

PHILANTHROPY FOR ISRAEL

tion" of philanthropic programs. The American counterparts have vested interests in the form of education and conditioning of their membership and contributors, while the complex organizational structure in the U.S. has produced its own inner political complications. On the Israeli side there is the necessity of conforming in a general way to the fund-raising requirements, and to their own political personality and organizational problems.

There is, in summary, need for a much greater flexibility in the structure and programs of the philanthropy which is vividly portrayed against the background

of rapidly changing situations in Israel which philanthropy is attempting to serve.

Events may overtake these problems. The emergence of the Government of Israel Bond Drive may permanently affect the fund-raising aspect of philanthropy; the developing economic difficulties in Israel, which show little prospect of improvement in the future months, may force fundamental changes in the complex of philanthropic programs. It would be much more effective, and less painful to the people involved, if these fundamental changes could be anticipated and the transition made gradual.

THE MEANING OF JEWISHNESS TO CLIENTS AND ITS EFFECT ON CASE WORK SERVICE*

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I SHOULD like to preface this paper with the explanation that its content is the result of group discussion by representatives of the Jewish Family and Vocational agencies of the Twin Cities.¹ We met on a number of occasions to examine the previous discussions on Jewish component and, in the light of our experience, to evaluate whether, and under what conditions, it has had significance in vocational counseling and case work practice.

What are the Jewish components in

* Editor's Note: This paper which was presented at the National Conference of Jewish Social Welfare in Atlantic City, June 7, 1950, has been the subject of much discussion and controversy among case workers and others interested in the Jewish component as a factor in case work. Its presentation here—together with discussion by George Rabinoff and Samuel Grand—does not necessarily imply acceptance of the point of view reflected in Mr. Lerner's paper. The JSSQ has published a number of papers reflecting a different point of view, however, and on a subject of such vital interest to practitioners it seems appropriate that a variety of views be presented. Case workers who are stimulated by Mr. Lerner's paper to write on their own opinions or experiences are invited to send communications to the Editor for possible publication in future issues of the Quarterly. H. A.

¹The committee consisted of Mr. Solomon Shapiro, director J. V. S., St. Paul; Mr. Joseph L. Taylor, director J. F. S., St. Paul; Mr. Samuel Lerner, Case Work Supervisor, J. F. S., St. Paul; Mr. Walter Levey, J. V. S., Minneapolis, and Mr. David Levine, Supervisor Children's Division, J. F. & C. S., Minneapolis.

case work? Is there anything specially significant in clients coming to Jewish agencies or being interviewed by Jewish workers? If there are significant factors that affect the case work process, do they apply to some or to all clients? How are we to know whether Jewish agencies have special meaning to clients, how can this meaning be measured, and what are we to do with it?

A recently arrived DP became quite excited while in an agency's waiting room. The receptionist asked whether she could help. In Yiddish she was told that nothing was the matter, but that the man whose picture hangs on the wall is a friend of the client. He had just left him that morning at "minyan." . . . The man whose picture hangs on the wall happened to be a Rembrandt painting of an "Old Man."

Is there any Jewish content, applicable to case work practice, to be gleaned from this story? This client's confusion in identifying the man in the painting as a friend of his, is only matched by the confusion in the case work field as to the possible meaning of Jewish content in case work. Because it is so easy to read into a situation what we wish to read into it—just as the client may have done with the painting—it is necessary for us to re-examine, in each discussion, the assump-

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tions upon which we base our conclusions, and, ultimately our case work practice, in order that we be sure not to generalize too readily as to the meaning of agency, worker, or Jewishness to clients, without specific understanding of the differences in meaning to the individual clients.

It is not possible to talk of a Jewish content in case work that is applicable to all clients. Nor does there appear to be something specifically Jewish about the principles of case work with Jews which distinguishes it from case work with Irish, or Swedes, or Italians. What is generic about case work process is applicable to all clients. What we must be aware of in all good case work are the individual variations, which are dependent upon the cultural, economic, and sociological settings in which the person lives, and the psychological factors which motivate his actions and behavior.

This does not mean that there are not certain clients, or types of clients, to whom Jewishness is an important aspect of their problems. With such clients discussion of its meaning may be necessary and desirable if we are to render service and help to them. What we as case workers must be sure of is that we do not project our own expectations of the significance of Jewishness in the situation, or our own conflicts about Jewishness, onto the client, and we must avoid assuming that it is a problem, or has significance, with all clients or even with a majority of them. Only as we observe the individual cases in all their possible ramifications and do our planning on this basis can we be sure that we approach the problem of Jewish content objectively and scientifically.

What kinds of clients are apt to benefit from contact with Jewish agencies and case workers? Refugees are the

prime example of a group of people who may need contact with Jewish agencies in the initial period of adjustment in America. But here we are presented with a special situation. Our refugee clients lived through one of the most bitter and painful experiences of modern times. An outstanding and special aspect of this experience was their subjection to humiliation, personal indignities, and possible death, because of their Jewishness. The actual slaughter of over 6,000,000 Jews made them aware that anti-Semitism was no longer a philosophical problem but one involving life and death—the latter in most instances. Small wonder, then, that the survivors have come to mistrust non-Jews, to the extent where even receiving help from them is weighted with conscious and unconscious feelings of hostility and skepticism. Their whole experience, with few exceptions, has been based on non-acceptance by non-Jews. To some extent these attitudes are broken down as they experience understanding and warmth from the Gentile community. But in the meantime, they cannot fully trust non-Jews to really be of help to them. For such people their tie to Jewishness has strong, even decisive, emotional meaning.

Illustrative of the intensity of their feeling is the example of the refugee child who remarked about the Y.M.C.A. in an American city that it must be anti-Semitic because it has "Christian" in its name, and why else would it do that unless it were against the Jews? To such youngsters and adults, "supportive identification" from Jewish workers and agencies may be the most feasible method of help. But even with refugees we must recognize that this tie and need to identify is accompanied by bitterness and resentment. They may feel the need to struggle against the very Jewishness

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which they feel has contributed to their present difficulties. An example of this is the client who said, "I have never considered myself a Jew and Hitler cannot make me one."

There are other groups of clients served by Jewish agencies for whom the Jewish factor may have some significance. Previous discussions have suggested the meaning of Jewish content in child placement. Awareness by the case worker of the possible psychological significance to a child of his being a "Jew," in order to help him accept one phase of the reality of his being, is important if we are to handle the problems these children present, with sensitivity and understanding. Similar sensitivity must be shown to all clients for whom the cultural factors in their lives have significance. One such group of clients is the older Jews, most of whom are first-generation Americans who came to America with established customs and beliefs. Many aged Jews, either in or out of old age homes, are in search of help from individuals and agencies who represent to them a bond with the lives they have led. To them, as to Orthodox Jews, Jewishness has special significance. They may have lived in an atmosphere where Jewishness in its many cultural and religious aspects has played a prime part in the fabric of their lives. Frequently they failed to be assimilated in the non-Jewish community, either voluntarily or otherwise. Many of these people have no conflict about their Jewishness but merely assume automatically that the Jewish agencies will take care of their needs. Others may feel more conflicted about their differentness from their second-generation children who have become more "Americanized." As if in protest against their own inability to lose their identity as their children do, they cling more strongly to those traditions

and beliefs which give them security and peace. If religious orthodoxy is also involved, they may feel strange in talking to a "Goy" or any person who they feel cannot understand their rituals and customs. They may be able to relate more quickly to a case worker who can speak their language, in an agency which they feel can accept them as they are.

Illustrative of such cases is the orthodox, aged Jew who comes to the Jewish agency in search of a boarding home where Kashruth would be observed. He can perhaps begin quicker with a person who can understand immediately the meaning of his request. But whether such a person need be Jewish, or look like the client's stereotyped image of a Jew, or can speak the language, or merely have a "Jewish name," and whether these factors "per se" are significant in helping the client get started, are unanswered questions. Though desirable, it would be extremely difficult for adequate research to be done to measure the importance of these factors, and which of them has most significance.

Another group of clients comes to the Jewish agency hoping it will meet their special needs. This is the group of chronically ill persons, the blind, and infirm. Here, too, it is hard to measure just what coming to a Jewish agency for help means. No doubt for many their request is prompted by the fact that the Jewish community traditionally provides for such people. The origins of this assumption of responsibility by the Jewish community are many: it has religious origins, from the Scriptural injunction for charity and mercy, to the modern humanitarian concepts of justice, and the tradition among the Jews that they will take care of their own. The client's awareness of this tradition may prompt his coming to the agency for help. At the same time

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many chronically ill Jews have felt ostracized and rejected by their children, their friends and the Jewish community. The contact with the Jewish agency and worker permits him to bring his hostility to bear directly on the agency. An example where this situation existed follows:²

Mr. K, a 52 year old recipient of Aid to the Blind, has been known intermittently to the agency for the past 12 years. In the past marital problems, requests for assistance in making business loans, and medical problems led him to the agency. For the past six years, Mr. K has been receiving Aid to the Blind.

Recently, a community person called to report that Mr. K's loneliness and apparent helplessness had been brought to her attention. Could the agency help Mr. K? The referral source had visited Mr. K and found him to be ill and overwhelmed. She knew that he was receiving Aid to the Blind but she felt that if he had a room with a family instead of living in a hotel, he would be better off.

The worker spoke with the Aid to the Blind worker who, incidentally, is Jewish and is well known in the local Jewish community. The worker learned that Mr. K was receiving assistance. Although he had been ill he was not completely helpless. He was able to go for his meals and he did have partial vision. The Aid to the Blind worker considered Mr. K's bitterness as a block to any relationship that might end his loneliness. She reported that Mr. K is an ex-TB patient, suffers from asthma, and is presently under medical supervision.

Later Mr. K himself phoned. He demanded with hostility to see a worker immediately. He was bedridden and he wanted a room with people who would take care of him. An appointment was offered for later that afternoon. Mr. K accepted this but voiced his anger at not being seen immediately.

Mr. K was seen in his hotel room. He is slight, emaciated, hollow-cheeked, and gray-haired. In the beginning Mr. K expressed his bitterness and deep feeling of resentment against the Jewish community. He felt the Jewish community had rejected him. His hostility was directed against the agency, the rabbis, and a number of prominent community people. In his intense screaming and ranting, he frequently became incoherent. Throughout this outburst he demonstrated familiarity with Jewish customs and Talmudic

² This case was handled by Mr. Frank Winer, supervisor, J. F. & C. S., Minneapolis.

literature. During his tirade he compared the city to Sodom. The city is made up of hoodlums and gangsters. People care about nothing but themselves and money. Nobody cares about him. This applies particularly to the Jews, and if he were not a Jew he would be anti-Semitic. He talked of being double-crossed and mistreated by the agency, by rabbis and Jewish doctors. There have been a few people who have befriended him, but they have been Gentiles; not his own kind of people, Jews. Among the Jews his friends have all died or left the city. As for the young people, they are a generation that doesn't care.

The worker recognized Mr. K's bitterness and indicated a desire to be helpful. Exhausted from his outburst, Mr. K paused. He didn't want any money. He guessed that he just wanted to talk to somebody to get it off his chest. The worker remarked that he was lonely and he could understand a lonely man wanting to live with a family where he would be taken care of. Mr. K softened and began to engage in a real discussion. He was lonely, and he would like people to take care of him but he also felt that all his needs were being taken care of with the help of Aid to the Blind. He liked his privacy and didn't want to be beholden to anyone. The worker understood this position. If in the hotel he was having his physical needs met and he could get by adequately, then it was loneliness that was concerning him. Mr. K agreed. All of his acquaintances in the hotel were bums. They played cards all day. He was different, and he wanted to remain different.

Mr. K again began a tirade against the Jewish community, and started cursing the agency. Supposing he wanted to go to a Seder, could this high powered Jewish organization, with all its workers receiving fat salaries, take care of him and help him get to a Seder? His whole manner was challenging and hostile. The worker met this by saying he felt the agency could make arrangements for him if he did want to go to a Seder. Had he severed all his connections with his former friends and acquaintances? Mr. K indicated that although he had lived in the city for over thirty years, he had little connection with any people in his neighborhood or with the Jewish community as a whole. There are one or two left of the "old bunch" but he rarely has contact with them and he is angry with them anyway, as they never come to visit him. He has made up his mind that he would like to go to a Seder and would certainly be interested if we

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could arrange this for him. He misses Jewish meals a lot. With pathetic earnestness he told how much he would like a few Jewish meals once again.

The worker told him of the Golden Age Club; this he rejected. He was not an old man, and besides they are not well read nor intelligent. He could not get there anyway, as he had no transportation. If he went to a Seder there, someone would have to arrange for his transportation. He was too sick and too handicapped to go by himself. The worker indicated that this could be arranged.

Was he interested in visits from people in the Jewish community to overcome his loneliness? Yes, Mr. K replied, he was interested (but there was ambivalence in the way he spoke). The worker told Mr. K that he sounded unsure. Was it that he didn't want to feel indebted to people? Mr. K shrugged. It was all right if people visited him. At this point he became somewhat apologetic. He excused himself for his outburst. He didn't mean the worker personally when he spoke so roughly. He just felt pretty bad today. Perhaps the worker could help him to be among his people again, his own people. Mr. K reflected on this for a moment and a smile spread over his face. At this the worker commented on how far Mr. K must feel from his people. The worker recognized Mr. K's bitterness and doubt that people would want to be helpful to him. These feelings would be in Mr. K's way. His reply was that he could not be blamed; that he had good reason for his feelings. The Jewish community was selfish. However, he would want people to visit him, he would want to be among people again, he is lonely and he needs people.

As the interview was closing, Mr. K said that he guessed he wanted a social worker today because of the spiritual good it did to talk it out. He was glad that the worker had come. He sees that the worker is interested in him; although he must say that he doubted if the worker would actually show up. In making plans for the next interview, Mr. K was concerned that the worker take down his telephone extension and asked that the worker should call again, if he were out.

A few days later, worker visited Mr. K in his hotel again. Mr. K was at the door immediately to extend a warm greeting. In a friendly manner, he invited the worker to sit down on the chair while he sat on the opposite bed. He began in a

slow, deliberate voice: "I have decided to go to Arizona and I don't think I'll do anything about getting into the Jewish community here again." There was some discussion of what had gone into this decision. The doctors, he said, had advised him that this city's climate was unhealthy for him. He feels that Arizona, with its warm dry climate, would be much better. Many of his old buddies are in Arizona now. In Arizona there were many other sick people; it would be easier to be friendly with another sick person. Sick people make a fraternity because they are not interested in money, they are interested only in talking and discussion. This is the way he feels too. He was quite sure that he could get medical clearance to go, through the Aid to the Blind. He was confident that this could be worked out and he expected to leave at the beginning of April.

The worker discussed whether Mr. K still wanted to follow through on the Seders. Mr. K said he changed his mind. He doesn't want to go to a Seder unless he can pay for it. He doesn't want "rachmunes" from anybody. At the same time he was interested in knowing who made an offer to him for a Seder. He had to be selective with the families from his former neighborhood; most of them were hoodlums. If they invited him they would talk for months afterwards about the good deed they had done. Mr. K was in a fix, the worker observed. On the one hand he would like to have people help him and do things for him, and on the other hand he didn't want to take anything from anybody. Mr. K wondered if the agency knew of a poor woman who would like to earn \$2.00 by inviting him to the Seders. He rejected the possibility of an invitation to a community Seder given by the New American Club because he felt that he would be an outsider with them. The worker recognized Mr. K's ambivalence. Mr. K answered that he was proud of not taking charity from people, except for the Aid to the Blind which he feels he must take. Also, he doesn't mind taking things from people who are really interested in him. Accepting his point, the worker responded that he knew that if Mr. K was going to have relationships with people, it would not only be a question of how interested in him people were, but how interested he was in trying to get along with people. Mr. K agreed but felt that it was meaningless now that he was going to Arizona. In Arizona it would be different; there, people were interested

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in other people and he would love to talk and discuss things with them.

Mr. K and the worker recognized that this would be their final contact, as Mr. K was leaving town. However, if the Seders would be arranged for Mr. K's \$2.00 he would want to be contacted again. Mr. K shook worker's hand warmly and was a bit apologetic about his earlier outbursts. He wanted the worker to know that the visits had made him feel better. It gave him a lift.

After various unsuccessful attempts to arrange the kind of Seder Mr. K asked for, it was arranged through the rabbi at Hillel House that Mr. K attend their model Seder. Mr. K was invited by one of the pre-social work students at Hillel, who also provided transportation. Mr. K enjoyed the Seder very much and accepted the invitation of the rabbi to attend his private Seder the following day.

Mr. K left the city for Arizona the following month.

This case is suggestive of several propositions. This client apparently had a desire to contact the Jewish agency because of his need to express his tremendous hostility directly with someone whom he considered a representative of the Jewish community. It is evident that he had hostility against the whole world but he was focusing it against the Jews. He seemed to have some need to express it and to work through these feelings directly, rather than through the medium of an outside agency, the Aid to the Blind. After expressing these feelings the client did have a softer, less hostile attitude than at the beginning of contact. He was able to accept the help offered by rabbis, despite his previous objection to contact with them. He had also delayed his departure time until the matter of the Seder, i.e., acceptance by the community, could be cleared up. Similarly, his decision to go to Arizona may or may not have been arrived at prior to his contact with the Jewish agency. But it is noteworthy that he had not actually taken the trip until after his

contact with the agency was made. We can speculate as to whether, now that he has expressed his hostility against the local Jewish community and felt some acceptance, he can now go to Arizona without transplanting his hostility to his friends there. I feel that, because of the depth of his original hostility, the changes in his attitude are probably only temporary, and there may be recurrence of these feelings once he is in Arizona. But even on this basis there may have been some help to him in permitting him to make the changes with less hostility than previously evident. In addition, the constructive experience may make it easier for him to make an adequate adjustment in his new environment as he may be a little less ready to seek rejection and a little more ready to go out to the community and give of himself.

One might also speculate as to whether the Jewish community and agency had more significance to him than would normally be expected. Why did he not feel the same hostility against the non-Jewish community and agency? Might it not be because the Jewish community had deeper significance, that it really represented his family, and thus this rejection had more emotional meaning to him?

It would be difficult to undertake a scientific exploration of the meaning of the Jewish agency to this or any client. For we cannot help but observe that to different clients the workers and the agencies have different symbolic meaning, with almost as many variations in meaning as there are clients. A fundamental question is—When can we say the Jewish agency, or the worker as a Jew, has meaning to the client?

Practically all clients are aware that they are dealing with a worker who is a representative of the agency. But does this automatically make the agency have

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meaning to them? This is questionable. The only true meaning is that which has emotional significance. It is my hypothesis that we must search for and explore the psychological dynamics in the individual client, or type of client, to understand the meaning of Jewishness to him and whether it has any real, emotional meaning. If it does, then the agency may be invested with that meaning. There is no way of knowing, without elaborate psychological study and under approved scientific methodology, whether Jewishness, or coming to a Jewish agency, or talking to a Jewish worker, have real significance to a majority or to a minority of the clients.

For those clients who have resolved their conflicts around Jewishness, their coming to a Jewish agency is apt to be invested with little or no meaning in terms of the problems for which they come. They come to use the service offered, be it a homemaker, or marital counseling, and Jewishness is not their problem and has no place in the discussion.

An example is the retired scientist who came to the agency for a homemaker to help relieve him and his aged wife of some of the burdens in caring for their grandchildren. The children's father was dead and the mother recently had a psychotic episode. Placement would not be considered by the grandparents, but some help was desired in feeding the children and putting them to sleep. There was no special desire for a Jewish homemaker. He had even thought of contacting the Quakers or the Urban League. What he was interested in was someone who could show understanding in handling the children, and who would not challenge his wife's position as "woman of the house."

He had been referred to the agency by a friend who was familiar with the agencies in the community. In fact the initial contact was made by a solicitous acquaintance, as Mr. J had reluctance, in his position, to have any contact with social agencies. When his feeling about coming to the agency for help was discussed he

indicated no special problems concerning Jewishness. He had never desired or tried to hide the fact that he is a Jew. With his libertarian background, however, he had long since separated himself from Jewish customs and institutions and felt that as a scientist he was devoted to the furtherance of the happiness of all people. He accepted the service of the agency cooperatively and gratefully, but did feel that he could have as readily accepted the services of another Community Chest agency.

There are other clients who have not resolved their conflicts around Jewishness and for them coming to a Jewish agency and worker can have meaning. When Jewishness has a symbolic meaning to a client it may complicate the solution of his other problems. What that meaning is to the individual client is variable. It varies with the client's social and religious upbringing. It varies with social class as well as intelligence. Perhaps more important is the client's whole relationship with Jewishness during his life. Whatever feelings about Jewishness a client has, he is apt to project onto the Jewishness of the agency and the worker. His cultural and personal contacts with Jewishness, his likes and dislikes, desire for identification with Jewishness, or fear of it, are all apt to be reflected in his conception of what a Jewish agency means. Particularly when Jewishness has a basically religious meaning to a client is this apt to be the case. We know that for many, Jewishness is tied up with a concept of God. Since God often represents a father-figure to many people, their conflicts about Jewishness frequently reflect their conflicts about their real parental figures. Obviously many clients have not resolved their feelings toward their real parents. Instead of expressing these feelings directly, they project onto the agency's Jewishness their feelings of respect, humility, hostility, or dependency. Frequently they

put on Jewishness blame or praise for factors that are basically unrelated to it. An example of this would be the college student who had failed in his engineering courses and could not get an engineering job but felt that he was being discriminated against because he was a Jew. Many of these clients who failed to get acceptance and warmth from their families project onto the Jewish agency their hostility and resentment.

An illustration of this is the case of Miss G, a 30 year old woman who is severely disturbed. She has a history of severe rejection by her parents. Their early death was followed by further rejection by other members of her family. For years she has been reacting to this rejection by repeating in all other relationships her expectation of rejection. At times she would directly blame the agency, and all the workers, for not obtaining work for her. At other times she would do this indirectly by excoriating the Jewish community for not giving her adequate recognition. She would expect the worker to defend the Jewish community so that she could condemn the worker and agency too.

Because of the severe emotional illness of the client, and the dangers of arousing anxiety in her, plus the difficulties in her working through, in a Jewish setting, her problems around her family, one can question whether her contacts with a Jewish agency are necessarily supportive or healthy. In cases where the character of the hostility borders on the pathological, insofar as Jewishness is a constant irritant which brings out the hostility, then the Jewish agency may at times have difficulty in helping such clients. Perhaps some of these clients can be helped in a different treatment setting, such as a non-sectarian agency. An analogy would be the situation in a child

guidance agency where a severe mother-child problem is presented. Although the child must eventually work out his problems in relation to women, it may not be advisable to assign him at the beginning to a woman worker because it may bring out all his hostility at a time when he cannot handle it. This hostility may prevent the development of a relationship which is necessary if the child is to receive help. In such instances the child would be assigned to a male worker during the initial stages of treatment. Similarly we recognize that the type of agency, and its setting, can have positive or negative meanings to clients and frequently these meanings are only discovered during the process of treatment.

This case also illustrates a fundamental point that is often overlooked; the Jewishness of the worker is not necessarily an asset or unmixed blessing. Just as it can be a way of identification, for many Jews, so it often is used as resistance to treatment. If the worker is an Orthodox Jew and if these sentiments are evident in the case work relationship, then a Reformed Jewish client may feel that the worker cannot be sufficiently understanding of his problems. The reverse is true, as it would be in the case of a Labor Zionist and an anti-Zionist.

This emphasizes the point stressed by Dr. Axelrad last year, that "the case worker in a Jewish agency must be able to function as a professional person. As such, he must be able to accept the client—no matter what the degree of the client's identification with Jewishness, without permitting his own relationship to Jewishness, positive or negative, to be a block. It does not call for the worker to be a certain kind of Jew, rather its meaning is that the worker not be conflicted about his identification with Jewishness, his place in a Jewish agency, and that he

not have scotomas and blocks about the cultural conflicts and demands of his clients, anymore than he may have them about their psychic conflicts."³

There are other reasons why clients come to Jewish agencies. They may have a need for identification with the group, and coming to a Jewish agency often implies for some clients a bond with the Jews in the community, a oneness in their problems. Particularly when they feel a need for status and cannot find it in the non-Jewish community are they apt to come to a Jewish agency where they feel they will be given appropriate recognition, if only for the difficulties of living as a Jew. This more frequently occurs in vocational guidance agencies than in case-work agencies. Though both agencies have a similarity in that they recognize and handle the counseling aspects in any situation, the client may often see the vocational guidance agency as more directly helping him with his need for status and identification with the group. A client who is the only Jewish employee in a plant, and feels isolated, or perhaps discriminated against, may come to a vocational guidance agency in search of a job where other Jews are employed and where opportunities for advancement are evident. Thus, though the client's needs in relation to Jewishness are often implicit, though not apparent when he comes to a case work agency, they are often more explicit and part of his immediate problem when he comes to a vocational guidance agency.

Discussions of the Jewishness of the agency or worker often tend to overlook the many clients who do not have any special feelings about Jewishness. As I have previously indicated, this does not

mean that there has been a final resolution of any conflicts that they may have had in this area. It may simply be that such problems are dormant, and have little relation to the other problems for which they come to the agency at this point. These people may come for help for any of a variety of reasons. Some may come recommended by other agencies or individuals. Others may know, or have heard, that the Jewish agency may have high standards in their community, and very capable workers, or that the agency is most generous in supplementing public financial assistance programs, or in giving aid to transients. In some instances, the Jewish agency may be the only one rendering a particular type of service and, parenthetically, non-Jewish clients often request the opportunity to avail themselves of this service. Many clients, because the way their local community is set up, feel that they are "supposed" to go to a Jewish agency, that it is expected of them to use that resource rather than a non-sectarian agency. In this connection the practice in big cities, like New York and Chicago, is frequently different from that in smaller communities. Such variations in practice often depend on the homogeneity of the Jewish community, the amount of anti-Semitism in the general community, the degree to which individuals feel, or want to be, assimilated into the general community, and a host of factors that may vary according to local conditions. In these situations the worker should be aware of and sensitive to all the cultural factors that are important to the individual client in the local community. But, in most of these situations, it would be unwise and poor case work procedure to inject the Jewishness of the agency, or the worker, into the discussion. It may be highly irrelevant to the issues in the

³ Dr. Sidney Axelrad, "The Jewish Components in Case Work"—*JEWISH SOCIAL SERVICE QUARTERLY*, March, 1950.

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case, and diverting, and perhaps confusing, to the client. The client may start affirming a "Jewishness" he does not feel because he surmises it is expected of him in order to get help.

Where, after proper analysis of the case, Jewishness appears to be a significant factor, the case worker should handle it just as she would handle any other factor in the case work situation. What is advisable is for the worker to see what the client brings into the interview, and what factors are important to him. It is false, and rigid, to inject an element into a discussion that is not meaningful. A worker would not normally discuss the political convictions of the client, or his skin coloring, or the texture of his hair, except where the client brings it in and indicates some special emotional feeling that is tied up with any of these factors. The same should apply to the problem of Jewishness. Where the client does project his problem in terms of Jewishness then it is relevant and meaningful to him. Where it is not done we falsely schematize the relationship on the basis of factors that we consider important and not the client. We have then begun to set our goals, and not the client's, as the ends of the case work relationship. This not only has undemocratic implications, but, more importantly, is apt to project us into value-setting, an area which is common to group work and education but which runs counter to generally accepted principles of good case work.

It should be emphasized that whether or not the client projects onto the agency his feelings concerning Jewishness, this is only a point of beginning. What follows in the course of counseling cannot be predicted, as this depends on the circumstances in the individual case. Both the case work and the vocational guidance agencies in the Twin Cities, in consider-

ing the problem of technique, have found that there is no "Jewish" way of handling the problem. Use of accepted techniques of counseling and case work, with individualization of the problem and focusing on methods of helping the client solve his difficulties with greater self-awareness and understanding than when he first came to the agency, remain the basis of case work practice.

It is possible that for many clients there will be a "secondary gain" as a result of their coming to the Jewish agency which was not evident at the time they originally came for help. For the client who has not resolved his conflicts about Jewishness and wants to do so, then, if this is done, his contact with the Jewish agency may be a satisfying experience. Insofar as a client's experiences with the agency and the case worker provide an experience which permits him to achieve equilibrium, to that extent he has been helped personally. He may, incidentally, get a better impression of the Jewish community, if he equates the Jewish agency with the Jewish community. Whether he does do this is open to question and study. In any case, for the professional helping person, what is important is the fact of resolution of conflict. His goal is not one of making clients more Jewish, but to make the client a happier, better adjusted person.

The Jewish community may feel that there is a stake in the helpful "good" experience that conceivably may have the cumulative effect of enabling some clients to assume their Jewishness. Parenthetically, it can be observed that this would be part of the Jewish community's stake in strong professional service. Of course the Jewish community also has a stake and should have an interest in helping clients, regardless of their feelings about Jewishness, to be happier and bet-

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ter adjusted individuals. In this way the Jewish community as well as the larger community would be the beneficiaries. In this connection, it might be well for some research organ of the Jewish community to try to ascertain the effect of contacts with the Jewish agency on clients' feelings of belonging to the Jewish community.

In summary, we have examined the reasons clients come to Jewish agencies and have found that the reasons varied according to individuals and types of clients. For some the agency has positive meaning, in terms of cultural and emotional identification, or because of their need for status. To many it is tied up with their religiosity, to others it is a remaining tie to their acceptance of themselves as Jews, and acceptance of the community by them. For other clients, Jewishness has little or no emotional significance, and the Jewishness of the agency and worker has minor importance in terms of solving their problems. Some clients may even have strong negative feelings toward Jewishness and coming to a Jewish agency may not help them work through their conflicts.

What is important is for the case worker and agency to recognize the differences in meaning to the individual client, to comprehend the emotional significance to those clients who conceive of agency and worker as parent-figures, to be aware of the cultural factors in the lives of all their clients, and to handle in the case work process those factors that have significance. For those clients to whom Jewishness is a problem interfering with their adjustment, and for whom the Jewish agency and worker have emotional meaning, these matters may properly be handled in the case work interview. Where it does not have such meaning, it should not.

As long as we continue to recognize that in case work we attempt to handle the client's problems with full recognition of the meaning to him of all the cultural, psychological, and other factors that have made him the way he is, and as long as we can honestly evaluate our role and our place in the helping process, then we will continue to render service that will be of real benefit to our clients, and thus to the Jewish community.