

SECTARIANISM IN THE AMERICAN SOCIETY TODAY; IMPACT ON JEWISH COMMUNAL SERVICES *

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BEN HALPERN, in an incisive analysis, ventured to predict that the Jewish community would swiftly stop concerning itself about the proper limits of sectarianism and non-sectarianism and talk and act as if it were truly on a par with Catholic or even Protestant America, if it did three things: (1) take pride in extending under its own sectarian auspices services explicitly designed as non-sectarian; (2) welcome public support for Jewish services; and (3) take a firm stand on general political issues.¹ In fact, the Jewish community has done all three.

The Jewish community does take pride in the fact that many of its services are being extended to non-Jews. Just as an example, I cite Jewish hospitals or, if you like, Ben Halpern's Brandeis University. As for claiming public support, the question is not so much, should the Jewish community do so, as, is it being too avid. And certainly, in recent years, there has been an increasing willingness to take public stands quite vigorously on issues of broad public concern—legislative reapportionment and the establishment of a

Department of Urban Affairs are but two recent examples.

To be sure, Dr. Halpern qualified his prediction with the phrase, "if the whole Jewish community were united in support of all three" propositions; and such complete unity does not now exist. But neither is there total agreement among Protestants or even among Catholics on these questions. The differences between Southern Baptists and more "liberal" Protestant denominations on acceptance of public funds, for example, are as sharp as any within the Jewish community, and on the question of taking stands on political issues, Cardinal Cushing of Boston and Los Angeles' Cardinal McIntyre are as far apart as the two shores of the continent that separate them. Not just Jews, but Catholics and Protestants as well, will continue, perhaps even more intensely than now, to be concerned about the proper limits of sectarian effort. For our preoccupation with this question is, in fact, less related to our heritage from a millennial Jewish experience than it is to the evolution of the American society.

I am in complete accord with Ben, however, when he says that the argument over sectarianism is not going to be settled on clean ideological lines, that we can only deal with the issues pragmatically. The fact is that nearly all issues of Jewish communal organization

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¹ Ben Halpern, "Sectarianism and the Jewish Community," *this Journal*, Vol. XLII, No. 1 (1965), pp. 6-17.

in American Jewish experience have been resolved pragmatically, rather than ideologically. To find a pragmatic solution to the issue before us now, however, we need to examine not only the forces that impinge on the Jewish communal services and on the Jewish community generally but those larger contending forces that are shaping the patterns of sectarianism in the whole society.

When the agencies that were the precursors of our present network of Jewish communal services were created, they were wholly, simply and uncomplicatedly sectarian. Their sponsorship, their financing, their clientele, their personnel—all—were Jewish, and completely so. To the leaders of any of those agencies, talk about nonsectarian intake or membership would have been incomprehensible. Questions about outside financial support would have seemed equally *in der velt arein*. Jews took care of their own, not because of the pact with Peter Stuyvesant but because Jewish tradition demanded it.

The sectarian character of those early Jewish agencies mirrored the pattern of philanthropic and welfare services generally. Under the then prevailing economic philosophy, government assumed no direct concern for the economic security of the individual, his health problems or his leisure. These were strictly matters to be dealt with by voluntary effort and in almost all instances such effort was under church or sectarian auspices.

Jewish agencies were designed to serve Jews, to ease and speed their economic and social adjustment into the new world, to meet their needs for health, welfare and recreational services. That the services would be provided in a Jewish setting and environment was taken for granted.

It was also taken for granted that the beneficiaries of these services would re-

main identified with the group; that their bonds of Jewish identification should require strengthening was not accorded much thought. Nevertheless, there was a duality of purpose, namely, to help the individual achieve integration into the general society and, at the same time, to preserve the cohesiveness and distinctive character of the group. There was also a correlative duality of purpose, namely, to help the individual achieve status and security for himself and, by so doing, minimize hostility against the group, enhance its status and security and hasten its acceptance into the mainstream of American life. These dualities of purpose have characterized Jewish welfare services throughout American history, the relative emphases shifting from time to time in response to shifting societal forces.

Especially powerful influences are being exerted today upon the character of sectarian services and, indeed, upon the nature and place of self-identifying groups in our society. These influences are both internal to the groups and external to them, and they include pulls both toward separatism and toward integration.

Internally, acculturation to the American milieu has, for all practical purposes, eliminated the once jealously fostered distinctions between central European and eastern European Jews. The diminishing threat of anti-Semitism and the realization of major Zionist goals through the establishment of the State of Israel have shorn defense activity and Zionism of their formerly potent appeals for identification and affiliation.

Today, the American Jewish community is increasingly a native-born third and fourth generation community, a Jewish community that is the product of the American educational system and that feels integrally a part of the American culture, a community whose pat-

terms of speech, dress, work and play are hardly distinguishable from those of its non-Jewish neighbors, a mobile community that has advanced economically and dispersed itself geographically into the suburbs of middle class America. It is, nonetheless, a community that is ever mindful of its minority status and that seeks constantly to surmount the remaining barriers that continue to prevent its full acceptance into the mainstream of American society.

This same process of homogenization and acculturation has operated in some degree to lessen the distinctive and separatist characteristics of all sectarian groups. Moreover, the increasing pervasiveness of the mass media of communications and of other aspects of our mass culture, the gathering momentum of the drive to extend America's egalitarian principles into ever widening areas of community life, the spread and growing strength of ecumenism, and the diminishing power of doctrinal differences to move and excite—all these constitute pressures toward conformity, pressures that bear upon the whole society, Protestant, Catholic and Jew alike.

On the other hand, the same and related influences have contributed to what has come to be called the "identity crisis" in contemporary life—the product of the increasing complexity of our automated, soon to be computerized, society in which the assertion of individuality becomes increasingly difficult. Alienation is the cultural climate of our time and the search for personal identity the predicament of modern man. Under these pressures, the individual looks with increasing nostalgia for a return to tradition or at least for some emotional identification with a group that embodies the continuance of a tradition.

Among Jews, this pull toward group identification is augmented by a number

of unifying forces unique to our own experience. In recent history, such forces have been exerted most dramatically by the sense of shared agony aroused by Hitler and the sense of shared pride aroused by the creation and achievements of the state of Israel. But other less arresting forces also have been at work: a continuing, if no longer overt anti-Semitism, some residual anti-Jewish discriminations, and a nagging skepticism about the Christian readiness to accept Jews as equals in all senses.

The desire to escape from anomie into group identification has given impetus to and in turn has been reinforced by a gradual trend away from the "melting pot" conception of America toward the theory of the pluralistic society. Under the pluralistic concept, American culture tends to be perceived as the result of the interplay among the various religious, cultural and other organized groups comprising the society, each pursuing its distinctive interests and values within a basic structure that guarantees freedom to all. It is precisely this interplay that distinguishes American pluralism from the Swiss or Canadian variety. The goal of the latter is an amicable relationship among essentially separate cultural enclaves; by contrast, under the concept of American pluralism, cultural norms and patterns emerge from the interaction, indeed from the competition and conflict, among the many group values and group purposes that characterize our plural society.

It would be an overstatement to say that we have substituted a pluralistic concept for the earlier melting pot theory. Rather, the two concepts have been fused and the goal is *both* to afford all members of the society an equal opportunity to participate fully and freely in all aspects of the life of the society, without regard to group affiliation, *and*, at the same time, to foster

conditions that will encourage creative group living.

A synthesis and harmonious blending of these two goals is the aim, explicit or implicit, of every Jewish communal service. Even so forthrightly a sectarian service as Jewish education has as a part of its rationale that the Jewish youth who is secure within his own group will be able to establish more satisfactory relationships with youth of other groups. This is also one of the basic assumptions underlying Jewish center work. Conversely, an agency as focused on the individual client and his personal needs as the Jewish family service rationalizes its casework services in part as "a conserving force for Jewish survival."

Thus, the duality of purpose remains, as it was in the beginning, to achieve a balance between group solidarity and good intergroup relationships, to help the individual with his problems of personal adjustment, but also, thereby, to enhance the status and welfare of the group. There have been marked changes, however, in the relative emphases given to these dual aims. At the risk of oversimplifying a complex and ambiguous relationship, it might be said that whereas in the earlier period, the Jewish group established services primarily to help the individual, the primary reason for the services today is to strengthen the group by furthering the identification of the individual with the group; less to enhance the participation of Jews in the general life of the community (processes of acculturation have carried that far along) and more to enhance their participation in and ties to the Jewish community.

Where to strike the balance between these two goals of integration and distinctive separatism is a problem for every sectarian group. Traditionally, Catholics, to a greater degree than other sects, have encouraged participation

through Catholic institutions in order to maintain the cohesiveness of the group. Under the liberating spirit of "aggiornamento," Catholics have begun to participate in common undertakings with other groups to a greater degree than ever before; some have had the temerity to suggest that the smaller Catholic colleges go out of business and even to question the worth of the parochial school system. Nevertheless, the emphasis continues to be overwhelmingly in the direction of separate Catholic enterprise and activity.

Under the melting pot concept, Protestants were content to foster non-sectarian enterprises and services since they assumed that there was a complete identity between their own cultural attributes and those characterized as "American." Today, in response to the challenge of pluralism, the growth of Catholic power and, to a lesser degree, the evolution toward an organized Jewish community, Protestant sects have begun to demonstrate minority group characteristics and to look increasingly for means of specifically Protestant expression. Ecumenism is proceeding not only as between Protestants and Catholics but also, and at a more rapid pace, among the various denominations within Protestantism itself.

A recent Gallup poll on attitudes towards religious influence on American life contained the following results: (1) The percentage of those who see religion losing influence has more than tripled since 1957; (2) Whereas eight years ago 69 percent fancied religious influence to be on the rise, this figure has now slumped to 33 percent; (3) The judgment is harshest of all from university students—of whom 62 percent find religious influence faltering.

With the illusion of a great religious renaissance now firmly erased—there is good evidence that even at its height the revival was more social than theological

—all institutionalized religions, in an effort to maintain the cohesiveness and unity of their adherents, increasingly have been conducting activities under their own auspices that in the past represented avenues for interreligious contact and relationships. It is estimated, for example, that 50 percent of all Boy Scout troops today are under sectarian sponsorship and other equally striking evidences of the growing trend towards faith segregation could easily be cited.

Many forces will influence the course of developments. Two that are now exerting major effects and will continue to do so are the massive sums of public money being channeled into welfare services and the revolution for racial equality.

The sharing of health and welfare responsibilities by government and private philanthropy is of course of long standing, a natural resultant of the sectarian origins of the field discussed earlier and of the gradual evolution towards a welfare state. In this, as in so many other respects, the American way is a pragmatic way, less a product of logic or consistency than of history.

Whatever qualms existed earlier about permitting Jews to become public charges, or about accepting public money to finance Jewish communal services, were dissipated—or perhaps it would be more accurate to say overwhelmed—by the Great Depression of the 1930's, when Jewish needs inundated Jewish resources. And, in the course of time, as Jews became more integrated and gained a greater sense of security as part of American society, the earlier anxieties tended to disappear. For some time now we have been as receptive to offers of public funds as have other sectarian groups.

The guidelines that were evolved to rationalize the relationship between Jewish health and welfare services and those under public and non-sectarian

auspices reflected the duality of purpose described earlier. In general it might be said that we undertook to

1. Advocate and support the development of public services.
2. Experiment, innovate and provide demonstrations of desirable programs by way of elevating the quality and standards of service in both public and non-sectarian agencies.
3. Meet those needs of Jews that were uniquely Jewish or that required uniquely Jewish treatment or atmosphere.
4. Meet those more general needs of Jews that were not being served or were being inadequately served by other agencies, public or non-sectarian.
5. Contribute to the general welfare, including appropriate services to non-Jews, as a means of discharging Jewish group obligation to the society at large. This was seen as serving the purpose of furthering integration and also as nurturing a favorable public image of the Jewish group.

Over the years, these rationalizations have stood the test of validity rather well. But today we confront not a changing situation so much as a changed situation. Not only has there been a dizzying acceleration in public expenditures for health and welfare. More significant as a predictive factor than the trend itself is the changed conformation of the public opinion that supports it.

There has been a major breakthrough in that realm, producing a broad national consensus in which a general acceptance of Keynesian economic theories has brought a major portion of the business community into concurrence on the proposition that government outlays for welfare services, including deficit financing, are not only justified to transform "tax-eaters" into "tax-payers" but in-

deed are necessary to stimulate economic growth. This is a fairly revolutionary development, which in one swoop comes close to demolishing "laissez-faire" economics and Calvinistic identification of poverty with sloth and sinfulness.

For evidences of its consequences, one need look no further than the succession of welfare measures that have been enacted by Congress, with overwhelming bipartisan majorities, in recent months. Neither prophetic insight nor a gambler's recklessness is required, in these circumstances, to predict for the future—as examples—medicare coverage not only for the aged, a trebling or more of the federal funds provided for education (which has grown in giant gulps from \$276 million in 1960 to well over a billion in 1966), enormous increases in the anti-poverty campaign, greater and greater outlays for public housing, slum clearance and urban renewal, and upwardly spiraling expenditures for health services of all kinds, vocational education and rehabilitation, treatment of the mentally ill and the mentally retarded, and so on and so on. The Department of Health, Education and Welfare is the newest federal department of cabinet rank. In the ten years of its existence, expenditures coming under its jurisdiction have grown so rapidly that they are now second only to those of the Defense Department. Current federal expenditures for health, education and welfare exceed the combined expenses for these purposes of all levels of government ten years ago.

A similar prediction can be made in regard to state and local governments, most of whose budgets today are dominated by welfare items. Moreover, as reapportionment gives urban areas in which welfare needs are the greatest larger influence in state legislatures and in the Congress, an acceleration of the trend can confidently be expected.

Not only the magnitude but the char-

acter of governmentally-sponsored and supported services has undergone radical change. Public programs are no longer directed only to the relief of the indigent but reach into areas of prevention and amelioration that formerly were regarded as the domain of voluntary services almost exclusively. When the Department of Health, Education and Welfare was established in 1954 72 percent of its budget, excluding OASI, went to states for the needy and destitute. Today, despite the enormous increase in HEW's budget, less than half goes for such purposes. Research and demonstration, long the hallmark of private agencies, today are carried on either directly by public agencies or with government financing on a scale never approached by the private field.

The resultant blurring of former lines of demarcation of public and private responsibilities is accentuated for us by the diminishing demands upon our agencies for services uniquely Jewish in nature or directed toward uniquely Jewish problems. The declining number of observing Orthodox Jews has sharply reduced demands for kosher food or religious observance as aspects of institutional care. In their choice of hospitals and nursing homes, Jews, like others, are likely to give greater weight to such considerations as quality of service, geographical proximity and attendance by a personal physician, than to the sectarianism of the institution. With the growing emphasis on home care for the aged, the age of admission to institutional homes for the aged has risen, and ever larger percentages of the residents are sick and infirm, patients rather than residents. Large scale institutional care for children is virtually a thing of the past. The whole issue of sectarian institutional atmosphere thus tends to become increasingly moot.

Discrimination against Jewish doctors and against Jewish job-seekers, long

cited as part of the rationale for Jewish hospitals and Jewish vocational services, is no longer a serious problem and, under the impact of the civil rights revolution, may be expected to decline even further in the years ahead. Jews in need of casework, counselling or psychiatric services are less and less concerned that the services be under Jewish auspices.

Paralleling these developments has been a steady decline in the proportion of Jewish agency budgets provided by Jewish philanthropy. In 1963, according to the 1964 *Yearbook of Jewish Social Service*, 207 reporting institutions and agencies obtained only 6.5 percent of their aggregate operating receipts (which totaled over \$335 million) from Jewish federations or welfare funds—and some part of this was community chest money included in lump sum grants to the central Jewish funding agency.

Conversely, income from public funds has been rising steadily and in 1963 totaled approximately double the amount provided by federations and welfare funds. The rise is especially notable in the case of child care agencies, 49 percent of whose income represented public money in 1963, compared with 25 percent in 1950; and homes for the aged, which relied on public funds to the extent of less than 6 percent in 1950, against more than 18 percent in 1963. Even in the case of family services, traditionally perhaps the most "private" of welfare activities, government participation in financing of Jewish agencies rose from seven-tenths of one percent in 1950 to nearly 5 percent in 1963—a proportional increase of some 500 percent. And under the recently enacted aid to education bill, Jewish day schools may, too, become beneficiary agencies.

While these have been statistics of Jewish agency income, the experience has been much the same for other sectar-

ian groups. Not long ago, the National Lutheran Council pondered what the executive director of its division of welfare called the effects of "the creeping tendency to become a welfare state." He observed that only about 15 percent of the money spent in 1962 by Lutheran social service agencies came from church sources, most of the rest being government money in one form or another. These figures did not include Lutheran hospitals. Had they been included, they would have overbalanced the statistics almost ludicrously, the executive said. He concluded that "the state may well squeeze the church out of its traditional role in welfare . . . that which is unique about church-related welfare must be recognized and strengthened." He saw no solution—but he did raise the issue as one for the Lutherans to confront in terms of their conception of the purpose of their welfare programs, which he characterized as "recognizing deeper needs and ministering understandingly to them because the love of Christ constrains us."

It would be disingenuous to suggest that the steady increase in public income does not carry with it a correspondingly increased public accountability by the recipient agencies. Stipulations requiring a non-sectarian policy, assignment of specific clientele, standards of operation, etc., may influence not only the sectarian aspects of agency program but its basic direction and control. Indeed, some limitation on control is explicit in every grant of public money; were it not so, we should be among the first to protest that the government was being irresponsible with the taxpayers' money. But it is not such conditions alone that compromise control. It is all too easy to become beguiled by the prospect of funds for prescribed programs and to contrive post facto rationalizations for having taken the funds and operated the programs. The unhappy denouement

sometimes comes too late. Some of our great American universities are discovering only now that they may have sold their *raison d'être* for the fruits of the government money tree—which, it turns out, cause acute academic indigestion. Jewish hospitals and other institutions are accepting capital funds from public sources that carry with them long-term commitments that may well become onerously irrelevant to Jewish needs and purposes over a much shorter term. The same is true of long-term research grants.

In the light of these developments, there would seem to be a need to re-appraise the relevance of the criteria by which we have traditionally rationalized the relationship between public and Jewish services and to re-examine the programs themselves for consistency with the asserted criteria.

I do not intend to deal in this paper with the question of public funds for sectarian agencies in relation to the constitutional principle of church-state separation; that has been discussed in other annual forums of this Conference; it is an issue of such importance and complexity as to require a separate paper.

Moreover, whatever the differences with respect to the constitutional question, the dual system of public and private agencies and the involvement of government in the financing of sectarian agencies is by now so integral a part of the whole structure and organization of welfare services in this country as to make it reasonably certain that, to some degree, at least, the present pattern of relationships will continue into the foreseeable future.

The issue immediately before us, therefore, is not whether government should subsidize sectarian health and welfare services nor whether Jewish agencies should continue to accept such subsidies. Rather, it is to recognize that

the manner in which government chooses to expend the ever increasing sums at its disposal for welfare purposes may profoundly affect not only the operations of Jewish communal services but also, and more significantly, the role and relationship of sectarian groups in our society.

I have suggested some ways in which the infusion of government funds might serve to dilute—or even negate—the sectarian purposes of agency programs. Certainly, a marked expansion of quality public facilities and programs will greatly lessen the need and demand for many existing Jewish or other sectarian services. On the other hand, if the almost limitless resources of government are funnelled increasingly through sectarian channels, we may find ourselves well on the road towards a separatist structural pluralism that would run directly counter to the dual purposes that characterize our own sectarian objectives.

The operations of the recently enacted Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 may provide some clue to future directions. Consider, for example, the encouragement given by Title I of the Act to the establishment of shared time or dual enrollment programs. Will such programs, by bringing parochial school children into the public school environment for part of the time and providing additional contacts among children of differing religions, contribute toward democratization of relationships? Or will it prove further divisive by emphasizing religious differences and, at the same time, lead to participation by clerical authorities in public school administration?

Or consider the provisions in Title II for loan of textbooks to parochial schools. Will the use of public school texts counter some of the distortions found in many parochial school texts? Or will the parochial school authorities

seek to influence the selection of books for the public schools to meet their particular sectarian criteria?

In testimony before the Congress in support of the bill, representatives of Torah Umesorah declared, "We would request that representatives of the private schools participate together with the public school authorities in the specific selection of the text books and instructional materials." Can we expect Catholics to ask less?

Answers to these and related questions will have to await the test of actual practice. Meanwhile the very passage of the Act may mark a turning point in church-state relationships. To be sure, the law gives no money directly to parochial schools; even the textbooks that will be made available will remain the property of the public school districts. Nevertheless, the principle of parity between parochial school children and those attending public school, so long advocated by Catholics, has been accepted.

In past discussions regarding the use of public funds, a distinction was always drawn between health and welfare services and education. For all practical purposes that distinction has been obliterated by the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

The log jam which for a quarter of a century prevented the enactment of any comprehensive federal aid to education bill was broken by the simple expedient of focusing the major provisions of the act on children in poverty areas and calling it a "welfare" measure. It was on this basis that Protestants, who in the past had adamantly opposed any federal aid to parochial schools, justified their support of the Act. This was the rationale of the spokesman for the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America who testified that "the principle of child welfare must be considered in its own right and is clearly distin-

guishable from that of school support as such." It is this same rationale by which the counsel for the Office of Economic Opportunity recently justified funds to parochial schools for programs of remedial reading, writing, arithmetic, shorthand and typing under the poverty program, contending that "such programs fall into the category of welfare services rather than education."

The "child benefit" welfare service rationale is broad enough to encompass public assistance to almost any kind of educational activity, short of theological study or religious observances. That Catholics recognize this is evident from a recent editorial in the liberal Catholic journal, *America*, assessing the act as "a promise for the future of a truly pluralistic school system." To many of us, the promise is a threat—a threat to the American public school as the great common meeting ground for Americans of all faiths, creeds and races—a threat of the development in America of a religiously separated school system on the order of the Quebec system.

Which way will America go—toward a more sharply separated sectarianism along the lines envisioned by Will Herberg—Catholic, Protestant, Jewish—living under a national roof but with minimal interrelatedness and a common life limited to politics and perhaps business; or toward a pluralism characterized by integration of individuals into a broader spectrum of the life of the society as a whole, with full freedom and encouragement for groups to foster their distinctive faiths, traditions and values?

Let me turn now to the second of the two forces to which I referred earlier, namely the revolution for racial equality. The dimensions of the revolution are not to be found in the laws, court decisions and administrative actions against discrimination, revolutionary as they have been. The true dimensions of the revolution are just beginning to be

suggested by the far-ranging social changes set in motion by the Negro drive for equality, the portents of which are still only vaguely discerned.

The heralded "war against poverty" is essentially a response to demands and pressures generated in that drive. Our entire educational system is in process of drastic overhaul—not only to correct racial imbalances but to improve the quality of schools, curricula, teachers and methods—deriving from the assault upon *de facto* segregation. The moral and ethical challenge of racial inequity has infused religion with a zeal for social action and brought ministers, priests and rabbis into the streets, seeking fulfillment of religious affirmations. Inter-religious involvement and cooperation in the civil rights struggle has given new impetus to the ecumenical movement. Indeed, it is hard to separate these two developments in contemporary American religious life—ecumenism and the fight for equality—one has fed on the other. Business and labor alike have been forced to review and revise long-standing practices of racial preference and exclusion—and to a degree this has had its effect on anti-Jewish discriminations as well.

The burgeoning student movements (whatever their other orientations and causes) took their initial inspiration from the civil rights movement. And, if I may say so to this audience, the renewed emphasis in social work on the spirit of reform that give birth to our profession derives largely from the aggressive militancy of civil rights advocates.

The concentration of Negro population in our major industrial states has already given them a strategic balance of power in national and in many state elections. Reapportionment will add to this political strength. With the continued exodus of whites to the suburbs, Negroes soon will become the dominant

political force in most of our largest cities.

The federal voting bill now awaiting certain passage will result—in the relatively near future—in a large increase in Negro voting in the South; and the consequences of this upon the whole pattern of American politics will be truly revolutionary. These are only some of the already observable results of the revolution for equality and they are but tokens of what lies ahead.

If it is safe to forecast an escalation of public expenditures for public welfare, it is even safer to predict that Negroes, being most in need of all the help that welfare services afford, will be the most vigorous advocates of such escalation. And there is no doubt that they will use their political strength to press and obtain their demands.

More than that—it can be taken as certain that they will insist that the new or expanded services be truly non-discriminatory. Given the not unwarranted skepticism that Negroes have toward the asserted non-discriminatory policies and practices of most sectarian welfare agencies, whether Protestant, Jewish or Catholic, it must be anticipated that they will not be content with making such agencies the major beneficiaries of the expanded funds. Rather, they will press for new public or non-sectarian agencies. And they will want and they will get a share—in many cases a major if not controlling share—in the policy direction and administration of those agencies. The future is plainly foreshadowed in the emphasis given by the Office of Economic Opportunity to such vast new projects as Haryou-Act in contrast to the relatively small, if numerous and in the aggregate considerable, grants to sectarian agencies, and in the requirement in the Economic Opportunity Act that those the programs are designed to help participate in the com-

munity action boards created to direct them.

Among those the programs are designed to help, Negroes may not necessarily be the most numerous, but they are likely to be the best organized—indeed, for practical purposes, the only organized. It would be shortsighted and naive to assume that they will not capitalize on this organization to use their positions on the community boards as vehicles through which to influence the shaping of policy in the whole gamut of welfare services. Whether this pressure is exerted on federal agencies, on city hall, or on the community chest, its thrust will be to deflect funds from existing sectarian agencies into the newer public and non-sectarian agencies that are predominantly Negro in clientele and most markedly Negro in control.

What we must accommodate to is the emergence, in effect, of another sectarian group, not religiously but racially sectarian, physically denoted by skin color, but held together by a growing sense of common destiny and new-found hope. Because this is happening at the present stage in the evolution of the welfare state, the group has no need to pass through that period of self-help that characterized the welfare activities of sectarian groups three generations ago. By organization and application of political power, it can pursue its group purpose with public money. How soon it will develop the sense of shared group concern for the general welfare that constitutes part of the sectarian purpose of other groups will depend on how soon it becomes secure enough as a group, economically, socially and politically, to escape from its present understandable preoccupation with fighting its way out of its deprived, depressed and rejected status.

Meanwhile the potential capacity of the Negro group to affect the financial basis of Jewish and other sectarian

services is being bolstered by law—law that is, itself, in no small measure a consequence of Negro pressure; law that will be monitored by an organized vocal Negro group alert to see that the non-discrimination proclaimed in the law is reflected in practice.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination because of race, color or national origin in all aspects of any program receiving federal financial assistance. Considering the reach and extent of such assistance, the potential impact on all the major institutions of our society is almost incalculable. Schools, colleges, libraries, housing, farm programs, health and welfare agencies—federal, state or local, public or private—all will be affected. Even swank country clubs, many of which receive federal grants under the Soil Conservation program, could come under the sanction of Title VI.

Agencies that are recipients of funds under programs that require them to be non-sectarian—the Hill-Burton Act, as an example—clearly come within the scope of Title VI. They have no choice. Title VI, however, does not outlaw religious exclusivity. Some Jewish agencies could, therefore, by asserting a sectarian purpose, limit their intake without violating the law.

But if they choose this course, do they not have to find other ways of relating themselves meaningfully to what is clearly the most significant social issue of our time in keeping with their asserted group obligation to the society as a whole?

Will we resolve this dilemma by trying to escape into a narrow sectarianism, or by pursuing our dual goals of integration and group cohesiveness through the generous giving of our resources to the general welfare? If we choose the latter course, we cannot discharge our commitment meaningfully except by extending our services to those of the

general public who are most in need of service; and today, that means largely Negroes.

The Jewish community in America today is the largest, the most secure politically and the most advantaged economically in Jewish history. America's democratic pluralism (imperfect as it is) affords unrestricted opportunities for that community to develop Jewishly. At the same time, it exerts no pressures on individuals to identify with the community. A favorable soil and climate for dynamic group survival are provided; what we harvest will be the fruits of our own sowing and our own husbandry.

As has been shown, the fruits we have sought through our cultivation of Jewish communal services have been of two kinds: integration into the general society and group cohesiveness; and in the present period the major object of our husbandry is the latter. How good is the harvest? A quantitative measure is impossible, for there are no objective scales in which psychological attitudes such as identification can be weighed. And it follows that opinions as to the best seeds to plant and the best methods of cultivation to yield a good crop of Jewishly identified Jews are necessarily untestable against objective criteria. In short, to abandon the metaphor, Jewish identification is not measurable by any known standard, and there are no demonstrably effective means of assuring it.

Jewish education, Jewish cultural studies are good in themselves and essential as an expression of Jewish group vitality. It does not follow—and there is no empirical evidence—that more intensive or more inclusive Jewish education will necessarily lead to wider or deeper Jewish identification. This is quite aside from the question of what kind of education is held to be effective; as Ben Halpern observed, there can

scarcely be said to be consensus among Jews on that score.

The demands for a larger measure of Jewish content in the programs of Jewish agencies other than educational and cultural agencies (which are by their nature Jewish in content) derive from understandable motivations. But, again, there is something less than unanimity as to the specific nature of the proposed Jewish content.

There is a large element of irrelevance in this entire controversy over how best to assure identification and maintain group cohesiveness. The identification factors that individual Jews perceive as their ties to the Jewish community are many and varied. This has been true throughout a very large part of Jewish history; and it is not only inevitable under the conditions of voluntarism that obtain in America, but a constructive factor in the creative dynamism of Jewish life here. Some Jews identify religiously, others traditionally, others through scholarship, some through philanthropy, many through participation—whether active or vicarious—in Jewish sectarian agencies. The very existence of those agencies thus constitutes a vehicle for Jewish group identification—for some Jews, perhaps the major vehicle through which they express their Jewishness. It is a wholly valid expression, with a venerable tradition behind it; and all the defensiveness that has been manifested in its affirmation is quite gratuitous. It is one of many roads to identification. All should be honored.

But this still leaves us with the problem of the unidentified, the alienated and the indifferent. What will draw them, especially Jewish youth, into the community? From the available evidence, today's Jewish young people do not turn away from Jewishness out of fear of being different; they live in a milieu in which difference is the norm. They do not seem to be rejecting Juda-

