern to make faith meaningful as a basis for interpersonal experience, than I find in the other societies which I have mentioned.

As Jews we can tie our American Jewish traditions to the Peace Corps theses; Maimonides' concept of helping others to help themselves to social work; the peace movement to Isaiah; the race relations problem to the treatment of the "stranger in thy gates;" the current search for knowledge to the ancient tradition of learning. What is developing in the upper class-structure of America is a concept of service as a responsibility



of the well-to-do. Such a concept is historical in Jewish life. This only covers a portion of significant developments of our time. At this time in world history Catholic individuals and institutions are speaking out on the race question, ministers are active in the peace movements, and all theologians are concerned with the social utility of ethical beliefs which are part of religious faith. Service to others is a part of the traditions of Unitarians and Quakers, and they are as well in the vanguard of the peace movement.

In concert with others, we can bring the full impact of moral judgment to bear on the problems which face us. It is in this sense that we speak of a creative survival of Judaism which contributes to, draws on and works in concert with the totality of those forces in the American civilization which strive for the improvement of the conditions of man in our time. The freedom of exchange of ideas in our society is increasing and the responsiveness of others to listen is increasing. There are notable examples of individuals who have substantially influenced each other . . . Martin Buber on the one hand, Karl Barth and Reinhold Niebuhr on the other hand.

This brings us back to the question of what we do about this within Center program. We have stated that we want to achieve the "creative survival of Judaism" in this country. Physical survival, of course, can be achieved by isolation and by rigidifying the in-group. By creative survival we mean reinterpretations and adaptations of tradition, responding to the societal dynamics of which we are part. Such a creative survival cannot come about without interchange and integration. The concept of reinterpretation can take place within a view that the Torah is God-given.

We will need to relate the significance

of the race-riots of today to our survival as a Jewish people. We will need to relate our survival as a Jewish people to the major social problems of which we are a part: the problems of automation, of anonymity, of bureaucracy, and so on. Creative survival would then mean an interactional process in all phases of life. It is our willingness for our Jewish tradition to interact with our American citizenship that will provide the answer as to how creative survival occurs.

Creative survival is not defined in such terms as the commissioning of Jewish works or the adaptations of games for the Jewish holidays, but rather in a form beyond this. Since our goal is helping Judaism to survive creatively in our culture, there must be a willingness to engage in a process of interaction with other elements of our culture.

In the final analysis we must determine what our end-goal is. It would seem that our end goal is the development of a human being. This human being is a Jew, an American, and a citizen of the world. I cannot place any of these as first. They are all of a piece.

Nothing has been more devastating about the development of the atomic bomb than the belief in the minds of people that they cannot control it. Its potential for destruction, its scientific complexity, and its control in the hands of a few specialists give the general population the feeling that it is beyond their capacity to do anything about it. Those who have conducted programs in Centers attempting to discuss the meaning of the bomb have found resistance to face the full significance of this question. We encounter a deep sense of impotence and helplessness.

Our function within the Center, therefore, must be to help people to feel that they can influence other people and events. There may be little apparent relationship between helping people feel

they can influence their day-to-day lives and their capacity to influence the bomb. Even assuming that one has no relationship with the other, we cannot avoid our responsibility which is to provide a basis for people to make the decisions which affect their lives. This certainly would reinforce the meaning of the decision-making process as central to our work.

As noted above, we seem to be moving away from the concept that enablement of the decision-making process is our central professional role and we are assuming a function of "leadership." Some assume that we can, through this leadership, show people the right way. On a day-to-day basis we must constantly work to help people to achieve and to influence; we must help people to overcome fears and to make the irrational, rational; we must enforce the feeling that collective effort is required in order to achieve significant results in our cultures; we must maintain the basic principle that there is no problem that cannot be discussed in the Jewish Center.

Specifically for the bomb itself, we must begin to help people to face the full implications of what it means. Although people cannot comprehend the scientific complexity of nuclear physics, they can comprehend the significance of what will happen if a bomb falls. Based on their knowledge as to what will happen, they would then be in a position to make decisions as to whether they would like this country to expose others to the death and devastation that would be involved and whether they wish to expose themselves to such death and devastation. In effect, we would then be saying that the nation would be in a better position to make its choice based on facts, not mere patriotic slogans, whether it would rather be "red or dead."

### Summary

In summary, then, what can the Jewish Center do about the social problems of which it is a part?

1. It can reinforce the individual's feeling of adequacy. It can give the individual through successful group experience a chance to feel his individual and collective power. It can, as it helps the individual member meet with and face other individuals, appreciate difference. All of these desirable ends are achievable within a process of interaction, a common purpose and a resultant cooperative effort. In very old terms, then, we are talking about groups composed of individuals working together. Nothing that has developed in our society today changes the need for and the effectiveness of this process. Rather, the need is reinforced.

2. The Center can continue to provide opportunities for individuals to experience a sense of mastery. Such a sense of mastery can relate itself to influencing the environment in very specific or general ways. In order for people to have such an experience there must, of course, be challenge and motivation. We know enough about motivation at this point to know that while it can be stimulated, it can also be inhibited. We know that inspirations for motivation can come from material rewards as well as from threats of punishment or deprivation. With all that we know about motivation we are, as an informal educational institution, committed to the selection of those means for stimulation and motivation which are most compatible with our general philosophical premises. I would submit, therefore, that our philosophic premise relies more on internalized motivation than it does on manipulated motivation.

3. If we accept the current reading of our society by many social philosophers

as to its bigness, its sense of isolation, and its lack of concern for the individual, then we must truly help people to experience warmth and affection both within the agency as an institution and within the groups of which they are a part. We will then rely much less on what seems to be a current trend in our thinking about interest groups that people "come for the achievement of the skill" and that they, therefore, should not be "group-worked." Nothing in the classical literature either in social group work or in progressive education, ever expressed the fact that a sense of mastery and achievement was to be underplayed. Such observations as have been made regarding individuals in the so-called interest groups leads us to believe that the socialization needs are as active here as elsewhere and that our Center program should be structured to take this into account and to provide for opportunities for people to experience each other as much as to experience the media.

4. It should be the function of the Center to develop a free and creative approach to life. This would mean that the world is our concern and that humanity is varied in its interpretations of life. We look to a resurgence of spontaneity.

5. Despite all of the dangers seen by some sociologists and some social philosophers in the group nature of our society, they cannot minimize the significance of cooperative effort as a fundamental requirement of our society. At least in this country, societal changes are achieved most effectively by cooperative engagement and by concerted group pressure. This is not to underestimate the significance of outstanding individuals in our time and we certainly would hope such persons will always be with us. We seem, however, to be ready to dispose of the emphasis on working

together, on committee decisions and on group readiness in favor of the rugged individualist type approach or some concept of benevolent, autocratic leadership. The major social problems of our day, however, require cooperative effort for their solution.

6. The Center as an institution can assist Jews in finding meaning in their Jewishness and in helping them to understand the relationship of their Judaism to the faiths of others and to their universal humanity. The discovery of contemporary meaning of Judaism as faith, morality, community, and goal for mankind is an essential task of our current Jewish community here and worldwide.

7. The Center through its board of directors and its institutional place in the community can do a different job by its interaction with other institutions of the community. In effect, the Center is more than the totality of the groups which are part of it, as a group is more than the sum total of its parts. In our current society there are very few Jewish institutions which are in the forefront in dealing with the social problems of our day. Some synagogues have begun to assume a more active role in this regard. Others remain entrenched in their isolation.

Also the Center professional is more than a member of the Center. He is a Jew, a citizen, a professional within his field, and a Center worker. Within any of these roles what he does in one capacity has significance for his function in the other and casts its influence on the community, on the membership of the Center, and on the society of which he is a part. It seems that our day requires an active functioning of the Center worker within all the dimensions of life of which he is a part. Not because he should act as a leadership person, thereby showing the way to others, but

that to expect others to function in these dimensions, we should expect no less from ourselves.

The tasks proposed are a challenge to us and to our current society. Effective Center practice can make a contribution to our day-to-day life. Pursuing these objectives underpinned by the social philosophical concepts that are part

of the Center's fabric as well as being part of the fabric of other helpful, useful, social, democratic institutions can materially assist in the creation of an atmosphere in which individual personality will flourish and in laying a base for diminishing our fears and anxieties through efforts that strive to improve our society.