

dated the Protestant ethic and have become an integral element in the existing patterns of American social and economic structure.

For Jews, America has proven to be a home and a land of opportunity, the *goldene medina*. We affirm our past as we plan for the future and vow to continue to contribute to America in the spirit of

the Jewish heritage and the American dream.

We will use this Bicentennial year as a launching pad for a program of personal commitment and professional sensitivity to Jewish learning and to the Jewish values and social vision which are fundamental to Jewish continuity in America.

Changing Dimensions in Federation Agency Relationships*

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Certain significant changes are taking place in the ways Federations conceive of their role and responsibilities in relation to local services. These changes constitute a basic shift in Federation thinking which will have far-reaching effects on the nature and scope of Jewish communal services in the future.

ANY discussion of Federation-agency relationships is bound to create a sense of *deja vu*. One is reminded of the adage, "The more it changes, the more it remains the same." One wonders whether there is really anything very new, and there is the suspicion that it's all going to be a rehash of previous thinking. This attitude is understandable, because on the surface it doesn't appear that very much has changed in recent years.

The surface appearance is misleading. Certain significant changes are taking place in the ways Federations conceive of their role and responsibilities in relation to local services. These changes constitute a basic shift in Federation thinking which will have far-reaching effects on the nature and scope of Jewish communal services in the future. This new dimension has not yet crystallized, and is therefore not yet clearly seen either in the Federations or agencies. We are in a period of transition in which the shift has not yet been expressed in definitive policies and patterns of allocation. Many aspects of Federation-agency relationships persist in more or less traditional ways. Sometimes the appearance of newer ways of Federation thinking and doing are seen as temporary reactions to certain im-

mediate pressures and conditions rather than expressions of changing attitudes.

The Traditional Framework

Change can be understood and assessed only with reference to that which is presumed to have changed. It will therefore be helpful to review briefly what the traditional framework of Federation-agency relationships has been.

In this country agencies preceded Federation. They were the American forms of thousands of years of Jewish philanthropic activity. They became the major institutional expressions of communal effort which in turn became the *raison d'être* of the Federation form of community. Federations were originally created primarily to bring order into a chaotic fund-raising situation among agencies. To this day Federation is seen by most local beneficiary agencies simply as a source of funds, and I think that the nature and scope of Federation-agency relations are still determined mainly by fiscal considerations.

This conclusion is sometimes denied by Federation and agency leaders. It is maintained that there are important bonds cemented by history, culture, sense of community, personal relationships, and common devotion to community needs. While this attitude is based on a degree of reality, I still think it is fair to say that based on experience, the fiscal tie remains primary.

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There are those in the service agencies who argue, with complete sincerity and candor, that this is sound and appropriate. They see the agency as an independent entity with major service functions. The agency decides upon and carries out those functions, and seeks support for them wherever it can. It modifies those functions as it deems necessary in relation to changing needs. This position is generally held by those who have a minimal sense of investment in the concept of an organized Jewish community.

The development in recent years of planning structures in Federations did little to affect this state of affairs. Federation, with few exceptions, incorporated agency concerns as their own to a large extent, and the primary focus in Federation planning continued to be on agency concerns and program emphases. In the main, Federation planning has been and continues to be a response to agency needs and pressures. In any case, until recently, Federation planning structures rarely had the power or influence to effect significant changes in agency programs even if they wanted to.

The New Impacts on Federation

While the traditional framework persists I believe it is being subjected to two groups of forces which are compelling change. One group is operating in this country, and the second group is exerting influence from outside the country.

A. The American Impact

In the United States there have been five major impacts, as follows:

1) The first is the tremendous expansion of public responsibility and financing, and the doubts this has raised in the minds of many people about voluntarism, and particularly sectarian voluntarism. This impact has been most marked in health, children's agencies, vocational agencies and services to the

aged. Even where certain sectarian agencies are still controlled by sectarian boards and still serve primarily Jewish clientele, there is the realization that the ties to Jewish communal life are weakening as Federation financial participation declines.

2) The second major influence has been the realization that there is a serious and growing weakening of the sense of Jewish identity. This is tending to develop greater support for those programs which are seen as strengthening Jewish identity and the quality of Jewish life.

3) A third influence has been the worry about the growing pathology in the American Jewish family — the increase in divorce, in juvenile delinquency, in marital tensions, in emotional disturbance, in drug abuse, and so forth. Associated with this is a re-awakening concern for the poor and elderly, all of which is resulting in increasing pressures for funds for both old and new programs.

4) A fourth and decisive influence has been the tremendous surge of fundraising success. This has crystallized a number of important psychological elements in the climate of Federation. It has created a stronger sense of achievement, purpose and confidence. It has shifted a larger measure of influence and power to those with a primary interest in overseas rather than local needs; and has heightened the sense of common purpose and unity of action.

5) The fifth major development stemming, to a large extent, from fund raising efforts has been the ever growing realization that the Federation has become the closest thing we have in this country to an organized Jewish community. Whatever its structural shortcomings, its enabling influence over so many programs makes it the most important central organizational mechanism we have to insure the survi-

val of many aspects of Jewish life. These factors have sharpened the conscious Federation sense of responsibility for assuming a leadership role in relation to problem-solving. This has increasingly implied an assertive role in relation to the nature and scope of service programs.

B. The Overseas Impact

The second group of forces has had to do with the impact of Israel and other overseas problems, such as immigration and Soviet Jewry. We are all thoroughly familiar with these events, but I should like to point out how they have created a subtle change in basic Federation attitudes toward questions of local program support.

Up to the advent of Hitler, Federations were focused primarily on local health, welfare, community relations and educational services. Their primary *raison d'être* was to support a group of agencies. The holocaust created a basic shift in Federation thinking, even if not always conscious and articulated, to a major preoccupation with rescue and survival. That shift focused on the overall concerns of total community, and this has become a guiding principle and overall objective. It was not that local service agencies did not continue to develop. It was rather that a large new dimension has been introduced into Federation's conception of itself and its mission, and this dimension promises to become an overshadowing one.

Effects of the Impacts

Associated with these two groups of impacts, particularly since about 1960, there has been a pervasive sense of crisis. To the Israel and immigration crisis have been added the urban crisis, the generational crisis and the ever present fiscal crisis. It is the major point of this article that this atmosphere of crisis, together with the two groups of forces

already referred to, are beginning to have a cumulative impact on the way Federations are thinking about their role and their responsibilities. A number of major elements in this thinking are emerging, as follows:

1) There is a slowly developing consciousness in Federations that raising of money cannot be separated from the grave responsibility of spending it wisely. There is an increasing awareness that wise spending involves carefully thought out rationales, criteria and judgments about what shall or shall not be supported and why; and that such decisions can no longer be matters which arise solely from momentum, tradition or inertia.

2) While the ideal of service continues to permeate Federation thinking and doing, changes are occurring in the way "service" is being defined. To the traditional meanings which have referred to the needs of individuals, families and groups, has been added such new dimensions as identity and survival, which refer to total community need. This implies less concern with agency definitions of need and function, and more interest in the ways agencies relate themselves to what is considered to be the more important community needs as defined by total community.

I do not wish to introduce a misleading notion about this. I am not suggesting that Federations are suddenly changing established patterns of allocations. I am saying that there are changing viewpoints, and the evidence can be seen in the sharp increases to Jewish education, for work on college campus, and for the support of special projects related to problems of Jewish identity. For example, Jewish education has received the sharpest percentage of increase of any field in the last 10 years, and allocations to campus activities have more than quadrupled in the last 5 years.

3) I believe that this focus on community concepts of need will ultimately compel a rejection of the idea that the primary tie between Federation and agency is a fiscal one. Federation and its constituent agencies will be more clearly seen as an ethnic communal system, as a family constellation of entities and interests bound together by core elements of history, religion, sense of peoplehood, and common objectives. The objectives of the total ethnic system will play a much more significant role in determining the nature and scope of agency services. By the same token, there will be less reluctance to act decisively when agencies are not prepared to identify with the communal objectives.

4) There will be an increasing emphasis, particularly in the larger communities, on the agency responsibilities in fund-raising, in contributing, working, and providing leadership. As the sense of ethnic partnership intensifies, Federation leadership will more and more regard agency leadership as partners in a joint communal enterprise, sharing the responsibility for all major community problems and needs, including the fundamental job of raising the funds. For Federation, one criterion of community leadership is setting an example, and what is more important than setting an example in the campaigns which provide the lifeblood for all Federation programs?

5) There has been and will continue to be a significant development of planning departments with more staff and lay time being devoted to problems of planning. This will be accompanied by an increasing assertion of the role of Federation in key ways, such as a more conscious use of its own sense of priorities to influence the pattern of allocations. It is interesting to note that in a number of large communities, when the Federations felt that agencies were

not identified with overall community objectives, they created new agencies or directly sponsored the services they wished to develop. This represents a quite radical departure from traditional Federation functioning in the area of local services.

In this connection, it is significant to note that where this happened, the Federations were not ready to discuss the issues and alternatives with the agencies concerned. In several instances which I discussed with Federation representatives, I was informed that there was no confidence that the agencies would be ready to support the Federation's objectives or would be ready to implement them in ways acceptable to Federation. I offer this not as a matter of who may be right or wrong, but as a description of an undesirable element in Federation-agency relationships.

6) The increasing focus on the problem of Jewish identity and survival is leading to an ever growing interest in the ways local agencies are related to this problem and are dealing with it. For the first time we see this question being asked in deliberate ways. For example, while family services are still strongly supported, there is developing special interest in the potentials of family life education to affect the sense of Jewish identity and the style of Jewish living. One large Federation now requires that all agencies submit, as part of the annual budget request, a description of all programs relating to the strengthening of the sense of Jewish identity.

7) Another influence on Federation thinking has been the initiative which has been taken by many Federation agencies in obtaining funds from non-Federation sources. This problem has been discussed and analyzed in many forums, and I do not wish to belabor its several aspects. For the purposes of this paper, I simply wish to point out that Federations have been faced with a

growing non-sectarianism, and with an associated challenge from several quarters to justify Federation support of non-sectarian services. I am convinced that in the future, there will be increasing question about support of these services.

Implications For Federation And Agencies

What are the implications of these influences and changes for Federations and agencies? How are their mutual responsibilities affected? What is it that they have to do to deal appropriately with the changing dimensions in their relationships caused by changes in Federation thinking?

In most discussions of Federation-agency relationships that I know about, there has been a tendency on both sides to discuss the problem in terms of good guys and bad guys, an approach which has been neither helpful nor productive. One thing did strike me about those discussions, and that was how those on the Federation side of the table approached the subject. They talked about partnership and about mutual responsibilities in a way which assumed a kind of equal strength, power and authority on both sides. While this may have been true at one time, and may still be true to some extent in a very few communities, it is becoming less true as time goes on and as Federation strength and influence increase. It is necessary to face up to the reality that in the long run, it is Federation which will be calling the shots, not the agencies. It is the agencies who are and increasingly will be in the defensive position, whether for fiscal, community or other reasons.

If this assessment is valid, then it seems to me that Federation carries the greater responsibility for insuring that the future of Federation-agency relations rests on a sound basis of agreement on mutual objectives, relationships

of mutual trust and confidence, and an acceptance of mutual responsibilities. It is therefore Federation which has to take the lead in creating the kinds of structures and processes which insure full and frank communication and exchange of views. A sense of partnership can develop only if there are mechanisms which make for sound communication, and for appropriate participation of agencies in policy formulation which affects their programs and provides adequate support of agreed upon programs.

This is another way of saying that Federations still have a lot to learn about how to work with agencies and to accept the fact that the pro forma presence of a planning mechanism does not automatically create the kind of atmosphere, processes and relationships which make for mutual trust and confidence.

In making this statement about Federation responsibility, I am aware that a number of my Federation colleagues will consider it naive, unreal and Pollyannish. They will insist, and I think with validity, that Federations will be prepared to undertake such a commitment only if agencies are also prepared to undertake a commensurate commitment regarding their own obligations. This will imply, first and foremost, a commitment on the part of agency lay and professional leadership to the principle that agencies are creations of the community, existing to carry out communal objectives, responsible to the community, and having no valid Jewish existence outside of the communal framework. (Agencies do, of course, exist outside of that framework, but when they do, they cannot and will not be seen as arms of the Jewish community, sustaining and being sustained by that community). Agency leaders must be community leaders, identified with and supportive of basic communal objectives and programs.

Just as Federations will have to reach out to agencies, so will agencies have to learn how to deal more openly and effectively with Federations. They will have to accept certain realities of Federation power and influence. They will have to develop greater skills in interpretation and image building in relation to the central power structures. They will have to be ready to involve power structure people on their Boards and to be able to use them appropriately.

There will be many agency leaders, lay and professional, who may feel that my analysis is unfair and one-sided because it sees the problem primarily from the point of view of Federations. That is my viewpoint because that is the professional framework that I live with, know and accept. But I am also pointing to the crucial fact of organized Jewish life in

this country, namely, that Federations have come of age; that they are now primary determinants of the course of service programs which are and wish to remain parts of the Federation system, and that this is a reality with which all Jewish communal services must come to terms. It would be most unfortunate if this were seen as a threatening or limiting force. It may be that for some services which are outliving their sectarian relevance. For those agencies which are prepared to become significant parts of the Jewish communal system known as Federation, the opportunities are indeed great. It has become quite clear that Federation will continue to give increasing support to those services which are seen as identified with and supportive of those efforts considered to be vital to the existence of the community as an ethnic system.

Federation and Synagogue — A New Partnership For A New Time*

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... the way to deal with the issue of funding synagogue activities . . . is precisely to agree on specific projects and activities which meet the needs of the total Jewish community, which can be or should be conducted by the synagogue, and to have Federation participate in the funding of specifically those activities with full accountability by the synagogue.

ONE of the assumptions that I have made in thinking through and developing this article is that of the dynamic nature of the Jewish community and of the Jewish Federation. I state this at the very outset because a while ago I came upon, among other materials, an article based on a presentation by William Avrunin to the General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations & Welfare Funds, in November, 1974, entitled, "The Developing Federation Idea." Avrunin stated, "Two basic characteristics (of Federations) are overriding. They affect everything we do or fail to do. They are related to everything I will have to say about Federation. First, Federation is a voluntary association characteristic of our voluntary society. Second, it has obvious limitations." Later, Avrunin goes on, "(in) the reality of Federation's limitations, we refer not simply to a *sense* of limitations, but to their *actuality*. Even though we use the term 'Federation' and 'organized Jewish community' interchangeably, they are not interchangeable. Our reference is only to those parts of the organized Jewish community associated together in Federation. In most communities, we do not mean synagogues. We do not mean many other bodies on the periphery or

outside of the Federation concept."¹ With Avrunin's quote as background and recalling my opening reference to the dynamism and changing nature of Federation, I now quote from a report of the Committee on Jewish Life of Jewish Federation-Council of Greater Los Angeles dated April, 1974, just a brief half-year prior to Avrunin's presentation:

The Committee on Jewish Life was organized at the call of the President of Jewish Federation-Council of Greater Los Angeles. The committee was charged with examining: (1) The relationship between synagogues and Jewish Federation-Council. This charge came from the feeling that untapped potential rewards could accrue to the benefit of the entire Jewish community of Los Angeles from the development of a creative new relationship between Federation and synagogues. Although there is now some interaction between the Jewish Federation-Council community and the community of synagogues, essentially, Federation operates on one level, a level which deals with fund-raising, with the allocation of those funds and social planning, while congregations operate on another level, one which deals with memberships and spiritual, cultural and educational activities. For the most part, these communities do not appear to touch each other and where there is interaction, it is not felt or perceived by a majority of the Jewish community.

(2) The question of the significant savings

* Presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Conference of Jewish Communal Service, June 1, 1976.

¹ William Avrunin, "The Developing Federation Idea," this *Journal*, Vol. LI, No. 3 (1975), p. 229.