

Understanding American Jewry

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8.

Jews Among Others*Earl Raab***Former States of the Art**

For more years and in more societies than any other historical group, Jews have been at the "wrong" end of some design of "majority/minority relations." Jews were always aware of the difficulties attendant upon these varying relationships; and usually did about as well as they could. When the world became much more organized and self-conscious about its social behavior and the hopeful management thereof, the Jews developed concerns and agencies entitled "external relations," "defense," "intergroup relations," and "community relations." All the titles have to do with the ability of Jews and their communal institutions to flourish as a minority in a host society without disadvantage. "Without disadvantage" is subject to different measures and expectations. In certain times and places, it has meant little more than sheer survival. In America today, it means everything: survival, equal opportunity, and access to all the world has to offer; and even, to some, the absence of hostility.

There have been two kinds of broad perceptions: external relations governed by power and those governed by good (or ill) will. In earlier days, power relationships were clearly determinant. The object was to get the king or prince to protect the Jews; and to use whatever power the Jews could muster to serve the needs of that king or prince. In many cases it was a commercial service of one kind or another. When modern "liberal" societies emerged, many Jews added to their philosophy of defense a belief in the power of good will. They were now supposed to have equal status, and it would be denied only if people held ill will toward them. That would happen only if their fellow citizens clung to the hostile and mistaken anti-Jewish stereotypes developed in the Dark Ages.

The Zentralverein Deutscher Staatsbürger Jüdischen Glaubens — the German Jewish defense agency founded just before the turn of the century — stated its purpose this way: "We intend to express openly before the whole world how we feel and what we think. The systematic slanders will

not cease therewith to cover us with their poison. But the neutral will not deny their sympathy to a serious and respectably conducted defense, and those who today do not know us, who are unable to get to know us because our entire life is strange to them, will testify for us: 'These Jews of Germany are not less loyal citizens than we, just as self-sacrificing patriots, just as noble human beings.'" The Anti-Defamation League launched its major campaign against anti-Semitism in America in 1930 with this statement of purpose: "To educate the great mass in the truth concerning the Jew and to demolish the foibles and fictions that are now part of the mental picture of the Jew in the public mind."

Yet the weight of evidence was that direct cognitive assault against anti-Semitic stereotypes was not successful. Practical results seemed incommensurate with the money and energy spent on that assault. In addition, a new and more sophisticated application of the "good will" construct was becoming dominant by way of dynamic psychology: an approach to the emotional rather than cognitive elements of prejudice. Theories of frustration-aggression, anxiety-aggression, projection and scapegoating, and psychogenic character structure, such as the authoritarian personality, were developed and applied, and by and large seemed illuminating. This approach prospered in the years immediately following World War II, and particularly fit the wartime image of Hitlerism as consummate personal diabolism and pathology.

However valid this causative perspective may have been, it provided no strong remedial seat. Neither individual nor group therapy, nor family life retraining, produced or promised that much. Besides, a new social science approach began to dominate the field. Social structure rather than psychopathology became the analytic fulcrum. Values and conflicts were perceived to be created by the social systems in which people were trapped. This approach was also in tune with the political temper developing in America, although it came into conflict with cruder forms of economic determinism. The latter had been around for some time and had always been found seriously wanting as a total explanation of intergroup hostility.

The field of external relations moved in another direction. The objective was not individual or intercultural therapy, but societal therapy. The metaphor of the civil rights movement was to bypass individual attitudes and reform the social structure out of which such attitudes grew. The focus on power, rather than good will, again took center stage in the discussion about majority/minority relations. None of these trends entered neatly, but, in roughly the sequence described, layered on the i. nation and influences which brought us to present circumstances.

Current State of the Art: Theoretical Framework

We know a great deal about the apparent extent of the good will which the American public holds toward Jews. Measured in terms of negative stereotypes by a continuing series of surveys, the American public has not changed much. A little more than a third of Americans held some systematic pattern of anti-Semitic attitudes in the 1930s, and a little less than a third do so now. There is a formidable reservoir of anti-Semitism out there, the heritage of a couple of millenia. Information suggests that this is not the most direct threat to Jewish security; nor indeed does the most direct threat reside in those who hold these images.

There is another mass out there which is more critical. These are the people who are not actively anti-Semitic; but neither are they actively committed in any way *against* anti-Semitism. They are the low-resisters. When the American public was asked whether a congressional candidate's anti-Semitic platform would cause them to be for him, against him, or whether it would make no difference, a third of the respondents said the latter (only about 5 percent said they would support him on that account).² Apparently there was no significantly higher proportion of explicit anti-Semites among Father Coughlin's followers than among the rest of the American public, but they were all nevertheless supporting a dangerous anti-Semitic movement.

The work of Philip Converse and others suggests that among the mass of people, no comprehensive ideology, good or bad (including anti-Semitic ideology) is operative. The nature of political thinking is geared to the concrete rather than the abstract. In light of his findings, and discussing the Nazis, Converse concluded: "Under comparable stresses, it is likely that large numbers of citizens in any society would gladly support *ad hoc* promises of change without any great concern about ideological implications." One is inevitably reminded of that marvelous subtitle of Hannah Arendt's book on Eichmann: *The Banality of Evil*.

While stresses trigger anti-Semitic believers, they create active anti-Semites out of low-resisters. They draw on the cultural reservoir of anti-Semitic conventions, but at the same time they replenish that reservoir. The working premise is that there is nothing remarkably pathological about low-resisters. It is rather the high-resisters who are "remarkable" and deserve special attention. According to this approach, social circumstances rather than psychopathology distinguish the low-resisters from the high-resisters. This approach can also take into account the fact that Jews are often subject to conditions of disadvantage which are not best described as "anti-Semitism," such as mandatory Christian observances in public schools.

There are three levels to be considered in the etiology of Jewish disadvantage. There are the precipitating stresses: economic depressions, plagues, and other social cataclysms. There are the individuals, the ultimate actors. And in between the two are the systems — the institutions and institutional behaviors of society — which presumably differentiate the ways in which a society reacts to stresses (as well as contributing to the nature of the stresses). This intervening structure primarily stamps the attitudes and behavior of individual citizens.

On the direct relationship between institutionalized behavior and individual attitudes, there is a mass of evidence. When people are required to work together on an equal basis, prejudiced attitudes toward working together diminish. When people are forced by residential design to live in proximity on an equal basis, prejudiced attitudes toward living together diminish. When people live in proximity on a less equal and less integrated basis, prejudiced attitudes toward living together tend to increase.

When there is an attempt to predict behavior toward housing integration by pretesting attitudes, the prediction fails because of intervening institutional factors, e.g., lending practices of banking institutions. Attempts to predict behavior toward school integration by pretesting prejudicial attitudes would also fail. In one Southern city, college graduates were as prejudiced against having Blacks in their schools as were grade-school graduates. But the college graduates were much less resistant to the idea of desegregation, because they had other institutional (systems) investments.

As to the relationships between cataclysmic stresses and the intervening systems, one can only draw inferences from available information. Surveys conducted during the 1930s indicate that the level of popular or folk anti-Semitism in the United States was not significantly less than that of Germany. And while objective stresses were much greater in Germany than in the United States, no one doubted that the stress on America was well within the range of the dangerous. Yet although the attempt was made, organized anti-Semitism never became a viable political instrument in the United States as it did in Germany. The intervening institutions and structure of the United States presumably made a difference. This intervening structure is not only determinative, but more directly subject to remedial action than either individual attitudes or cataclysmic stresses.

What elements of this intervening structure seem particularly pertinent to the enterprise of Jewish external relations? A comprehensive political construct has developed in which the axis of democratic pluralism/extremism has replaced the axis of prejudice/nonprejudice. *Democratic pluralism* falls easily into cliché unless it is elaborated as connoting the "double freedom" so critical for Jewish security: equal opportunity for the individual and working legitimacy for the group and its institutions. In Jewish history, host societies have often offered one or the other but not both, and the

results have been disastrous for both. *Democratic pluralism* also connotes an orderly and peaceable arrangement for the exercise of this double freedom. And extremism in this framework means a political attack on those orderly and peaceful arrangements.

At this point, much may seem to be in the eye of the beholder. A very militant Black group was picketing Goldwater outside the hotel in which he made his remark about the virtue of extremism in the pursuit of freedom. When this remark was relayed outside, the head of the picket line said "Right on!" The fighters of the Warsaw ghetto were disrupting an "orderly arrangement" with as much violence as possible. In this framework *extremism* is a judgement call, depending on one's assessment of the state of democratic pluralism, one of whose correlates is the possibility of peaceful change. The prevalent perception among American Jewry is that American democracy and democratic pluralism *have* worked to a degree never reached by any other host society.

Within this framework of democratic pluralism/extremism — What are the relevant components of the intervening structure in America? First there are the laws of society: there are laws which protect equal opportunity for the individual; laws to protect the individual's due process; freedom of association; there are laws which protect a religious group against official second-class citizenship; laws which favor peaceful change by protecting free speech and assembly. It is important to understand the social process underlying commitment to the law in general, and commitment to the laws of democratic pluralism in particular. The descriptive construct of "social disorganization" applies. Commitment to the official rules of society depends on the state of allegiance to that society and to its traditional groups, which are involved in the primary transmission of values. Such allegiances are strained by a number of circumstances in which the interdependent systems come unglued: loss of function by the society and its traditional groups; value conflict, when influences pressing on individuals are not mutually reinforcing; conflict between means and ends; conflict between rules and aspirations; conflict between aspirations and achievement.

This approach illuminates the earlier prescription that it is more important for the populace to be committed *against* the violation of Jewish rights than it is for them to like Jews. Thus it was more important for the law to prevail in the desegregation of certain Southern institutions, than it was for the Southern populace to be unprejudiced against Blacks. Such a sociological model fits the political framework (democratic pluralism/extremism). The dysfunction of groups, value conflicts, the disruption of expectations, tend to identify two forces in society. There are the have-nots who feel strongly about their disprivilege; and there are those relatively privileged who feel that their status and well-being are threatened. In both cases, when these forces are politicized, the equilibrium of the system is threat-

ened. These are the circumstances in which extremist movements, of the Left or Right, arise. With the rise of extremist movements and the dilution of resistance to them, the phenomenon of organized political anti-Semitism emerges. The model of extremism typically carries the luggage of racial or ethnic scapegoats, some featured in a comprehensive conspiracy theory which legitimizes abandonment of the democratic process.

One practical aspect of the American political process notably relates to this framework: coalition politics. There has always been a direct relationship between factional and extremist politics. The heterogeneous nature of American society and its multiplicity of interest associations have required, for political stability, that the major political entities themselves be interest-bargaining mechanisms. The major political parties have invariably swallowed up strong factional extremist movements in American history by becoming responsive to some of the goals they have digested, while suppressing the more extremist procedural goals. The institutions of coalition politics, of compromise politics, are the first line of practical defense against the rise of extremist movements.

The genesis of extremist movements is related to objective situations in society and concomitant social conditions: unmet aspirations, often associated with raised expectations; and status anxiety, usually associated with threatened displacement. Extremist movements often come in such a matched pair, Left and Right, at any given time; and one's interest in political stability, as one's concern about extremism, depends on one's personal evaluation of the state of democratic pluralism and the possibilities of orderly change. Whatever one's personal evaluation on that score, the above framework partly integrates the conflict theory approach, which emphasizes the exploitive nature of group relations amid scarcity situations, with the functional-systems approach which emphasizes the effect of the intervening social structure.

The implications in this framework for socialization shape the approach to formal education. The emphasis is not on education "about Jews." It is not even on intergroup relations education in general, although the beneficial effects of integration are still a conventional article of belief. The emphasis is on the kind of education which will help socialize the young with respect to the broader values of society and of democratic pluralism. As Selznick and Steinberg put it: "The uneducated are cognitively and morally unenlightened because they have never been indoctrinated into the enlightened values of the larger society and in this sense are alienated from it."

Level of education was repeatedly found to be the prime independent variable related to intensity of anti-Semitism, as measured by the acceptance of negative stereotypes. Quality and quantity of education were found to have a consistent effect. However, with the minimization of the

negative stereotype as an index of potential political anti-Semitism, the chief focus becomes the relationship of education to high resistance, to strong democratic restraint, to commitment to societal values and democratic pluralism. Again, level and quality of education were consistently found directly related to attitudes on these matters. Education is often a function of one's general status in society, of one's vested interest in its systems and values. But holding socioeconomic status constant, education and knowledge about the institutions of democratic pluralism make a significant difference, for at least a significant leadership segment of our society.

American democratic institutions have flourished because some people understood them and the rest were loyal to them. In recapitulation, that loyalty relates to the dynamics of stress and of the intervening social structure described above, in a political framework of democratic pluralism/extremism. But there is at least one other kind of meshing framework which can be used: integration-assimilation-subordination.

This would suggest a more narrow preoccupation with such traditional matters as ethnic stratification and mobility; or intermarriage and other forms of intercultural accommodation. From the point of view of Jewish external relations, as currently perceived, this is a vintage framework as compared to a more political cast. Subsumed under the larger political construct, this framework can provide useful vantage points relating more directly to other subjects of internal Jewish concern.

Another large dimension that must be added to any discussion of Jewish external relations is the security of Jews outside the United States and *their* problems of minority/majority relations. The security problems of Israeli Jews have dominated the agendas of American Jewish community relations agencies at least since 1967. The problems of Soviet Jewry have received much attention. So have the problems of Syrian Jews, Iranian Jews, Argentinian Jews, Ethiopian Jews. The framework in which the security of American Jews is perceived does not apply to these Jewries elsewhere. At its most abstract, such a framework might apply to postindustrial countries such as Nazi Germany or the Soviet Union; but it is of little use at its most abstract — and besides, the American Jewish community would have no direct remedial leverage. In other countries or regions in which Jews are in trouble, the framework does not apply at all. The art of external relations with respect to other Jewries has to do with trying to bring to bear the leverage of the United States.

This objective brings the current external relations theory full circle, on two counts. First, the kind of American society in which American Jews will be able to most effectively influence American foreign policy on behalf of foreign Jewries, is exactly the kind of American society in which American Jews will themselves have the most security. Therefore the theme of democratic pluralism is replicated. Beyond that, the "theory" of external

relations on behalf of foreign Jewries is based on a simple power approach: the power of the United States to affect other nations, and the power of American Jews to affect the United States. This is congruent with the current perception of how American Jews must attempt to affect their fate *within* the United States. The political structure and the intervening social structure to which modern community relations theory is addressed are seen as determined by power relations, rather than by the promulgation of "good will." In that sense, in a much more sophisticated way and in a much more complicated world, the Jews have returned to their instincts of the twelfth century.

What We Do Not Know

What is it that we do not know in these matters? What important gaps still exist? The trouble with such questions is that they are necessarily asked from a blind alley. The current state of information and of theory about Jewish external relations have been pieced together from Jewish history and social science study, for the most part derivatively applied to problems at hand; and shaped by academic fashions as well as by the predilections of its reporters. As A.N. Whitehead once said: "There is only one difficulty with clear and distinct ideas. When we finally achieve them, we can be sure that something is left out." In short, much of what we do not know, and of what we know mistakenly, will be revealed in the course of future study which we cannot anticipate. However, it is likely that such future study would be facilitated by some systematic attention to the subject, which has not been the case to date.

The study of external relations — and application of general knowledge to the field — has been in the hands of relatively isolated students or national agencies set up by the American Jewish community to handle this problem. These agencies, to varying degrees, have amassed helpful bodies of information, have maintained a certain level of continuing analytic discussion, and at times have stimulated and funded some landmark studies. But they suffer from certain disabilities with respect to the systematic study of external relations. Their primary mandate is action, not study; they are competitive; they have constant need to deal with the expressive needs of their constituencies, which are not always in full consonance with the instrumental needs of external relations; they are institutionally self-conscious.

At a time when American society may be in a state of transition, there is a need for more systematic attention to the field of Jewish external relations. Since the state of American society and that of Jewish external relations strongly intersect, such systematic attention would be a benefit to both. It is impossible to anticipate all the avenues such systematic atten-

tion might travel, but certain paths of exploration and systematization can be suggested. If there is any order in their presentation, it is from the more obvious to the less so.

Analysis of Public Opinion

While the state of public opinion toward Jews, in America or elsewhere, is not central to the current theoretical framework drawn, its constant measurement remains useful for diagnostic purposes. It is also the field most often plowed, with the support of national agencies. Every decade or so there is an effort to pull together available data for more serious analysis. These efforts have typically been by way of "afterthought," rather than with a core of planned long-term studies. These *ad hoc* efforts are marred by such flaws as the need to interpret inconsistent wording, and most of all by the failure to systematically sample opinions in immediate conjunction with certain relevant world events. The surveys would be more useful if they concentrated more often and more systematically on the opinions of lawmakers, public officials, intellectuals, and generally those closest to affecting the "intervening structures" which still more often shape than follow general public opinion.

Intergroup Relations

The study of interaction among the various ethnic and racial groups in America has increasingly been left to journalistic accounts, often at times of crisis, self-serving, impressionistic, and polemic. The Hispanic population of America, for example, is destined to be a paramount force in shaping some of those future institutions which are also of prime interest to Jews. But there is no studied analysis of Hispanic aspirations as they are emerging, and as they may affect both relationships with the Jews and public affairs objectives of the Jews. The same lacuna exists with respect to the enlarged Black middle class. When the "Andrew Young affair" struck, the Jewish community seemed stunned by the nature of Black reaction; it should not have been.

The Nature of Democratic Pluralism

Most of the work on those aspects of American society and its intervening structure which are of central interest to Jewish external relations will properly be accomplished in general studies. However, there has been little systematic application of these general studies to the theoretical framework developed in the field of Jewish external relations. From that vantage point, for example, what is the stake of the Jewish community in the populist, "participatory democracy" impulses which have affected a number of American political institutions? Many Jewish public affairs agencies have supported such impulses without an informed sense of what their import

might be for coalition politics in general. Jews had a strong instinct for the dangers of factionalized major-party conventions, but were more vague about the effects of the direct primary movement. Some Jewish agencies took a position against radical changes in the electoral college; but that position was based on a concern about immediate loss of voting power. The more far-reaching implications for factionalism and an extremist temper were not explicated.

To examine such phenomena from a specialized vantage point does not mean to examine them from a biased and fixed position. But to do the first without the second is more likely to be within the capability of an institution with an academic cast than one with an organizational cast. Such examinations by a cross-cut of historians, political scientists, sociologists, and other scholarly observers, will not be contained by the bias of any given theoretical framework, but will inevitably test and alter that framework. Systematic attention to such matters means not just the ongoing application of general knowledge to external relations, but also the stimulation of special studies which would illuminate aspects of the larger field — not just for Jews, but for the other actors in the political and intellectual world.

American Foreign Policy

American foreign policy has never been an area of expertise for Jewish external relations. There has been concern for the status of oppressed Jewry abroad and for the security of Israel. But there has been no systematic examination of how American foreign policy in general affects either of those concerns or the security of the American Jew. There is reason to believe that there are such interrelationships. The state of democratic pluralism in America depends on the position of America in the world; as well as on America sustaining a free-world sector. The image of 1984 is compelling with respect to the kind of totalitarian extremism that concerns informed Jews.

The Jewish community has a special stake in the way America deals with political developments in countries which are "turning over," such as Nicaragua, Rhodesia, Iran; or the security and stability of Western Europe and South Korea; or the defense posture of the United States. But the framework within which the field of external relations operates, does not seriously include any working consideration of such general foreign affairs. This could be a serious flaw if the state of democratic pluralism is increasingly affected by the conduct of foreign affairs. There are also practical questions: How can the field of external relations relate to such special expertise, which it does not now have? How can the various agencies in the field of external relations find a consensus, which they do not now have? Those questions require a new examination of relevant Jewish institutions.

Even within the limited area of American foreign policy vis-à-vis Israel, external affairs agencies have proceeded on conventional wisdom, without a systematic body of knowledge or theoretical framework. In the past several years, Stephen Speigel, a professor of political science at UCLA, has managed a kind of "committee of correspondence," commissioning, collecting, and circulating papers by experts on specific aspects of American foreign policy and Israel. This highly useful project is a minimodel of what may be needed on a broader and more systematic basis. It also suggests that a "think tank" for this kind of "basket subject" does not require that its product issue exclusively or even primarily from a body of residents.

Social Action and Relevant Jewish Institutions

If the political process and its effect on the social structure is central to the course of external affairs, so is the role of the American Jew as an actor in that process. That Jewish role is perhaps the most ignored aspect of the external relations field. Democratic pluralism, as distinct from extremism, is the most hospitable mode for a small Jewish minority. In such a system, ideally, power is not exercised directly but strained through neutral laws and institutions. Much is made of the fact that laws cannot be drawn for particular individuals or groups, but must apply generally. Behind and beyond the laws and in their administration, there is the constant exercise of differential power. But this system allows more room than otherwise for indirect and partial power, variously applied. What is the nature of American Jewish power in such a system?

One classification of power bases distinguishes among "expert power," "reward power," and "coercive power." As applied to the American situation, most attention has been paid to the supposed "reward power" of American Jews in the political process. Jews are presumably able to reward legislators and public officials by dint of their voting power and political activism, thus gaining some leverage in the shaping of public policy and institutions. There is much literature on this subject, but most of it is journalistic and indecisive. From the perspective of external relations, that may be just as well. If it were definitively established that Jews exercise a great deal of such power, it would fit a standard item in the catalogue of anti-Semitic beliefs: "Jews have too much power." If, more likely, it were definitively established that Jewish political power is quite marginal, limited, and situational, a useful fiction would be destroyed.

Our information and reflection on this subject is quite primitive. We are guessing most of the time. At the least, we should be more aware of what our demographic shifts might mean politically (if we only knew what our demographic shifts were). For that matter — What is the effect of a mass writing campaign? Of a demonstration, of a highly placed delegation, of an editorial comment in a local newspaper? The dynamics that apply in the

case of the National Rifle Association may not apply for the Jewish community. Light could be thrown on such matters by research designed and ready to be triggered by specific events and policy issues. It may turn out that the Jewish community has overestimated its "reward power" and underestimated its "expert power" and even its "coercive power," in the modern sense of affecting the climate of ideas. What is the role of the Jewish influential: the Jewish individual who is a public official or aide, writer, professor, or just a public activist? How connected are such influentials with the Jewish community, how informed are they on the urgencies of Jewish external relations, and what are the trends with respect to their connection?

There are signals that in recent years a trend of double dissociation has been taking place. On the one hand, the guess is, there has been a fall-off of young Jews involving themselves in public life. This trend would be a result of post-1967 preoccupation with Israel, combined with turmoil on the American scene dating from about that time. This is the phenomenon of the "turning in" of the Jewish community which has been often and loosely commented upon. On the other hand, the guess is, there have been a number of Jewish individuals out there in public life who have been less connected with the Jewish community agenda, with the Jewish external relations "framework," than their counterparts would have been a generation ago.

This is directly related to Jewish community relations effectiveness and to the broader question of "what is happening to the American Jew." It is probably true that Jews in active public life were once more "naturally" informed in these matters by values and knowledgeable instincts of "mother's milk" origin. Such Jews were not produced by Jewish agencies; they produced and comprised the Jewish agencies. In the past thirty years we have seen the rapid growth and dominance of Jewish external relations agencies — for mixed reasons and with mixed results.

These agencies — both the older national agencies and the newer local agencies in over one hundred communities — flourished in the aftermath of the Holocaust, out of the civil rights successes of the 1950s and early 1960s, and then because of special concerns with the security of Israel, which depends so greatly on U.S. governmental support.

Sometime during that period, the burden of Jewish external relations seemed to have "tipped," from a body of naturally informed individuals to a structure of agencies established by the communities. This "tipping" occurred for a number of reasons. There was the diminution of "naturally informed" Jewry. There were the extended boundaries of external relations. And there was just the bureaucratic momentum of the agencies themselves. There was another related development: organizational centralization. One of the failures of the American Jewish community in the 1930s

was its fragmentation. The Jewish community set about to repair that failure, and managed to set up coalition and consensus mechanisms, nationally and locally, in the area of public affairs. But the older agencies themselves, flushed by success and Parkinsonian impulse, became more consensual in their search for broader membership. Once these organizations had represented different caucuses in Jewish life. Now they began to resemble each other more and more, and became less inclined toward factionalism.

In its drive for centralization and consensus the organized Jewish community became narrower in boundary and less capable as a community to deal with the broadening exigencies of modern external relations. The agencies, as a body, have taken on a certain horse-and-buggy character. These narrowing boundaries in a broadening public affairs world have exacerbated the double dissociation referred to earlier. Some Jews, caught in the organizational boundaries, have remained inordinately "turned in." Others, out there in public life, have become inordinately "turned off" with respect to Jewish organizational connection. These developments cry out for a new examination of these Jewish institutions. It may be that some decentralization is called for, and some reformation of the function of these institutions. Perhaps they must deemphasize their function as position takers and spokesmen, and function more as training grounds and wellsprings for informed Jewish individuals acting more autonomously in the public arena while remaining connected to the community.

There is another dimension. The above proposal has a certain artificial sound about it: the "creation" by public affairs agencies of active individuals informed by Jewish values and knowledge. The ability to replicate "naturally informed" Jews is at least questionable. It would seem that the complex of Jewish institutions — educational, religious, public affairs — would need to be more integrated toward this task. Here is another place where the external relations needs of the Jewish community intersect with its total needs.

There should be little expectation that Jewish institutions would be able to conduct a self-examination, or do so in isolation. Some detached, systematic, and disciplined study of Jewish institutions related at least to external relations is called for. In sum, much is known — although not enough — about the conditions of Jewish security. But the Jewish community is flying by the seat of its pants with respect to implementing that knowledge.

Interfacing

A number of issues have been raised which are simultaneously "external relations" issue and "internal Jewish life" issues. Many of these fall within the integration-assimilation-subordination framework cited earlier.

For example, we are in a period presumably emphasizing ethnocentrism, including our own, which is often called "Jewish identity." How do we best mesh ethnocentrism and pluralist equilibrium? Such questions should occasionally be addressed from a cosmic point of view, because they have implications for a number of different fields in Jewish life. Examination of certain questions in external relations should often relate to other examinations of Jewish life and vice versa. There is currently no institutional way to facilitate such cross-seeding.

Such systematic examination of external relations vis-à-vis total Jewish life might result in more informed and serious thought about the nature of *American Jewish identity*. External relations are now being defined as vitally intersecting with the very nature of democratic pluralism. Democratic pluralism is perceived by some as the "calling" — even the spiritual calling of the formal American society. The role of Jews is perceived as important, or potentially important, in supporting this aspect of American life. If these perceptions are valid and can be further developed, they may help to further not only a sense of authenticity as Jews, but a sense of authenticity as Jews in America.

Notes

1. Proceedings of the Thirteenth General Convention of B'nai B'rith (Cincinnati, Ohio, April 27, 1930), pp. 507-58.
2. NORC survey reported in S.M. Lipset and Earl Raab, *The Politics of Unreason* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2nd ed., 1978).
3. Gertrude J. Selznick and Stephen Steinberg, *The Tenacity of Prejudice* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), p. 157.
4. Quoted in R.A. Schermerhorn, *Comparative Ethnic Relations* (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 22.
5. J.R. French and B. Raven, "The Bases of Social Power." In D. Cartwright (ed.), *Studies in Social Power* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1959).

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Note

*Titles are current as of the date of the Conference (October 21-24, 1979).