

Resolution on Immigration to the United States  
 Resolution on Energy  
 Resolution on Social Security Benefits

Resolution on Federally Supported Services for  
 the Elderly

## The Jewish Community of the 1980's\*

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*... our effort to create an American Judaism that could nestle comfortably and inconspicuously in the embrace of American society, however well-intentioned, was a very serious mistake, a mistake for which we today pay an inglorious price. For that effort, survivalist in temper, produced a uniquely American denomination of Judaism, not Orthodox, not Conservative, not Reform or Reconstructionist, not even secular; it produced something that could only be called Residual Judaism.*

In the fall of 1907, Zalman Shazar enrolled in the Academy of Jewish Studies which had been established by Baron David Ginzburg in St. Petersburg. The curriculum was rich, the faculty distinguished, but the students were not satisfied, for there was no course that covered the social and economic conditions of Diaspora Jews. The Academy was bold and innovative, but for such new-fangled subjects as sociology and demography it had no room. So the students decided to appeal to Baron Ginzburg, and this, Shazar tells us in his autobiography, is how Ginzburg responded:

Dear ones, I am deeply grieved by this request of yours. I am certain that you have no intention in the world of causing me unhappiness, and it is very difficult for me to say no to you. But how can I hide my concern from you? You have come here to study the nature and destiny of the Jewish people—and now I hear you asking what occupations Jews were compelled to engage in to keep alive. It is as if a scholar had been asked to lecture to you on Kant, and then, instead of teaching you the Critique of Pure Reason, spent his time describing the restaurant Kant frequented and the kind of cutlets his wife gave him. And it is not Kant you are studying, but the sublime people God chose for his own! Do you really think it is so important to know exactly when the gentiles permitted us to engage in trade and when those malicious people forced us to be money lenders? What good will the information

do you? And wouldn't it be a pity to spend your precious time on this when there are still so many rooms in the mansions of Jewish scholarship that are closed to you and so many great books waiting for you?

As he spoke, he pointed to the tens of rooms filled with bookshelves from floor to ceiling, endless, infinite treasures of books . . .

We shrank before the majesty of his suppressed rage. And he, walking excitedly across the room between the desk and the books, suddenly stood still and went on even more bitingly: If you do research on horses—there is such a science, too—it is obviously very important to investigate what fodder should be put in the horses' crib—oats or barley. But when the subject of your study is the wisdom of the chosen people, do you think that their fodder and their crib should concern you?

My subject this evening, despite the demographic materials which have been sent to you in advance of this conference meeting, is neither oats nor barley. I side with Baron Ginzburg, as also with Y.L. Peretz, who was hired in 1899 by a Warsaw philanthropist to study and report on the life of the Jews in Poland's shtetlach. The intention was that this be a statistical expedition, recording and reporting on income, diet, fertility and the like. It was, however, during the course of that very mission that Peretz came for the first time to understand that it is the stories of a people rather than its statistics that tell us of its situation. A ruble more, a ruble less; a child more, a child less—these tell us what facilities to build, what professionals to train. They tell us about the edges of

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people's lives, and it is at the edges that our interventions take place. But Peretz, who began by looking for facts, at the edges, found his way to the core; he began and ended by looking for truths, having learned along the way that an accumulation of facts does not amount to a truth. He came to believe that the truth is revealed in a people's language, in its response to the facts, in its evasions and its confrontations and its resolutions.

I side with Peretz, not against the facts but beyond the facts. Thus, for example: a couple of years back, *Midstream* published an essay by Elihu Bergman in which Professor Bergman set out to show that there might well be, by the year 2072, as few as 10,420 Jews left in America. Many of you will remember the study; it created great shock waves throughout the community. It was duly reported by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, and it became the subject of sermons, symposia, and considerable conversation.

I believe that we learn much more about American Jewry from its response to the Bergman article than we learn from the article itself. For the fact of the matter is that the most serious demographers of American Jewish life—people such as Goldstein, Massaryk, Goldscheider and others—have been arguing for some time that the straight-line extrapolation from a high rate of intermarriage to a shrinking Jewish community is wrong, and Massaryk has even argued that we are most likely experiencing a modest gain in Jewish numbers as a consequence of the current rate of intermarriage. Goldscheider has gone still farther, arguing that even when all factors are taken into consideration, including our low rate of reproduction, American Jewry is probably holding its own so far as numbers are concerned.

Now the arguments of these good gentlemen and able scholars have not been published in obscure places. On the contrary: in at least several cases, they have

appeared in magazines and journals whose circulation is larger than *Midstream's*. Yet they have been greeted by total silence. Out of Bergman's nonsense, as ill-informed and ill-reasoned an essay as has appeared in many years, urgent consultations grew; out of the more sensible and reassuring analyses of others, nothing blossomed.

Why should this be so, and what do we learn from it?

I submit that we enter Jewish life with a theory so fixed, so rigid, that only those facts which conform to the theory are taken to heart and to mind. The essential element of that theory is, as the great scholar Ravidovitch put it, that we Jews are "an ever-dying people." We believe that Jewish survival is everywhere and every day in jeopardy, that ours is most likely the last generation of Jews.

I know of no more pernicious doctrine than that. It is ill-founded logically, it is ill-founded empirically, and what I propose to begin with this evening is a brief reflection on its absurdity, followed by an attempt to answer the question of why it is that we cling so steadfastly to it in the face of both the logic and the evidence, and then by a consideration of the ways in which such a view not only misrepresents the truth but also, by acting as a self-fulfilling prophecy, does us very grave damage.

Logic first: Can it reasonably be argued that the threats to the Jewish people in our time are so sinister as to place our very survival in question? To suggest that they are is to suggest that those threats are unprecedented in their ferocity. But the Jewish people has faced threats through most of its 4000-year-old history, and we have survived. Even a superficial knowledge of our history, and surely a careful reading of that history, confirms, again and again, the view that the Jewish people is marvelously adaptive and resilient. The fact of the matter, indeed, is that we have actually done much better than survive. We have been, for most of our time, uncommonly

inventive and productive, by whatever standard measured, and it does a radical injustice to our story to summarize it as merely an example of survival in the face of adversity. Further, and more important still, the circumstances of the Jewish people have changed, and the change is all to our favor. The Jewish people of our time is neither without friends nor without power, be it the power which derives from an independent Jewish state or the power which derives from our position in the free societies of the West. We are not what and who we were, and to suggest that we are is to be trapped by a model of Jewish history which derives from other and sorrier times and places, which does not fit our own condition.

Yet we are so trapped. Of questions we make problems, of problems we make crises, of threats we make calamities, no matter what reason tells us, no matter the evidence. Consider the evidence: Are we not the people who in the last seven years has managed to bring nearly 250,000 of our kinfolk out of the Soviet Union into freedom? This puny people, this threatened people, this dying people, turns out to be the only people that has managed to defeat the frozen evil of the Soviet Union. And it is this same dispirited people, this same condemned people, which raises over a billion dollars a year in voluntary contributions to help sustain Jewish agencies and institutions, which lobbies vigorously and often successfully to protect its own interests, which halts its own funeral procession every second step to lay still a new cornerstone for Jewish life. Observers, Jewish and non-Jewish alike, have for years been announcing the imminence of our demise, telling us that we are a vanishing people, and we have come to believe their grim predictions. But we refuse to vanish: instead, we create *havurot*, we create a CAJE, we create new day schools, we create new magazines, we create new liturgies, we create new scholarship, we create a

new literature, we build new museums and new libraries and new cultural centers.

How is it that our eyes do not see the work of our hands and our lips do not praise it? Our Judaic memories are vague, and our Judaic motives are blurred, but our Judaic energies are substantial; these are not the energies of a dying people, of a vanishing people. Why is it, then, that each generation of Jews, ours no less than those who came before, insists that it is the last? Why do we revel in Bergman and stonily ignore the others?

There are, it seems to me, two principal explanations for the curious compulsion which so distorts our vision. The first is our history of calamity. We recite that in each generation, our enemies rise up to destroy us, and we know that the words do not exaggerate. Against our memories of trauma, it is hard to preserve our recollections of triumph, the more so since the traumas belong not only to our past, but also to our present. The perception that we are a bone in the throat of the world is inescapable, and there is none amongst us who can quite say how it is that we, so few in number as we are, have managed thus far to sustain ourselves. The whole saga seems a miracle, and since we are by nature skeptics who do not believe in miracles, we expect at any moment to learn that the Jewish people and Jewish power and Jewish persistence are all illusions and that the bitter logic of ugliness and enmity has won the day at last.

What can I say against this, save to insist, again and again, that Jewish history is not an unremitting story of calamities and catastrophes, is not a proof that the world is evil and mankind non-redeemable, that, instead, we are the people for whom the waters once parted, we are the people who stood at Sinai, above all we are the people who through 2000 years of punishing madness have insisted on the pursuit of meaning, on finding it, on praising it, on advocating it. The presentation of Jewish history as

compelling evidence of darkness reveals us as amnesiacs. And the depiction of the Jewish present as evidence of futility reveals us as blind or neurotic.

But there is a second reason, beyond either amnesia and blindness, that helps account, it seems to me, for our graceless lack of confidence in ourselves and in our future. For all that we are preoccupied by the damage once done us by our enemies, we are still more concerned by the curse of friendship we now encounter. Deep down—and sometimes not so very deep—we still believe that we depended on the pogroms and the persecutions to keep us a people, that we have not the fiber to withstand the lures of a genuinely open society. It is seduction, not rape, that we fear the most, and nowhere is the seducer more blatant, less devious, than here in America. Here, where it is the hand of friendship that is preferred, here, where the assassin's hand is at last stayed, what is there that will cement us, that will bind us to one another? Does safety for Jews mean, as we might hope, that Judaism can flourish, or does safety for Jews mean, as we fear, that Judaism becomes irrelevant?

In the battle between hope and fear, our fears defeat our hopes. We perceive America as a vast supermarket, its shelves overflowing with enticements we have never seen before, items we were never before allowed to own. And we imagine that the Jews, permitted free access to that supermarket, will empty their carts of the dreary merchandise of yesterday to make room for more, more, always more of America's bounty. Judaism is a memory and a burden; America is a promise and an adventure. How can we expect the Jews to make room for the memory, to shoulder the burden?

That has been the core image, the informing metaphor, of Jewish professionals in this country since we began. We have perceived ourselves as fighting a rear-guard action, seeking somehow, against terrible odds, to stave off the uprooting flood.

What tactics have we used in the battle? We have sought to tell those whom we lead that things are not what they seem, that the openness of this land is only superficial, that anti-Semitism lurks just around the corner. What an encouraging lesson to teach, that we must keep our bags packed and our passports stamped, because if we are very lucky, this oasis too will prove a mirage, and we shall be driven back to our native swamp. Or we have argued that while things go well for us, Israel's continuing travail, and the treatment of Jews in the Soviet Union, and in Argentina, and in Uruguay, and in you-name-it-we'll-find-anti-Semitism-there, proves that we are still an abnormal people, and we can take comfort, those of us who care about the Jewish future, from ugliness elsewhere. Even if it is beyond our shores, it confirms that we cannot trust the stranger, we will not be permitted to fade away, our future is a simple extrapolation from our past, as we have come to remember that past.

The essence of this approach is that we seek to prove that it would be dishonorable for Jews to stop being Jews, for one does not abandon a beleaguered people. So long as anti-Semitism persists, a Jew who would be honorable cannot quit.

Now that is a rather convoluted argument. On the surface, it would seem much more direct to substitute for the argument, that it is not honorable *not* to be Jewish, the argument that it *is* honorable *yes* to be Jewish. But that more direct and more compelling argument is one we have been loathe to mount, for it flies in the face of our fundamental strategic doctrine. The principal element of that doctrine, promulgated and preached by the most ardent defenders of Jewish survival, holds that the Jewish persuasion is irrelevant. In order to keep Jewish juices flowing, we have wanted some anti-Semitism, but in order to prevent Jewish blood from spilling, we have not wanted too much. Accordingly, we had to persuade the world that we were not, after

all, terribly different from anyone else. And this same argument on behalf of Jewish non-difference would also, we supposed, reassure the Jews themselves, who might otherwise see the burden of Judaism as a barrier to the American adventure. Accordingly, we argued eloquently and convincingly that a Jew hath indeed eyes, ears, organs, senses, dimensions, passions, that we are fed with the same food and healed by the same means and that we ski the same slopes and watch the same Walter Cronkite as the others do. We argued these things even though some of us knew better, knew that there were other things that did set us irretrievably apart. But we thought best that we not speak of those things, of the memories and of the dreams. That was our strategy for oh so many years, and today we pay the price of that strategy, for today, when at last we are reasonably comfortable about the announcement of our difference, we no longer recall its nature. Now that we trust America, more or less, and believe that it is safe to speak out loud, we have nothing left to say.

I suggest that our effort to create an American Judaism that could nestle comfortably and inconspicuously in the embrace of American society, however well-intentioned, was a very serious mistake, a mistake for which we today pay an inglorious price. For that effort, survivalist in temper, produced a uniquely American denomination of Judaism, not Orthodox, not Conservative, not Reform or Reconstructionist, not even secular; it produced something that can only be called Residual Judaism. So fearful were we that our own Jews would not be up to the challenge of difference, so certain were we that our hosts would not be up to that same challenge, that we sought to produce a Judaism that could be easily swallowed, Judaism as an appetizer that would leave time and room for the American feast, that would enable us to sit at the banquet table with all the others herein gathered and not feel awkward or self-

conscious. Create, we thought, a Judaism that works at the periphery of people's lives, one that is not too obtrusive, not too demanding, not too substantial, hence not too threatening.

Now this is surely not a new argument. Many more senior and more eloquent than I have argued it vigorously for years now, and I myself have been arguing it since 1965 or so. And the truth is that there has been a consequence to the argument, for over the course of the last decade, we have witnessed a remarkable resurgence of Jewish concern and commitment. It was not the force of our argument alone that carried the day; it was also the Six-Day War, and Vietnam, and the emergence of ethnic pride as an acceptable aspect of the American experience, and a variety of other fortuitous circumstances, that together brought this change about. That the change has now taken, and is no fad, should be perfectly clear. Simply stated, whatever the facts on intermarriage, on assimilation and on apathy and on cults and on all the other matters that appear to diminish our numbers and weaken our morale, there are hosts of newly awakened Jews for whom active involvement in Jewish life has become an attractive option. In the 1960s and 1970s, a community long undernourished, which most observers predicted would seek sustenance elsewhere, developed a serious Judaic appetite.

That is the good, and the surprising, news of our time. That appetite is our principal resource as we enter the 1980s. When I spoke from this same platform in 1968, I could only wish it might emerge full blown. Now it has. And now I rise to propose that the appetite will prove useless unless it can be fed, and fed well. We will have committed a cruel hoax on those whose appetites we have sought to arouse if, having succeeded, we have nothing with which to satisfy those appetites. And I suggest that unless we can rid ourselves, massively and dramatically, of the doctrine

of survivalism, we shall not succeed. And the reason is that a community that regards walking as a gift will never think to run or to dance, and those of its number who seek to run and to dance will be driven to look elsewhere.

Simply put, the doctrine of survivalism has taught us to resist the challenge of quality, and the fact of the matter is that for all the good news we may cite, most Jews do not yet imagine that Judaism is an arena where the term "quality" can be applied. The gap between the taste and the standards we take for granted in our secular lives and the dross we have been taught to accept as Jews is crippling. Our standards for Judaism and for our own Judaic performance have been debased, and I believe that very many Jews, unwilling to live by a double standard, and unaware that a Judaism of excellence is available to them, will simply drop out, not out of apathy but out of disappointment. At best, they will assign to Judaism such energies and attentions as are left over after they have done with those areas of their lives where achievement and challenge reign. And from such corners, a recognizable Judaism will become increasingly difficult to retrieve, increasingly pointless to transmit. Why, after all, invest such energies in, and why impose upon one's children, a tradition so enervated, so trivial, so peripheral?

If we are ready to settle for what we can get, or for what our fears have taught us to think is the most we can get, we shall be left empty-handed. We shall demean the very thing we seek to protect, and we shall deprive our children—and theirs—of their patrimony, of the opportunity to encounter Judaism in its fullness. If, in the name of survival, we continue to offer our children—and ourselves—a diet so spare, so unappetizing, so bland, as Residual Judaism has put forward, there will seem little point in consuming it. We have won the battle of Judaic intentions, but this is only a partial victory, a victory that enables us to com-

mence the battle of Judaic meaning.

A nourishing Judaism, a Judaism that can match the appetite that has emerged—that is the one we talk about, but do not offer, the one we describe but do not yet represent. It is the closing of the gap between our advertisements for Judaism and the Judaism we in fact purvey, that intolerable and destructive gap, which, it seems to me, is the central task and highest priority of the professional leadership of our community for the 1980s. Despite the good news, it is not yet time to celebrate; instead, it is time to raise the ante once again, to demand more, of ourselves, of our kinsfolk.

What does it mean to seek a community of excellence? What can it mean to pursue quality, to set standards, to want more, and better, and richer?

Let me say first what it does not mean. It does not mean a continuing exclusive emphasis on Jewish style at the expense of Jewish substance. I am tired of the term "Jewish lifestyle"—it sells us too cheap. And I am disturbed by our continuing assertion of the virtues of Jewishness without a corollary concern for the values of Judaism.

By Jewishness, I intend the expression of group interests and the exploration of group nostalgia which mark us today. We are warmed by a bit of *yiddishkeit*, and it is no surprise, given how deeply we believed that it was no longer available, that when we encounter it, we celebrate. But ladies and gentlemen, the Jewish people is about more than defending its own interests, it is about more than remembering its own past. The Jewish community is about being a holy people. We are not merely an ethnic group; had we been only another ethnic group, we would long since have lost the fight, for there would have been little purpose in the investment. We are about tomorrow, about that tomorrow we call the end of days, we are about a fractured world made whole, we are about the work

of redemption, we are about the covenant. When those who seek to cast their lot with us ask what it is we have to offer, we must have something more to say than this is the way it was, or this is the way it may yet be. We must be able to describe a community that is distinguished not merely by its wishes but also by its ways, not merely by its dreams and its memories, but by its actions. And such a community we have yet to craft. It is not enough to announce that we are against despair. What is it we are for? Nor is it enough to shout "never again;" to what do the Jews say "yea"? It is not enough to remember the Holocaust or even to work for Israel; vicarious Judaism will not do, it provides a motive but not a meaning. And everything I have been saying up til now can now be simply stated: a community that stands for too little inherits the wind. Our fixation on survival as opposed to excellence assures that we will not excel and—here's the rub—defeats our efforts to survive.

I feel constrained to add, lest I be misunderstood, that a community of excellence does not mean, cannot be permitted to mean, an Orthodox community alone. There are those who think of Judaism as a neatly quantifiable commodity, where "more" inherently means "better" as well, and where "most" therefore means "excellent." I am not among them. Expanding Jewish activity does not necessarily mean enhancing Jewish meaning. I take Jewish ritual to be the metronome of Jewish life, and for all that I think it desperately important to keep time, to know the rhythm of our people, a metronome is only a metronome, it provides a beat but not yet a melody. I do not know whether there can be a melody without it, but the evidence suggests that it is all too easy to mistake the tempo for the tune, to become so fixated on keeping time that one never lifts the instrument to one's lips. Perhaps a metronome is necessary; for sure, it is not sufficient.

What, then, at last do I mean by "excellence"?

I offer several brief illustrations.

I take, as do we all, great pride in the hospitals we have erected in so many of our cities. But a community of Judaic excellence is not content to build great hospitals or to have distinguished physicians. A community of Judaic excellence, Jews of communal excellence, will also insure that the ill in our hospitals be visited and not abandoned. I do not think it an accident that of all the articles we at *Moment* have published, the one which elicited by far the largest number of requests for reprints was a modest little piece entitled "The Delicate Mitzvah: How to Visit the Sick."

*Alachat kama v'kama* do we fall short of excellence with respect to proper care and concern for our elderly, for our own parents.

Or, from a different domain entirely: how can a community that boasts of Bellow and Singer, of writers of grace and of skill in profusion, a community of obsessive readers, a community of the book, permit itself to suffer what passes for a Jewish press in this country? Do we simply shrug our shoulders in indifference, thinking it a modest failing—or do we, can we, or will we finally understand that by allowing the drivel we do we are reinforcing the image that Judaism is not a place where quality counts? Nor can we take refuge in helpless alibis, for in Baltimore and now on Long Island, with the *Jewish Times* in the one and the *Jewish World* in the other, we have proof that we are not helpless, that we are capable of better.

Of course we are capable of better, most likely even of the very best. But for us to translate capability into commitment, resource into reality, we shall have to put away the notion that it is in our secular lives and there alone that ambition is appropriate and that standards can be imposed, we shall have to say no to Residual Judaism, that malformed child of our survivalist

obsession.

Would you like at last a statistic? Here is a statistic: over the course of this year, some ten to twelve thousand Jewish couples will file for divorce. And another statistic: some eighty or ninety percent of them will use Jewish attorneys to handle the case. Is it not possible for us to convene these lawyers, at least those on whom we have some claim—the numbers are not small—and seek through the application of Jewish precepts to encourage them to help their wounded clients to preserve their dignity and self respect, rather than, as is so lamentably and so often the case these days, to exacerbate the conflict?

In each of the areas I have noted, and in each of a hundred more, there is room for improvement, there is need for improvement, there is urgency for improvement. Failing the effort at such improvement, we shall become even more fractious, ever more quarrelsome, ever more trivial. Ladies and gentlemen, in our generation, it is not Jewish powerlessness that is the principal threat to Jewish survival; it is Jewish purposelessness.

In my remarks, I have merely set the stage for a renewed debate on our cosmic purpose. I have proposed some modest arenas, which all can accept, in which we can prove excellence even as the debate goes forward. In that pursuit, as in that debate, I believe that the professional class of our community has a special role to play. You have that role not because you are wiser, or because you are nobler, nor even because you are more committed, for none of these is universally so. No. The special role is yours because only you can break the sterile tradition of minimalism to which we are heir. Most Jews simply cannot imagine another way, a better way, a more

substantial way. People tailor their imagination to fit their sense of possibility, and nothing they have seen of Jewish life has alerted them to the richness of Jewish possibility. But you—you can stretch the imagination of our people by insisting on excellence and representing it. It is for you to inspire a sense of the possible that derives not from our constricted present but from our expansive prospect.

This you can do by helping, at last, to craft a community of ethical excellence, which does not demean itself by honoring the base and which does not debase itself by endorsing the vulgar. This you can do by insisting that the era of grim junk must be done. This you can do, preeminently, by making of your own work a model not only of Judaic commitment but also of Judaic achievement.

And can anyone doubt that it is precisely that community of excellence which we might together craft that is the surest guarantor of our survival? For such a community, so rich and so rewarding, none would think to leave. Our demographers would ply their statistical trade, but we would pursue our mandate mystical, and there would the truth about the Jews be found.

Such a community would itself offer a sufficient response to the question of Judaic purpose. And such a community is ours to fashion, if we will only perceive that suffering is not an adequate summary of our past nor survival an adequate prescription of our future, that, instead, our past is a past of nobility, and our future, a future of holiness. It is that past that must become the motive for Jewish life, and that future, its method. Thus, and thus alone, can our people newly hungry be nourished.

## Reaping the Wild Wind: Some Issues Confronting the Jewish Community Center\*

Abe Vinik

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*The time is long past that the (Jewish community) center rely solely on self-studies for the assessment of its performance, however valuable these may be. The Center is in need of periodic, systematic, outside review—and accreditation . . . of its performance . . .*

The seduction of a new decade arouses certain uncontrollable, irrational impulses, among them the need to define, and thereby hope to control, the future. However much I may enjoy the erotic arousal of such an impulse, the historic rarity of accurate predictions and my own track record as a born-again skeptic make me hesitate to enter upon such a course. At the same time, the planning committee of the Association of Jewish Center Workers may well have assumed too great a risk in asking someone about to withdraw from the battle to deliver this keynote address. The temptation to look back rather than forward will be difficult to avoid. Whether or not this paper serves the original purpose, I am thankful for the invitation because it afforded me the opportunity to review those of my writings over the past thirty years which I could still find. However, this will not be just a snip and paste rehash.

My career in the Jewish community center, for many reasons, has been blessed with fortune. What is relevant here is that it coincided with the explosive growth, measured by any yardstick, of the center field, a growth during what may, in retrospect, be regarded as the golden age of American Jewry. I must confront the present to which that age has brought us; it being my assumption that such a confrontation is, at least, necessary, if not sufficient, for the lay and professional leadership of our centers to deal with the future.

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It is not my intent to dwell on demographic issues or their implications. I am relieved of that burden by the plan for this annual meeting. Instead, I propose to discuss other selected developments in our American, Jewish and professional lives to which, I believe, the Center must direct its attention. I am mindful, in my selectivity, of the danger of distortion of fact, and confusion between cause and effect, resulting in the application of the wrong treatment to the misdiagnosed illness. Your skeptical appraisal is both welcome and essential. After all, "What is the ordinary member of the tribe to do when the witch doctors disagree?"

### Vital Large Social Trends

First; on the American scene, I am less concerned about the disarray in our political economy and our foreign policy than I am in the uncertain prospect of building and holding together any stable coalition of sub-groups in our society. The centrifugal forces engendered by the conflicting interests of so many disparate sub-groups lend confusion to and prevent any consensus about the requirements for community cohesion and national leadership. I see the American Jewish community having essentially detached itself from participation in the process of trying to build a new coalition, due to uncertainty and disillusionment or because its energy is invested in alternative definitions of its own self-interest. The path of going it alone and mobilizing adequate power out of our own resources is an illusion leading to a