

Membership Resolutions

Annual Meeting, Los Angeles

The following resolutions constitute an affirmative statement by the members of CJCS that active participation on the issues cited is of high priority to the professional and to the community. The CJCS urges each Affiliated Professional Association to develop and implement strategies for action, and to encourage the involvement of its members on those resolutions of particular relevance to their field of service.

Religion in a Pluralistic Society

The principle of church-state separation maintains religious pluralism in America. Its safeguard of the rights of conscience of minorities has contributed to our ability as Jews to participate fully in the broader community without forfeiting our Jewish affiliation and identity.

That principle appears to be threatened in a number of ways: by court decisions upholding the placement of religious symbols on public property, through Congressional action allowing religious clubs in public secondary schools, by proposals to enact school prayer or moment of silence legislation, and by support from President Reagan and others for tuition tax credit legislation. CJCS rejects these and all other efforts to enact into law religious values or beliefs of particular religious denominations. The climate created in the United States by these actions and statements jeopardizes and threatens American principles of pluralism, Constitutional guarantees, and the very security of the American Jewish community and other religious minorities.

As Jews and Americans, we deplore all efforts to use the political process to

impose sectarian views. Therefore, CJCS:

- 1) publicly expresses its strong support for the First Amendment guarantees of religious freedom requiring the government, at all levels, to remain scrupulously neutral in regard to religious matters and to maintain strict separation of church and state;
- 2) encourages each of its affiliated professional associations and their members to support the principles of this resolution; and,
- 3) asks its members to communicate, by all appropriate means and methods, their beliefs as stated herein to their elected representatives and join with like-minded groups and individuals—both Jewish and non-Jewish—in furtherance of this cause.

Federal Responsibility in Providing Human Services

One of the underlying principles of the field of Jewish communal service is the traditional Judaic value of *Tikun Olam*, to repair the world. As practitioners and citizens, we support the establishment and maintenance of government programs to safeguard the health and welfare of the needy in our society.

Since many members of CJCS provide direct services to needy individuals, we are directly and acutely aware of the impact on service delivery resulting from the withdrawal of federal support from important programs. Agencies report that cutbacks in federal funds have seriously impeded their ability to meet the needs of their client populations.

Changes in governmental policies as well as demographic changes in the Jewish community, have created a growing and somewhat new clientele for many Jewish social service agencies. Case workers have been reporting many more cases of single heads of households with serious financial and emotional problems, as well as an increase in child and spousal abuse cases, often a direct result of financial distress.

At the same time, tightening of eligibility standards and limitations of funds in certain programs have led to the cutting off from assistance of otherwise needy individuals. Thus, agencies are less able to meet increasing demands for service.

In addition to realizing that their ability to meet the needs is threatened, Jewish agencies are facing prospective cutbacks in voluntary support for their programs. Federal proposals that threaten to have a "chilling effect" on charitable giving are viewed with alarm by Jewish agencies across the country. Efforts to block these proposals have been launched in many communities and deserve the support of all CJCS members.

The CJCS is concerned that at bottom we are facing a redefinition by the federal government of its role in providing human services. The Reagan administration's redefinition of the role of government has resulted in the exclusion from service of millions of people, many of whom are children, single heads of households and other more vulnerable categories of the needy.

The CJCS:

- 1) calls upon its members and APAs to continue working toward the preservation of programs that meet the legitimate needs of our client populations,
- 2) will pursue coalition opportunities both within and beyond the Jewish community to meet the needs of

the chronically poor and needy; and,

- 3) encourages its members and APAs to work closely with other Jewish communal professionals to assist the Jewish community in understanding the implication of federal cutbacks on the community's ability to continue providing the same level and extent of service.

Events in the Middle East

This past year has been marked by a growth in the already positive relationship between Israel and the United States. Despite domestic economic difficulties, the United States has judged the strategic relationship with Israel to be of sufficient importance to American interests to increase military and economic supporting assistance to the Jewish state. The recently-enacted Free Trade Area between the two countries augurs well for the much-needed growth in Israel's export economy.

Diplomatically, the United States has begun to articulate unequivocally the centrality of Israel to the security of the association of democratic nations. The Reagan administration has pointedly told the Arab states that peace in the Middle East will come only when they are prepared to sit down with Israel in face-to-face negotiations. At the same time, Israel has repeatedly stated its willingness to meet with Arab leaders, such as King Hussein of Jordan, without pre-conditions and within the framework of the Camp David agreements.

CJCS reaffirms its unswerving commitment to the state and people of Israel and their right to live at peace within secure and recognized boundaries. To that end, CJCS pledges to:

- 1) speak out in support of increased military, economic, and diplomatic cooperation between the United States, Canada and Israel;

- 2) work to increase understanding of the significance of the relationship between the United States and Israel and the benefit to western interests of support provided Israel; and,
- 3) educate its members as to the significance to diaspora Jewry of maintaining a strong, viable, secure Israel.

Ethiopian Jewry

CJCS applauds the historic rescue and absorption of Ethiopian Jewry by the State of Israel. Despite severe economic problems, Israel has once again opened its doors, without reservation, to a beleaguered Jewish community. The drama of rescue underscores the unity of the Jewish people, reminding us that our history and sense of peoplehood transcend matters of race or politics.

At the same time, we have been moved by the plight of untold numbers of Africans threatened with death because of the ravages of drought and famine. CJCS applauds the work of relief agencies, including the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, which have unceasingly worked to relieve the dire threat facing millions of Africans in Ethiopia and other parts of sub-Saharan Africa.

CJCS urges its members and APAs to involve themselves fully in Operation Moses and other efforts designed to speed the absorption of Ethiopian Jews into Israeli society. Moreover, as citizens of compassionate nations, and motivated by the prophetic tradition of our faith, we pledge to continue to support efforts by our governments and private agencies to bring relief to the people of Africa suffering from famine.

Nuclear Threat

CJCS believes that no issue threatens our existence as Jews and citizens of so-

ciety more than the specter of nuclear warfare. We applaud the resumption of nuclear arms negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union and hope that these will eventuate not merely in a reduction in nuclear weapons but in a solemn resolve by both sides to pursue a complete halt to the nuclear arms race.

With appropriate safeguards, we appeal to all nuclear powers to reach agreement on the mutual reduction in the testing, production, and development of nuclear weapons.

Finally, we call upon the United States to vigorously take the lead in achieving effective nuclear non-proliferation. The CJCS supports proposals which would impose a moratorium on the transfer of nuclear technology to other nations until such time as genuinely effective safeguards can be established.

CJCS urges its members to:

- 1) speak out on this issue, including communicating with federal legislators and working for similar expressions of concern by other professional groups and agencies; and,
- 2) join in coalition with like-minded groups working for the same ends.

Soviet Jewry

In 1984, Soviet Jewish emigration plummeted to the lowest point in 15 years with the departure of only 896 Jews. Moreover, recent months have witnessed the arrest of numerous leaders in the Jewish cultural movement and an escalation in state-inspired anti-Semitism, highlighted by an especially cruel TV show entitled "Hirelings and Accomplices".

At the same time, the change in the Soviet regime and the opening of arms talks between the Soviet Union and the United States suggest new opportunities to reduce international tension.

CJCS pledges to continue its active participation in the struggle to assure full human and emigration rights for our brothers and sisters in the Soviet Union. We urge our members and APAs to:

- 1) become active in local and national Soviet Jewry advocacy groups;
- 2) write the legislators and other government officials in the U.S. and Canada decrying the plight of Soviet Jews;
- 3) urge the agencies in which their members work to place Soviet Jewish refuseniks and Prisoners of Conscience on their boards as honorary members; and
- 4) educate and energize sister professional associations in the broader community to become involved in Soviet Jewry and other such human rights issues.

Apartheid

As Jews, we find the South African apartheid system incompatible with our traditional belief in the dignity of all people. The concept that a person's rights and status in society can be defined by his birth, is totally repugnant to us.

Apartheid is a particularly cruel form of racial discrimination. It leads to the denial of equal opportunity to the black, Asian and colored citizens of South Africa, groups constituting 70% of the total population. Apartheid has resulted in the unequal delivery of public services, the forced separation of families, the detention of large numbers of people, the incarceration of political activists and the cruel treatment of civilians.

CJCS:

- 1) believes that the governments of the United States and Canada should be urged to work vigorously to end apartheid, discrim-

ination, and violence in South Africa;

- 2) supports legislation, such as the Gray-Kennedy bill, whose purpose is to end future American financial investment in South Africa that might contribute to the sustaining of apartheid;
- 3) urges American and Canadian companies with holdings in South Africa to conduct affairs there with the same commitment to non-discrimination in the workplace required in the United States and Canada; and,
- 4) urges its members and APAs to join coalitions of like-minded individuals seeking to bring a rapid yet peaceful transformation of South African society to a representative and democratic form of government.

The Homeless

The presence of large numbers of people living on the streets of our cities is a dramatic condemnation of our society's inability to provide for the well-being of these citizens. This is, of course, an extremely complex issue involving questions of mental health policy, welfare policy, health care, provision of low-cost housing, drug and alcohol rehabilitation, job training, as well as numerous legal issues.

Nevertheless, it is beyond discussion that a terrible human toll is evidenced by the fact that people, living defenselessly and in squalor, are found in growing numbers on our streets.

As communal professionals, we find this situation intolerable. Therefore, CJCS:

- 1) believes that only by the creation of national efforts to meet the needs of these people can this issue be addressed in an effective manner. Given the already strained resources of most large cities and the

MEMBERSHIP RESOLUTIONS

transient nature of many of the street people, it is unreasonable to expect municipal governments to resolve this problem except in concert with state and federal agencies;

- 2) calls upon Jewish institutions—direct service agencies and synagogues especially—to examine their role in relieving the physical and perhaps emotional distress suffered by many of the homeless in our communities; and,
- 3) calls upon its APAs to study and

enact measures to relieve the appalling and life-threatening conditions under which street people live, including but not limited to the establishment of additional shelters, providing a mandate to the appropriate authorities to pick up individuals who are clearly a threat to themselves, and where necessary, the re-institutionalization of those street people least able to fend for themselves.

Adopted: June 4, 1985