

## FACT AND OPINION

by SAMUEL SPIEGLER

### **SOME IMPRESSIONS OF THE SIXTY-FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING**

It may be said without fear of giving offense where surely none is intended that the substantial attendance at the sixty-fifth annual NCJCS meeting can scarcely be attributed to the irresistible physical allure of Cleveland. Let it hastily be added, however, that no city exceeded Cleveland in the graciousness of its hospitality or in the generous willingness with which it cooperated in conference arrangements and in many other ways.

It seemed to this observer that there was more excitement in this meeting than in some others he has attended, too. And while this is in part a product of the times, it is also in part a product of excellent programming.

The statistics of the meeting can be made to seem fairly staggering. There were, by actual count, 109 different sessions, meetings and other events crowded into the period from Saturday evening to Wednesday afternoon. And Hank Levy, with a publicity man's characteristic nonchalance, tossed off in one early release from the scene that a total of more than 350 names were listed among the speakers and other participants in the program.

As always, the sessions ranged over the gamut of interests represented in the

Conference, as they should. Some sessions were so heavily attended as to tax the spaces provided for them; in others there were scarcely more auditors than chairman, speakers and discussants. Probably this is unavoidable in a conference serving as many diversified specialties and interests as this one does. In quality, the papers and presentations were as diverse as the subjects they covered. This, too, probably is to be expected; although one hopes that it never comes to be regarded as unavoidable. Ironically, some excellent papers were read to exceedingly small audiences and some poorly prepared presentations of indifferent import were made to crowded rooms. These are impressions; neither cajolery nor threats will elicit examples.

A gratifying feature of the Conference this year was the extent of cross-attendance at sessions by individuals from various fields; this was perhaps unprecedented in degree. To this observer, it was most evident in the sessions sponsored or co-sponsored by his own Association of Jewish Community Relations Workers. Several of those sessions were quite heavily attended by Conference members whose primary concerns are in other areas. The tremendous significance of the struggle for Negro equality, and the inescapable involvement in this struggle in some way of everyone asso-

ciated with communal work or welfare activity, are chiefly responsible for this display of interest. But there was reverse cross-attendance, too; and at a brief post-Conference evaluation session of the Executive Committee, this was remarked upon by several observers.

The number of jointly sponsored sessions was in itself gratifying, as a contribution to that mutuality of understanding among the various disciplines in Jewish communal service that the Conference has for so long been seeking to further. There were at least six such sessions, including one that was sponsored jointly by four disciplines.

Triumphantly vindicated—if any vindication was needed—was the “buzz session” technique. The round table discussions were animated and engrossing; their fruitfulness may be gauged by the richness of the brilliant summary prepared by Charles Miller and printed elsewhere in this issue of the *Journal*.

This is all the more impressive because the general session papers that were to have provided the basis for the buzz sessions, in this observer’s judgment, rather missed the mark—or, in the alternative, so belabored it as to almost demolish the point. The Jewish quest for identity in our contemporary American milieu is still sufficiently acute, however, it seems, to overcome all impediments when it is being examined by thoughtful professional Jewish communal workers in free discussion.

High points of the Conference were the reports of the several subcommittees of the Committee on Public Issues. The work of this Committee, which is proceeding with commendable caution and circumspection in a terrain studded with the abandoned remains of previous uncompleted expeditions into the same territory, holds much promise for an enlarged Conference role in responding to the great social issues of our society.

## JEWISH OCCUPATIONAL PATTERNS CHANGING

“A HISTORIC transformation” may be taking place in the patterns of Jewish occupational distribution around the world. This is suggested in the 1963 ORT Yearbook, which reports that among the needy and underprivileged Jews served by the world-wide vocational training agency there is no longer any substantial interest in the so-called “traditional” Jewish pursuits such as tailoring and carpentry.

Courses in such subjects, previously heavily enrolled, have given way to training in refrigeration, electronics, engine repair and metal work. Over the last decade, ORT has added to its curriculum instruction in metallurgy, electronics, telecommunications, architectural drafting and construction technology.

Among girls there has been a corresponding shift from sewing crafts to secretarial work, interior decoration, medical and industrial laboratory techniques.

ORT claims substantial successes in both training and placement. Almost all of the nearly ten thousand who completed training in 1962, according to the Yearbook, “were easily absorbed in employment, often at above average starting pay.”

ORT graduates are said to be working in France for Renault, throughout Italy in state radio and television networks and in the Olivetti plants in Milan, in North Africa in a variety of airline, railroad and communications jobs, and in Israel in many industries and plants.

## HILL-BURTON GRANT FOR JVS REHABILITATION CENTER STRESSING PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH

GEORGE Newburger, executive director of the Jewish Vocational Service of

Cincinnati, believes that his is the first such agency to construct a building functionally designed for its needs.

The building has been made possible in part by a grant of Hill-Burton funds—perhaps the first such grant for construction of a facility in which the dominant emphasis is on psychological factors in rehabilitation, rather than on medical treatment and adjustment to physical disabilities. Federal funds will pay for slightly more than one-fourth of the total cost of the building. The grant is for \$45,000. Most of the additional \$135,000 needed has been subscribed by members of the JVS board, trust funds and foundations.

---

### **COMMUNITY-BASED TREATMENT OF NARCOTICS ADDICTION STUDIED**

THE treatment of narcotic addiction has gone through interesting changes over the years. One of the recent trends is that toward psychiatric treatment in the addict's own community setting. In part, this approach is based on the assumption of a relationship between addiction and the environment. At the 1962 White House Conference on Narcotic and Drug Abuse, there was considerable discussion of community-based treatment centers.

Now, with a \$130,000 grant from the National Institute of Mental Health, a pilot project in New York City will spend two years in seeking to determine the effectiveness of such treatment of young addicts. New York University and Greenwich House (a settlement house in Greenwich Village) are supplying the specialists to staff the project. Dean Alex Rosen of the N.Y.U. School of Social Work heads the over-all steering committee.

### **JEWISH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS TO BE LICENSED**

THE American Association for Jewish Education is preparing to inaugurate a program of certification of principals of Jewish schools. The National Board of License, which is administered by the AAJE, has put a committee to work formulating standards and procedures. The six-member committee is headed by Rabbi George Ende, Director of the Department of Secondary Education of the Jewish Education Committee of New York.

One of the problems faced by the committee will be that of effecting coordination in licensing of administrators. Such licensing activities are now being carried on separately by four local Jewish education bodies in their respective areas.

---

### **UNIQUE SUMMER DAY CAMP FOR BLIND CHILDREN**

A UNIQUE summer day camp program for blind and visually-handicapped children, combining therapy with an emphasis on enjoyment for the children, had its premiere season this past summer at New York City's Jewish Guild for the Blind.

The nonsectarian agency used the roof of its building in mid-Manhattan as an outdoor play area, augmenting indoor play facilities, and utilized a nearby YMCA for bicycling, bowling and swimming. The Guild's psychiatric clinic provided counseling.

The thirty children enrolled in the program were selected from those regularly attending the Guild School program during fall and spring sessions, those registered at the Guild's psychiatric clinic, and referrals from other agencies serving blind and visually handicapped persons. Fees were charged, adjusted to ability to pay.

## *Editor's Memo*

### *Change in Fact and Opinion Department*

The Fact and Opinion department is now edited by Samuel Spiegler. Theodore R. Isenstadt, its former editor, resigned after three years of service only because his present work kept him too distant from NCJCS affairs. Mr. Spiegler has been given a dual assignment: not only will he edit the truncated Fact and Opinion department, but he also acts as editor of *Concurrents*, the new and experimental newsletter quarterly which will be a house organ for the Conference, and will henceforth carry the personnel notes and other newsy material formerly included in Fact and Opinion.

### *Conference Papers Which Are Not Published*

Some readers of the Journal may not be familiar with the fact that only a minority of papers presented at the annual meetings of the National Conference of Jewish Communal Services are printed in this Journal. The sessions of the Conference offer a mine of contributions from the several fields of work included under the Conference umbrella. It is possible to determine the nature of these contributions by referring to the Conference program—always available at the Conference office. It is possible, further, to secure copies of unpublished papers by writing to the individual author. He will usually be found to be happy to fill any request for a copy of his work.

### *Erratum*

In the June, 1963 issue, Sylvia Riback, one of the co-authors of "The Four-Cornered Conference: Another Technique of Family Centered Treatment of Hospitalized Adolescents," was erroneously named as a "senior psychiatric caseworker." She is actually a supervisor at Hillside Hospital.