

REPORT TO THE
AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS TASK FORCE ON PRIORITIES

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INTRODUCTION

I was commissioned to write the Report that follows on January 15, 1979. It was clear that my function was to prepare a study of AJCongress (hereafter AJC) that would be useful to the Task Force in determining recommendations on priorities. The only limitations in the scope and focus of this study besides those of time are self-imposed. I began by trying to look at AJC in its totality. I narrowed my focus in accordance with what I perceived as AJC's problems and concerns.

The Report is divided into three parts. Part one discusses AJC today. It deals with its membership, finances, structure and policies. These, it seems to me, represent the major internal constraints in the development of priorities.

Part two deals with the American Jewish community today and its direction. This constitutes the major external constraint in determining priorities. Part one and part two constitute background information for the Task Force. Part three is a presentation of the priority alternatives themselves. Part three, therefore, represents a kind of agenda for the Task Force and a focus for its discussion.

The Report is based on the following sources:

1. A review of the National Convention (NC) resolutions, minutes of the Governing Council (GC) since 1966, and Executive Committee (EC) minutes since 1972.
2. A review of Congress Monthly from 1974-1979.
3. A review of AJC's statements to the Large City Budgeting Conference (LCBC) from 1974-1979.
4. A review of selected documents and reports of AJC and its commissions since 1970.
5. My observations of GC, EC and other selected meetings during late January, February, and March of 1979.
6. Oral interviews with 40 respondents. They included

20 past and present members of AJC's professional staff, 12 lay leaders of AJC, and eight professional and lay leaders of American Jewish organizations who interrelate with AJC in a variety of activities.

7. Responses to a questionnaire distributed to all 378 members and alternate members of the GC. Since the questionnaire results are introduced at various points in the Report this seems an appropriate place to comment on their representativeness. The questionnaires were mailed February 3rd, and 135 returns were received by March 4th. Those returns received by March 4th were prepared for computer analysis. Four returns could not be analyzed for technical reasons. This left 131 usable responses (35% of the GC). During the following month 29 more returns were received. The late returns were compared by hand with the early returns that had undergone computer analysis. No differences were found. Hence, although we shall report on 131 returns, 160 completed returns were received. The 43% response is a good return. It is a slightly higher percentage return than I obtained in past surveys of presidents of all Conservative and Reform synagogues and presidents of all B'nai B'rith lodges. It is considerably higher than returns I obtained from presidents of Orthodox synagogues. Unlike my previous mail surveys, AJC respondents were not provided with stamped, self-addressed envelopes. They had to use their own envelope, address it, and stamp it and this must have reduced the rate of return. Secondly no follow-up request was mailed to respondents. Had such procedures been followed, the return rate probably would have exceeded 50%.

Respondents are representative of the GC in terms of measures which could be compared. Fifty percent of the GC are female and 54% of the respondents are female. Twenty-five percent of the GC are members of the EC, 30% of the respondents were EC members. In terms of place of residence, the Table that follows indicates how representative the sample is. (See Table 1)

The only significant variation occurs with respect to one dimension which is an important consideration in the subsequent discussion. Eleven percent of the GC members are cooptees, rather than serving by virtue of election or ex officio; 21% of the respondents are GC cooptees. We will isolate the coopted from the non-coopted members in some of the Tables. There is no reason to believe that each sub-sample of respondents is unrepresentative of the universe from which they were drawn.

TABLE 1

Governing Council Members' Place of Residence (in percentages)

<u>Area</u>	<u>All G.C. Members</u>	<u>G.C. Respondents</u>
Metropolitan N.Y. or northern N.J.	57	52
Pennsylvania and Environs	6	8
Maryland and D.C. area	5	6
New England	7	8
Midwest	11	11
Southeast	8	8
California	5	5
Southwest	under 1	under 1
Other	under 1	1

PART ONE

THE AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS TODAY

I MEMBERSHIP

AJC projects itself in different ways. It likes to think of itself as the "cutting edge" of the Jewish community, or the "legal arm" of the Jewish community. But part of its image is of a membership organization which speaks for the masses of American Jews.

Membership dues provide an income of roughly \$675,000 or 20% of AJC's 1979 estimated budget. Membership size is one of the ways AJC legitimates its claim to speak for a substantial segment of the Jewish community. AJC's national leadership is bound by resolutions of the biennial convention where the local chapter delegates do have input. Furthermore, the national leadership is somewhat constrained in its decisions by the potential impact upon and response of its membership. This is true of such administrative decisions as establishing the level of dues, or of such policy decisions as opposition to the unlimited right of the American Nazi Party to march in Skokie, Illinois. Finally, while it is impossible to measure how much the AJC national office spends on membership activity, AJC estimates 1979 expenditures of \$846,000 (24% of all expenditures) on membership and organization activity, field offices, and the national convention. This is offset not only by dues but, in some part, by contributions of members. Some of these contributions might not be forthcoming if AJC lacked a membership base. Even less amenable to precise measurement is the estimate of how much of the \$650,000 income which AJC receives from Welfare Funds (i.e., Federations) would be cut if the local federations didn't feel that AJC had a local membership base. My own hunch is that there would be very little short run impact but a greater long run impact.

In summary, the fact that AJC, at least in theory, is a mass membership organization is of some importance in its formulation of policies and in its budgetary decisions, and it may be of critical importance for its image within the Jewish community.

There were in 1977-78 a total of 27,774 Congress unit members (about 15,000 in the Women's Division and 12,000 in the General Division). Some of these unit members were husband-wives. If we double the husband-wives units, there were a total of 37,818 individuals affiliated with Congress.

A large proportion of this membership is attributable to the fact that in order to take a Congress overseas tour, one must join AJC. The impact of AJC's tour program on its membership is pronounced, though its exact proportion can only be estimated. In 1977-78 there were 8,204 new members (reference is to unit members, not individuals). Assuming that almost all new members join because of the tours (and AJC leaders make that assumption), roughly 30% of last year's members joined because of tours. The figures for new members in the last 10 years are as follows (See Table 2). AJC enrolled over 100,000 new members in the last 10 years. The dropout rate is obviously quite high. Each year over the last 10 years some 30% to 48% of all AJC members did not renew their membership.

While the foregoing indicates how misleading membership figures may be, they also suggest an enormous reservoir of potential growth if AJC could maintain its tour members' interest. To the best of my knowledge AJC has made no systematic investigation of whether this is a realistic potential or what kinds of programs and/or policies might be developed to harness this potential. However, developing year round programs and policies to meet the interests of tour participants might require radical changes in present programs and policies. Some of those working with the tour department emphasize their concern with integrating its activities into Congress' ongoing programs. They fear that some national leaders view the program primarily in terms of financial windfall.

Over half of AJC members reside in the New York and Northern New Jersey metropolitan area. The remainder of the membership are concentrated in and around a few of the major metropolitan centers: Philadelphia, Miami, Chicago and Boston are the only metropolitan areas where AJC membership exceeds 1,000.

Estimates of field directors and activists in the San Francisco, Miami, Chicago, and Baltimore areas place the number of active or concerned AJC members -- members who attend meetings regularly, who can be called upon for help, whose Congress membership is presumably more than of marginal meaning in their lives -- at about 10% of the enrolled membership. The figures for New York City are lower. On Long Island it may be slightly higher. In 1976 former Executive Director Naomi Levine surveyed the chapter and division structure of AJC. She pointed to Philadelphia as being "the most active of our Divisions," an opinion shared by many

TABLE 2

<u>Year</u>	<u>New Members</u>	<u>Total Membership</u>
1977-78	8,204	27,774
1976-77	9,763	28,438
1975-76	8,632	25,406
1974-75	5,825	24,035
1973-74	11,136	33,281
1972-73	15,610*	35,232
1971-72	12,818	30,591
1970-71	10,366	31,090
1969-70	9,274	29,547
1968-69	9,294	28,294

*includes 1,477 students enrolled in a special AJC program.

respondents. Yet even there, based on Naomi Levine's estimates, one arrives at a figure of 20% active members to enrolled membership. Based on these figures, a generous estimate would place the total number of active AJC members at somewhere around 3,000. On the other hand, Julie Schatz who is in charge of organizing national conventions in addition to his responsibility for the Commission on Jewish Life and Culture puts the figure at 6,000 to 8,000. As a basis for comparison it is worth noting that there are from 4,000 to 5,000 members of local ADL boards; and ADL makes no pretense of being a mass membership organization.

AJC leaders seem less concerned with the number of members or the proportion of active to enrolled members as they are with the age and sex distribution of the active members. The leadership fears that AJC is being overrun with elderly women.

There are obvious consequences to having an active membership that is predominantly elderly and/or female. Such an age and sex composition will deter younger people from joining. Indeed, some younger respondents indicated that they could not or would not engage their peers in AJC activity because one look at the composition of a chapter or division or a GC meeting would scare their friends away. AJC is anxious to attract an elitist membership. Their ideal member is one active in and accepted as a leader by local Federations and Community Relations Councils (CRCs). Such members add prestige to AJC, strengthen its self-image, make the organization more attractive to others, and, I suppose, heighten the ego of its own leaders. One would rather be a leader of leaders than a leader of elderly women. I don't think it unfair to say that AJC's ideal member is one who things like a Congress member politically and has the social and demographic characteristics of an American Jewish Committee member. Such individuals, influential in their local communities, can be expected to implement AJC policies more effectively than the present membership. Finally, women and the aged are likely to be living on fixed incomes and in a period of inflation harbor their resources and are reluctant or unable to make financial contributions.

On the other hand, the presence of the elderly may also be interpreted as a sign of strength. After all, people don't get younger, they get older. An organization composed entirely of young people suggests an organization unable to maintain its member's loyalties. An organization of elderly may mean an organization able to attract people, albeit only beyond a certain age. Elderly people certainly have more

time to devote to organizational life, and up to a certain point, more energy as well. My own observation in speaking before many Jewish groups these past three years is that, if one can generalize at all, people in their late 60's and early 70's who attend lectures tend to be better informed about everything and somewhat more intelligent than people in their 30's. If AJC does appeal disproportionately to the elderly and to women, then perhaps the question it should ask itself is not -- how can AJC appeal to other demographic segments of the population, but how can it build on the strengths it has. Hadassah, after all, is probably the most potent organization in American Jewish life. Secondly, there may be a price to attracting a younger or more elitist membership. The cost may not be only a new leadership and a loss of position by the present elite but a change in policy as well. I will return to this point in a discussion of AJC policies. But the first question to answer is whether AJC is appealing to a particular demographic sector, or whether its present composition of activists are really the same people of 20 or 30 years ago who have now grown older and who are predominantly female because of women's longer lifespan and the existence of a women's division within AJC with a tradition of interesting, high quality programming.

This question cannot be answered for all activists but we can get an inkling of a reply by looking at the composition of the GC. Most GC members serve by virtue of election. They may have been directly elected by the National Convention or indirectly by election to an office which gives them a seat on the EC and ex officio membership on the GC. A minority of the GC are cooptees, appointed by the president with approval of the EC. The ByLaws don't stipulate the precise number of cooptees serving on the GC. The president may appoint up to 50 cooptees each year. Vacancies on the GC are also filled by cooption. There are more GC positions which the president can fill with cooptees than desirable candidates to fill the positions. As of January 1979 when the questionnaire was distributed there were 43 cooptees. They are people whom AJC leaders are anxious to involve and/or reward. It is, therefore, interesting to compare what one might call AJC's indigenous leadership (GC members elected by the National Convention) with AJC's non-indigenous leadership (GC cooptees).

Forty-two percent of the indigenous leadership have been members of AJC for 20 years or more, compared with 15% of the cooptees. Six percent of the indigenous leaders have been members of AJC for less than 5 years, compared to 26% of the cooptees. This can be interpreted in two ways. I am

inclined to interpret this to mean that the indigenous leadership is heavily represented by oldtimers who either stay on the GC or make way for other oldtimers. In other words, AJC is not recruiting elderly activists; rather its old time activists are now aging. An alternate interpretation would be that the cooptation system, by opening leadership positions to newcomers, enables AJC to reward long service. Parenthetically, there is no age difference among the two groups, but 62% of the elected GC members are female compared to 38% of the cooptees.

The questionnaire responses permit us to examine other characteristics of the GC as well. We will distinguish three types of GC members. Members elected directly by the national convention, members coopted, and finally GC members who serve by virtue of their membership on the EC. The assumption is that the first group mirrors AJC's most active members, the second group mirrors the kind of leadership AJC's own elite would like to involve, and the third group constitutes AJC's top lay leadership.

The EC responses are drawn from the 39 individuals who answered "yes" to the question which asked whether or not they are EC members. The GC member responses were drawn from a question asking members to list the basis upon which they serve on the GC. Alternative choices were provided in terms of AJC's ByLaws. Apparently four EC members thought they served on the GC by virtue of cooptation. My guess is that the misunderstanding derives from the fact that they are probably among those who serve on the EC by virtue of cooptation, whereas the questionnaire does not distinguish among EC members on the basis of their appointment. Hence the responses of the three groups in the Tables that follow exceed the total response. This accounts for an occasional apparent discrepancy between percentage responses for the three sub-groups and the total response which is based on the 131 usable returns [See Table 3 on page 10].

In terms of social characteristics the cooptees and EC members are a more elitist group. EC members are somewhat younger. The education and income of the cooptees is highest, they are predominantly male, and most likely to belong to three or more non-Jewish organizations.

In terms of Jewish characteristics, EC members are most likely to belong to a synagogue but they are also most likely to define their Jewish identity in non-religious terms. They are more likely to report contributing \$2,500 or more

TABLE 3

SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF AJC LEADERS (IN PERCENTAGES)*

<u>Age</u>	<u>Elected to GC</u>	<u>Coopted to GC</u>	<u>EC</u>	<u>All Respondents</u>
Under 40	4	4	3	5
40-49	13	11	18	14
50-59	29	26	44	30
60 or over	54	56	36	50
 <u>Education**</u>				
Undergraduate degree or less	32	11	28	27
Graduate study up to or including a Masters or equivalent	35	48	49	40
Graduate study beyond a Masters or its equivalent	33	41	23	32
 <u>Family Income</u>				
Under \$30,000	28	7	18	21
\$30,000-\$59,000	38	44	31	37
\$60,000-\$79,000	20	11	15	17
\$80,000 and over	11	37	33	23
 <u>Sex</u>				
Female	62	37	51	54

TABLE 3 (Continued)

SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF AJC LEADERS (IN PERCENTAGES)*

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Elected to GC</u>	<u>Coopted to GC</u>	<u>EC</u>	<u>All Respondents</u>
Housewife	16	15	13	13
Business	13	11	20	15
Lawyer	20	18	26	21
Teacher or College Instructor	19	30	10	18
<u>Generational Status in U.S.</u>				
First (born outside U.S.)	19	15	20	18
Second	63	67	54	61
Third or more	19	18	26	21
<u>Number of Non-Jewish Organizational Affiliations</u>				
None	12	15	15	14
1-2	35	22	36	33
3-4	26	26	20	24
More than 4	26	37	28	28
<u>Synagogue Affiliation**</u>				
Yes	67	74	80	70

TABLE 3 (Continued)

SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF AJC LEADERS (IN PERCENTAGES)*

<u>Jewish Identity**</u>	<u>Elected to GC</u>	<u>Coopted to GC</u>	<u>EC</u>	<u>All Respondents</u>
Orthodox	1	7	0	3
Conservative	26	30	26	30
Reform	30	30	26	26
Secular, Ethnic or National	35	33	41	34
<u>Annual Contribution to Jewish Philanthropy</u>				
Under \$500	32	18	15	25
\$500-\$999	22	18	13	18
\$1,000-\$2,499	22	26	18	21
\$2,500-\$4,999	12	7	20	12
\$5,000 or more	12	30	33	22
<u>Being Jewish Makes A Difference in Everything Done</u>				
Agree Strongly	46	44	46	46
Agree Somewhat	42	56	31	40
Disagree	12	0	20	13

TABLE 3 (CONTINUED)

SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF AJC LEADERS (IN PERCENTAGES)*

<u>Reaction to Child's Considering Marrying a Non-Jew</u>	<u>Elected to GC</u>	<u>Coopted to GC</u>	<u>EC</u>	<u>All Respondents</u>
Strongly oppose	25	37	28	27
Discourage	49	33	38	44
Neutral	20	22	23	21
Wouldn't Mind, Accept it	4	7	8	6
 <u>Jewish Periodical Regularly Read</u>				
None	25	33	28	29
Congress Monthly alone and/or local Jewish weekly	22	4	18	18
Two or more Jewish periodicals exclusive of Jewish weekly	54	63	54	53
 <u>AJC Rank in Importance to Respondent</u>				
AJC only important Jewish affiliation	14	11	8	14
AJC first and synagogue second	22	11	23	20
AJC first and Federation, UJA, or CRC second	10	11	23	13
AJC first and other secular Jewish organization second	36	18	28	30

TABLE 3 (CONTINUED)

SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF AJC LEADERS (IN PERCENTAGES)*

<u>AJC Rank in Importance to Respondent (cont'd)</u>	<u>Elected to GC</u>	<u>Coopted to GC</u>	<u>EC</u>	<u>All Respondents</u>
Synagogue first and AJC Second	12	11	5	9
Federation, UJA or CRC first and AJC second	3	7	5	4
Other secular organization first and AJC second	1	7	0	2
AJC third or lower in order of importance	22	1	8	8
<u>Annual Contribution to AJC</u>				
Less than \$100	25	18	5	18
\$100-\$499	54	56	44	52
\$500-\$999	10	11	11	11
\$1,000-\$2,499	10	15	14	14
\$2,500 or more	1	0	15	5
<u>Political Orientation</u>				
Radical	1	7	5	4
Very liberal	30	11	20	24
Liberal	44	74	56	52
Middle-of-the-road	23	7	18	20
Conservative	1	0	0	1

TABLE 3 (CONTINUED)

SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF AJC LEADERS (IN PERCENTAGES)*

<u>Attitudes Toward AJC Priorities</u>	<u>Elected to GC</u>	<u>Coopted to GC</u>	<u>EC</u>	<u>All Respondents</u>
AJC should expand ISRAEL activity	29	7	10	19
AJC should expand SOVIET JEWRY activity	9	15	15	12
AJC should expand CHURCH-STATE activity	19	11	10	14
AJC should expand JEWISH CULTURE activity	38	41	44	41
AJC should expand URBAN AFFAIRS activity	29	22	28	30
AJC should expand CIVIL LIBERTY activity	28	18	23	24
AJC should emphasize JEWISH more than UNIVERSAL issues	36	37	31	34
AJC should emphasize POLITICAL more than CULTURAL issues	30	26	18	28
AJC should emphasize AMERICAN JEWISH more than ISRAELI issues	30	30	41	33
JEWISH ASSIMILATION AND SURVIVAL problems should be high priority items for AJC	61	81	67	69

*Column percentages may not total 100% because of rounding and exclusion of those who didn't answer

**Column percentage totals are meaningless since some categories were excluded

to Jewish philanthropies. Differences between respondents are very slight on questions of how important being Jewish is or attitudes toward intermarriage. EC members report somewhat less Jewish commitment than others. They are no more likely to read Jewish periodicals than other groups. I believe that the significant factor is not the slight difference in one direction but rather the fact that AJC's top leadership is not significantly more Jewish than its second line leadership.

The EC members are more likely to report that AJC is the most important Jewish organization with which they are affiliated. They are also more likely to report contributing \$1,000 or more to AJC. Cooptees were next most likely to have made gifts of \$1,000 or more. The elected GC members are most likely to identify themselves either as radical or very liberal on the one hand, or middle-of-the-roads, or conservatives on the other.

Finally I note the responses of each group to the direction in which they like Congress to move--a subject to which I return in part three. Relatively speaking, elected GC members are somewhat more likely to want more emphasis on Israel, church-state issues, civil liberties, and political rather than cultural matters.

Cooptees are least likely to want Congress to expand activities on Israel, urban affairs and civil liberties, and most likely to feel that the problem of Jewish assimilation and survival in the U.S. should assume a high priority on AJC's agenda.

EC members are most likely to feel that AJC should expand its activities in Jewish culture, but least likely to feel AJC should emphasize political rather than cultural needs; an apparent contradiction to which I will return. EC members are most likely to feel that AJC should emphasize American Jewish rather than Israeli needs and issues. They are also least likely to feel that AJC should give more emphasis to Jewish, rather than universal needs and issues.

It should be emphasized, as the Tables demonstrate, that differences are not pronounced with regard to any of these priority alternatives.

II FINANCES

AJC's 1979 budget is roughly \$3,460,000. Its major sources of income are: [See Table 4 on page 13].

Tours is the largest single source of income, though AJC spends roughly \$470,000 on its tours. On the other hand, and in the light of our previous discussion, it is clear that a significant proportion of membership is attributable to tours and so are some major contributions which are reported in the individual fundraising category. The importance of tour income in AJC's overall budget introduces a note of uncertainty and a dependence on factors far beyond the organization's ability to control. No one can predict what the future of the tour business will be. Perhaps newer and even more imaginative tours will raise the number of participants. AJC has only recently begun specialized youth and singles tours and they apparently represent an enormous potential. On the other hand it is easy to predict a decline in tours given:

- rising costs of travel due to rising costs of oil
- declining interest in tours to Israel given a general decline in American Jewish interest in Israel and saturation of the market of those who are interested in visiting Israel (Israel tours represent 80% of Congress' tour business)
- increased competition from other Jewish organizations who are developing similar tour programs

It would certainly seem that Congress will have to work hard just to stay even in terms of its tour related income. In fact, tour income has declined in the last few years.

Welfare fund income has generally increased over the last few years [See Table 5 on page 14].

The Large City Budgeting Conference of the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds (LCBC) makes recommendations to the major local Federations from whom AJC receives support. LCBC recommendations carry a great deal of weight although, according to one of their leaders, Federations have been less supportive of LCBC recommendations with respect to AJC than with respect to other agencies. Average compliance of Federations with LCBC recommendations is 93% to 96%, compliance with recommendations with respect to AJC is around 85%. This, according to LCBC leaders, is not primarily a consequence of the fact that AJC has less influence on local Federations than does Committee or ADL. An LCBC leader explained that its recommendations for

TABLE 4

<u>Source of Income</u>	<u>1979 Budget Estimate</u>
Overseas Tours	\$1,000,000
Individual Fundraising	\$750,000
Membership Dues	\$675,000
Federations	\$650,000

TABLE 5

<u>Year</u>	<u>AJC Income From Federations</u>
1978	\$660,000
1977	\$635,000
1976	\$577,000
1975	\$608,000
1974	\$557,000
1973	\$479,000

AJC have been unrealistically high.

How does one account for this? Not, according to one LCBC leader, by the quality of AJC's annual written statements which he characterized as "verbose and self-glorifying" with reliance on "flattering quotes" none of which has an impact on the budget committee. In fact, AJC's written presentation was described as the least effective of the big three. The oral presentation delivered by former executive director Naomi Levine was characterized as far more effective; a presentation that struck the listeners as a contrast to the written report in its form and style. In addition "her ability to say maybe we were wrong on religion in the schools or alliances in terms of the new and developing reality added a dynamism and emotional appeal." The efforts toward merger with Committee "excited people" but in the final analysis the level of federation allocations are only marginally affected by written or oral presentations. The Executive Director of a communal agency, whose reports are acknowledged as the best, said he felt they had no impact whatsoever.

The generally positive reaction of LCBC to AJC's needs stems from other factors one of which is the feeling that AJC has been traditionally disadvantaged relative to ADL and Committee, and contributions to the "Big Three" should be equalized. Another factor to which we shall return is the sense that from Federation or NJCRAC's point of view, AJC is a much more "disciplined" organization. This suggests that AJC can expect to obtain increases in the coming years. But whether these will even be sufficient to offset inflationary rises is problematical.

The likelihood of a decline in Federation fundraising, the possibility of tremendous increase in the resettlement costs for the projected influx of Soviet Jews, and Federations' emphases on Jewish culture in general and Jewish education in particular means that AJC's traditional program has less of a priority claim for funds than was true in the past. Federation contributions represent a stable source of income with little prospect for dramatic increase.

For the last few years AJC has faced a financial pinch. In the last two years, despite staff retrenchment, there is a continuing concern over income. Our discussion suggests that if AJC is to overcome its fiscal difficulty it

must expand its fundraising from individuals. Grants from government and foundations is another possibility. But grants are allocated for specific purposes. They don't release large sums for discretionary expenditure. Assuming AJC's own program priorities are clear, grants are certainly a potential source of income which deserve more attention than they receive but in the immediate future AJC must look to individual gifts. Indeed, while there is always room for economies, it seems to me that any further contraction in AJC's budget will raise questions in the wider community about its viability. There is a strong sense of malaise now, particularly within the professional staff, to which I will return. Demoralization can become a vicious cycle which feeds upon itself and makes pessimism for the future a self-fulfilling prophecy.

In 1978 the General Division received pledges of \$573,000. There were additional pledges of about \$220,000 to the Women's Division. The analysis is confined to General Division income.

A gift of \$56,500 was a one-time corporate contribution related to AJC's travel program. There were two other contributions that were above \$20,000 -- one, of \$62,500 and one of \$24,000. There was a set of three gifts totalling \$19,000 which came from a firm and individuals connected to that firm. In other words, in 1978 the General Division received four pledges of major gifts. These pledges represented 28% of all General Division pledges.

There were an additional five individuals and firms who pledged from \$8,500 to \$13,000. Finally, there were 11 pledges of \$3,800 to \$6,500. \$55,200, or 10% of the pledges, came from 16 individuals or firms who contributed from \$3,800 to \$13,000. Most of the 20 pledges which constituted 38% of General Division income, came from people not actively involved in AJC activity. To put the matter another way, only a handful of AJC's leaders are numbered among its large contributors despite the fact that large contributions represent a significant proportion of AJC's fundraising.

The UJA fundraising experience, which has been replicated by other institutions, is that large givers are successfully solicited by other large givers. The professional fundraiser cannot do it himself. In the case of AJC the pool of potential solicitors is small.

There are three views within AJC about the causes of its

inability to raise large sums of money. These views are not mutually exclusive. According to one view, AJC has a tradition of neither honoring large givers or impressing upon its leadership the necessity to give. AJC staff are especially receptive to this point of view. At a 1972 EC meeting reference was made to AJC's fundraising as a "disaster" to which the then-president, Arthur Herzberg, said that in Congress "verbal skill is [a] passport to leadership" whereas in his synagogue or in Committee or ADL "people become leaders because they gave."

When potential GC cooptees were presented to the EC for approval and mention was made of their financial capacity some objected to such criteria for membership. According to one respondent there was objection to urging a dinner honoree to make a large contribution. This, it is reported to have been said, is unworthy of AJC. "Congress prides itself on being a democratic organization, but fundraising is elitist," says an AJC fundraiser.

A second view is much harsher. According to this view AJC leaders pay lip service to the need for new contributors and new, younger leaders but don't want them. AJC, it is said, provides a vehicle whereby its elite gains access to the top leaders of the Jewish world, exposure in the national media, and other status and social perquisites of leadership in a major national Jewish organization at a minimal cost. AJC leaders derive many of the same benefits as, for example, Committee leaders, at much less of a cost.

I reject this view as an oversimplification but I think it may contain enough truth to give AJC's present leaders pause for reflection. There is no question that AJC leaders don't "pay their way" relative to other Jewish organization leaders. An impression prevails that they contribute far less, even in accordance with their means, than do, for example, Committee leaders. It is also true that other national organizations show far greater sensitivity in involving present or potential contributors in activities that confer status. A classic example is a meeting that one national Jewish organization arranged with the ambassador of a west European nation. Having obtained the appointment, they invited a number of prominent Jewish businessmen to the meeting on the basis of the ambassador's interest in meeting American businessmen. When one invitee said he couldn't come, the organization accepted his suggestion that his son attend in his place. The son was subsequently courted, involved in the organization's activities, and is playing an

increasingly prominent role there. It had occurred to some people that whereas the ostensible purpose of some organization delegations of Jewish leaders to the Israeli Prime Minister or defense minister is to deliver a message of some kind, it is really a cover to involve large contributors in "exciting" activities. I was struck by the contrasting style of AJC. A former leader virtually imposed a meeting on a top Israeli official on the basis of his position in AJC. The meeting, so the Israelis believed, was solely to enable him to boast that he alone was able to obtain a meeting with the Israeli in question, while others were unable to. In other words, he exploited AJC for his own purposes rather than exploiting his connection for the sake of AJC.

Nevertheless, while it may be true that AJC's leaders could utilize their position to more effectively involve large contributors or perhaps attract others, it is not fair to suggest that they seek to exclude large contributors in order to control AJC for purposes of self-aggrandisement. If that were the case, AJC leaders would not have initiated the merger with Committee or been prepared, at least Committee assumed they were so prepared, to raise their contributions to the level of Committees leaders.

A third view, to which I am particularly partial, is that a major cause for AJC's inability to raise large sums from contributors is that it has little to sell. According to this point of view, large givers are interested in projects not organizations. They can become excited by proposals which are close to their interests, particularly if their names can be associated with the project. But AJC is issue, not project oriented. It appeals for money to fight for issues, and large contributors are not interested in this. Sometimes AJC type projects can be matched to the interest of large contributors. The Nursing Home investigation was a good example. But, the nature of AJC's present priorities are not likely to excite many philanthropists. I will return to this in part three.

Among AJC's contributors are some wealthy individuals who in the absence of a sense of involvement make only nominal contributions. But, a nominal contribution for a wealthy philanthropist can range from \$500 to \$10,000. Contributions to AJC seem to fall nearer the lower range. This is a matter of organizational style and expectation. In this respect, more effective fundraising techniques, and a better fundraising image, might produce larger income. AJC's present leadership is aware of the fact that dinners, ballets, and similar functions may serve a public relations, status,

or social function, but is a most inefficient way of raising money.

III STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION

The ultimate governing authority of AJC is the National Convention which meets biennially. It elects AJC officers and 200 members of the GC (there is provision for 50 additional cooptees to be appointed by the president each year), and adopts basic policy. More effective authority is exercised by the GC, which meets at least four times a year. It determines AJC policy between convention including policy proposals which the convention was unable to consider. It establishes and defines the jurisdiction of chapters, divisions, councils and regions. Finally, it creates and dissolves national commissions, standing committees, and special committees.

Chairmen, co-chairmen, and members of National Commissions are appointed by the president with approval of the GC. There are presently four National Commissions: Law and Social Action, Urban Affairs, International Affairs, and Jewish Life and Culture. The commissions include as members not only those who have a record of past activity but individuals of distinction with a claim to expertise in the areas in which the commissions function. The present commission chairmen include the provost of Yale, dean of Harvard College, and a very distinguished professor of economics. The commissions discuss public issues and recommend adoption of specific policies. If the president interprets a recommendation as new policy, it goes to the National Convention, or more likely, to the GC for adoption. If no GC meeting is pending it goes to the EC. If the president interprets the recommendation as consistent with existing AJC policy, it can be implemented by the staff without further approval.

The EC meets monthly and functions as a Board of Directors, with further responsibility for implementing policies of the GC, issuing directives consistent with GC policy, and preparing a budget for submission to the GC. Members of the EC include elected officers, honorary and otherwise, chairmen and co-chairmen of the national commissions, a number of representatives of the Women's Division, and up to 50 cooptees a year chosen by the president from the GC and from former AJC leaders, all this with approval of both the EC and

the GC.

The ByLaws provide for a Board of Trustees but it has not been established.

AJC, like other national Jewish organizations, really functions at a national level and at a regional-local level. In AJC's case, one can talk of a third level--the Women's Division.

The ByLaws provide for membership-at-large for those who live in areas where no AJC chapters exist. The vast majority of AJC members are affiliated with local chapters. Chapters in turn, may be composed of only women, in which case they are affiliated to AJC's Women's Division, rather than its General Division.

Almost all chapters are grouped into divisions. The Women's Division and General Division each have their own divisions. Outside New York, divisions are really constituted from all the chapters in the metropolitan area. In some areas of the country, there are regional groupings. The divisions constitute AJC's major field office. Each division is served by professional staff. In New York, however, a special situation obtains. All the divisions of New York City, Westchester and Long Island (the Long Island Division constitutes a region) are organized into a Metropolitan Council in order to give a united voice to AJC in New York. The Metropolitan Council consists of division delegates and cooptees. Relations between the Metropolitan Council and its divisions are important but will not concern us here.

The Women's Division (WD) structure roughly parallels that of AJC. At the national level, it has its own officers and professional staff. It's membership is somewhat larger than the General Division membership, and its chapters, where they coexist with General Division chapters, tend to be more active. In some areas there are no separate WD chapters. Constitutionally, the WD is subservient to AJC's national policy making bodies. It has no policy making authority. In practice, much of the impetus for AJC policy, particularly in areas of non-specially Jewish concern, has come from the WD. Traditionally, the WD has recommended or initiated more liberal or left-of-center policies. Until recently, however, many WD members felt that their point of view, their interests, and their leadership were not adequately represented at the national level. Nevertheless, impetus for the dissolution

of the WD came from its leaders. The issue seems to have been resolved in principle. Questions remain with respect to timing, or the extent to which women will play an independent role within an integrated chapter or division structure. These are issues of a technical nature which will not concern us. However, since it appears that the WD will be eliminated, it might be useful to indicate the rationale for its elimination as presented in a memorandum from Naomi Levine of June 16, 1977. (Naomi Levine was opposed to the step). She listed seven reasons some of which dealt with duplication, lack of coordination, and lack of autonomy, but some of which included:

--the difficulty of attracting young professional women into a women's organization with the consequence that "existing leadership in the WD is getting older and there is little or no replacement"

--"WD chapters are dwindling and dying"

In support of retaining the WD, the former executive director indicated that its problem with chapters and divisions is "an overall agency problem with the General Division having as many problems as the WD"

The existence of inactive or paper chapters has lead some in AJC to consider a basic reorganization in which chapters would be eliminated. (Julie Schatz estimates that there are about 80 active chapters and about 30 active divisions. His own Commission has names of about 30 chapter and 30 division chairpersons.) This question also rests beyond the purview of the study, but in one respect it is not unrelated to the Task Force's concern. AJC professionals at the national as well as the regional level are concerned with chapter programming. This consumes both time and money. The need for chapter programs is also a factor in the development of AJC policy. The recent shareholder's activity in which members were encouraged to empower AJC to raise the Arab boycott issue at stockholder meetings on their behalf was endorsed enthusiastically because, in part, it seemed an ideal membership project. Whether AJC ought to be more attentive to programmatic implications of its policies, and whether it ought to be more attentive to the policy wishes of its chapters and divisions, is a question which is quite relevant to the establishment of AJC priorities.

Many members and regional directors view AJC's national

leadership (lay and professional) as having long been indifferent to the needs of the regions and local chapters. This is sometimes formulated as a New York orientation. The complaint is an old one. It is reflected in the 1970 Rejuvenation Committee Report, and was echoed in many open-ended responses to the GC questionnaire. My impression is that it is not a New York versus the rest of the U.S. problem as much as a national versus local problem. In fact, at a policy level, the recommendations of the Metropolitan Council do not fare any better than those of Chicago. Both have made policy requests based on the specific needs which were rejected. The feeling of national leadership indifference to the regions was evident in the February 1979 meeting of AJC's field directors. The regional directors have no sense that AJC is concerned with their problems, their perceptions or their opinions. They were not asked to summarize their regional activity much less react to national's activity. When one of them did speak out, one of AJC's professional leaders told him he had "defective vision." It is not surprising, after that reaction, that field directors were reluctant to express themselves despite a subsequent request from the Executive Director.

Regional directors showed less reluctance in each other's presence. According to field directors whom I interviewed, intense discussions went on in the privacy of hotel rooms among participants -- much of it an expression of their sense that the national leadership is traditionally indifferent to them. All of the field directors to whom I spoke reported that they operated their offices more or less independently of the national office. This, they said, was not only because they felt it was the most effective way to maintain their regions, but because there were no clear priorities and directives emanating from the National office.

I don't know of one national Jewish organization where local, lay and professional leaders do not complain of an excessive New York orientation, of indifference to local needs and of insensitivity to the wishes of the local leaders. Such tensions are built into all national organizations. Nevertheless, it seems to me that national-regional relations in AJC are worse than in similar organizations.

Part of the reason for the poor relationship stems from what I perceive as insufficient sensitivity to local needs and to the opinions of others. Part of the reason, however, stems from an AJC style that pervades the councils of the

national leadership as well.

I sensed a tension among AJC leaders that may contribute to a propensity for people to reject rather than accept the proposals of others. Very little credit or deference is given to the recommendations of leaders or groups of leaders, of regions, or of chapters. My own observations suggest that among Jewish organizations, like other modern bureaucratic organizations, there is too little original and critical thinking. Proposals tend to be accepted or rejected, not with regard to their intrinsic merit but rather their bureaucratic implications. It is, in some sense, refreshing to find an organization like AJC. But my experience with AJC provides me with a new appreciation for standard bureaucratic modes of decision-making. After all, what is the point of having lengthy meetings and discussions in a national commission or in a sub-committee, or among the officers and professional staff, if the recommendations to the EC or the GC are to be ignored and the issue considered de-novo by a body which has less information before it than the body which made the initial recommendation. This happened four times in the two months I observed the workings of AJC. Recommendations of the Commission on Law and Social Action (CLSA), the Commission on Urban Affairs (CUA), the Metropolitan Council and the professionals and top officers, and a special committee of the EC were rejected by one forum or another.

This problem is related to a second question which is really a subcategory of the larger problem. There is a sense among many AJC leaders that the professional staff has too great a voice in policy decisions -- a sense that was echoed in the 1970 Rejuvenation Committee Report, and found some, though infrequent expression in the open-ended responses to the GC questionnaire. It was, apparently, an issue in Howard Squadron's election as AJC president in 1978. There were those who felt that in electing Squadron, control in AJC would be restored to the lay leaders. I should add that criticisms made of the professional staff were always accompanied by fulsome praise for their excellent and superb performance. Perhaps the praise was offered to dull the sharpness of the criticism. My own impression is that both the criticism and the praise are overstated. AJC's professional staff varies in quality. Some are quite good, some are not. The staff are human, which means that each individual has strengths as well as weaknesses and it is the function of the top leadership to develop the strengths of the professional

staff while minimizing the harm that can come from their weaknesses. I don't mean to be hyper-critical. AJC certainly does not have a bad staff. All things considered, including salary scale, it may be as good a staff as AJC could hope to assemble. Staff performance is also subject to leadership, motivation and good administrative procedures. Many of the professional staff feel the absence of a sense of purpose in AJC; a sense which the Task Force may do much to correct. There is a low morale among AJC's staff which probably affects its output. Finally, while the reader must bear in mind that my observations were limited, it is my impression that administrative procedures in AJC are very sloppy. Part of the problem may stem from insufficient staff. At the national level, it has a professional staff of 23, excluding four consultants, only one of whom is full time, and the overseas tour department. The senior staff consists of 11 individuals. By contrast the American Jewish Committee has a national professional staff of about 150. But, I believe the problem goes deeper. There is, as one executive director of another national organization put it, a "noise level" within AJC in which he could not function. In my own work at AJC I found people kind and generous, but no smooth flow in response to requests. With some exceptions getting anything was a struggle. And on a few of the occasions when requests were responded to quickly, they were performed sloppily. Poor internal administration must also hamper staff output; particularly when there is no sense of esprit, or good feeling, or mutual affection which can compensate in a small organization for inadequate administrative procedures. I cannot resist the temptation of adding an historical footnote. It is my general impression that organizations of greatest administrative efficiency are those which were founded by German Jews. The less efficient organizations to this day, are those founded by Jews of East European origin.

I have suggested that the praise which AJC's professional staff has earned from the members is not entirely merited. It seems to me the criticism is even less deserved. I do not touch upon the fight surrounding the 1978 election of a president, and the accusation that many of the professional staff sought to prevent Howard Squadron's election. If true, and it is widely believed to be true; this reinforces my sense of how little influence the staff does exercise. But the charge of professional domination preceded the 1978 election. The charge of professional domination relates to efforts of professionals to impose issues and decisions on the EC and the GC, or to manipulate the national commissions

which they staff. Once again, these charges are found in the Rejuvenation Committee Report of 1970.

The laymen's perception of staff manipulation suggests staff shortcomings whether the charges are true or not. In my opinion, they are substantially untrue. Of all the national level bodies, only the Commissions are dominated by the staff. This is curious, since Commission members are presumably more expert than either EC or GC members, indeed more expert in many cases than the staff itself. True, the staff sets the agenda and determines how issues are to be presented, but this holds true for the EC and GC as well. I suspect that one reason lies in the fact that precisely because so many Commission members are "outsiders" they are not terribly concerned with the outcome of decisions over issues. Their membership on the Commission or attendance at meetings is explained by the status which membership confers, the opportunity to meet colleagues, a chance to air their own ideas and hear new ones. But no one cares very much what the actual decision is, particularly in view of the fact that the decision only constitutes a recommendation to some other body. Commission members are, in many cases, as remote from the Jewish community as they are from AJC. Hence, they may feel that they ought to defer to the needs of AJC and Jews as the staff interprets these needs. In all events, staff are constrained by the time and energy required in preparing Commission meetings but not by the outcome of the meetings. This is not true of the EC or GC. How, then, does one account for the opposite impression among so many laymen?

AJC laymen have what I consider an excessive concern with "independence" or "democratic procedures" and an inadequate concern with getting things done and with the functioning of the organization. Professionals have to know more than laymen about issues which confront the organization, they have to care more than laymen about what happens to the organization, and they have to invest more time in working for the organization. To insist that they confine their function to carrying out policy made by laymen, or they refrain from efforts to influence policy, or to attack them when they succeed, will result in attracting a group of mediocre and indifferent professionals. This doesn't have to mean professional control--though it does in many Jewish organizations where lay leaders won't devote large amounts of time. It can mean a very close working relationship between the top

professionals and top lay leaders. In the mutual exchange of ideas the professionals probably do initiate proposals but they try them out on the top lay leadership, modify them and rebuild them around their responses and then let the top lay leadership carry them through the decision-making bodies. This means policy proposals which cannot be identified as lay or professional, but are really the joint product of top organizational leadership. This ideal relationship can only develop in an environment of mutual respect and self-confidence.

Policies, when worked out by the top leadership and presented, in AJC's case to the EC or GC, must carry the weight of the leadership's expertise, authority and prestige, and its sense of currents within the EC or GC. This doesn't mean proposals will never be rejected. But this will be a rare occurrence, not because the organization isn't "democratic" but because it is well-run. What is more likely to occur is a modification or refinement of the proposals.

There is a delicate balance between leadership and democracy. Top leaders may sometimes have to choose whether they will put all their prestige behind a proposal or whether, for the sake of a greater sense of member participation, they will retreat even at the risk of jeopardizing the best interests of the organization. But the GC and EC members must also recognize that their officers and professional staff have a function to lead as well as administer whereas they are part-timers with partial knowledge. They must realize that their own decisions are more capricious than those of the top leadership. It is perhaps "democratic" but also absurd for the GC to reject the proposals of its leadership given the arbitrary nature of the GC majority. The leadership may have spent days considering a proposal only to have it defeated because the weather, or the time of day, or any number of other factors lead to a chance majority on the GC or for that matter the EC. These are considerations which the more effective Jewish organizations take for granted. Why, one asks, is this not true of AJC? Beyond reasons of style, I think it has to do with AJC's own self image as a democratic, activist, aggressive, policy making organization. A potential staff member is reported to have said that when he was being considered for a job at AJC he was asked "are you capable of being strident?" Stridency with others I suppose has its internal repercussions. Another reason stems from AJC's policy or issue orientation. AJC leaders perceive their major function as adopting policies on political issues

confronting the U. S. in general and American Jewry in particular. It follows that if ones function is to take stands on political issues it is opinion and values which count. With respect to opinion and value, all are equal. This value orientation or opinion orientation also contributes to internal tension and abrasiveness. Many leaders view AJC as an organization which provides them with a forum through which they can realize their political values rather than an organization whose purposes are more or less clear and whose policies, therefore, are instruments in achieving this purpose. The latter orientation naturally encourages a sense of mutuality, common concern and deference to leaders and experts. The former orientation encourages a different style.

IV THE POLICIES OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS

A. AJC's Policy Orientation

The most important observation about AJC is that it is issue oriented. Its leaders assume the importance of discussing and taking stands on issues. My reaction and that of others to the EC meeting of February 13, 1979 is a good illustration of how AJC leaders share assumptions that others do not. There is no question of right or wrong in the discussion that follows.

The EC meeting of February 13 preceded the two day conference of regional directors. Hence, they were present at the meeting. Agenda items included reports from the executive director and the president, a report on a symposium conducted the past month on Jewish proselytism and discussions of public assistance to private nonsectarian institutions of higher education, the issue of abortion for minors and parental consent, and U. S. Saudi-Arabia relations.

As I left the meeting a senior member of the staff expressed his opinion to me that it was an exceptionally good meeting. He said, as I recall, that the level of discussion was very high and people "spoke to the issues". This opinion was shared by another staff member with whom I discussed the meeting. The political orientation of the two staff members are far apart. They stand near the left and right ends of the spectrum of political opinions within AJC. Their positive evaluation of the meeting was, I believe, shared by most of those present. At least this was my sense from the discussions I heard in the foyer of Congress House.

Circling about, however, I came across a group of four field directors complaining about the EC meeting. Their reaction was very critical. As one of them put it, "if I came to the top policy making body [of AJC] wanting to know its priorities I would learn it is what American foreign policy should be in Saudi-Arabia; not membership, finances, tours, etc...my people won't come to this kind of meeting". According to another, "it was an exercise in consciousness raising for those who were there. For me it was totally boring". The comment which I thought most appropriate came from the field director who said, "my study groups would have liked the EC discussion... but how much of it can filter down". I don't believe that

the EC agenda requires a defense. My purpose is not to criticize but merely to point out that AJC leaders may be a very special group in terms of their public policy interests and it would be well for them to realize this.

To what extent are these interests shared by the broader membership? It is true, almost by definition, of those GC members who attend its meetings. I was startled to find at the GC meeting of February 4, 1979 a large group with a strong representation of older women listening attentively for an hour and a half and participating spiritedly in a discussion of welfare reform. I found the topic most uninteresting. A good part of the reason stems from my own agenda of interests but part of the reason stems from my conviction that the issues of welfare reform are so complex that even the experts who deal with them don't really know what the consequences of their policies will be. In some way this makes the whole issue a bit trivial to me. GC members, saw the topic quite differently. Many seemed involved and knowledgeable about the details of the proposed recommendation. Others redefined the topic in value laden terms such as: "we are liberals and must fight the conservative mood in the country", or "we should join with the Urban League and NAACP", or "we are an organization based on principal and there is no reason to back down from principal and compromise". Others took the view that, "half a loaf is better than none". In the end the GC rejected the recommendation of its Commission on Urban Affairs which "its experts" had passed by an eight to one vote. Again, my point is not to criticize the GC but to indicate their own self image as political authorities. The second point I would note, is that at no time did anyone at the GC meeting raise the question of the Jewish relevance of the issue. AJC leaders apparently assume that all issues of domestic political concern are legitimate topics for their concern.

This interest in politics is shared by the sample of GC respondents to the questionnaire. They were asked to clarify their interests in domestic political issues. 70% said they were "very interested" and the remainder responded they were "interested". None said they were "somewhat interested". To what extent is this interest shared by AJC's general membership? I don't know. Those regional directors and former regional personnel with whom I spoke feel that their active members are certainly issue oriented; they care very much about issues. Even in San Francisco

which is the model of a "service oriented" rather than an "issue oriented" division, the field director reports that his members are concerned with issues. The proof, "whenever we take a stand, people quit." Florida is another example. According to the regional director there, her younger leadership groups are built around study groups. The chapters are for the older members, overwhelmingly women. Her young couples are liberals and activists and her older women are mostly retired teachers, lawyers, business women. "The kind of people who also supported the ACLU until it supported the American Nazi's right to march in Skokie." The only difference is that the issues of greatest concern in San Francisco or to the Florida study groups aren't necessarily domestic political issues.

It would appear that AJC's public policy orientation is compatible with the orientation of its active members around the country though not perhaps the specific issues which the GC and EC will address. We will return to this point in part two. What about the nominal or less active members? The Florida director reports that at Chapter meetings of her women's groups she'll give a four minute presentation on issues which "makes the members happy and proud to be a part of AJC." They then move on to the program highlight which may be a lecture by a chiropractor, a demonstration by a beautician, or a card party. Florida is the fastest growing region in AJC. Are its members' needs typical? Is AJC's public policy orientation and a compatibility of this orientation with the interests of its active members a sign that AJC is doing something right, or an indication of built-in limitations on its ability to expand its membership base? Is the perceived gap between the activists' orientation and the paper memberships' interests a cause for concern or a phenomenon to be anticipated? Is AJC's role to win the American Jewish community in general and its own paper members in particular to its concerns, or should it redirect its own concerns? We will return to these questions in parts two and three but they certainly represent topics of concern to the Task Force.

B. Policy Positions: Consistency and Change

The Constitution of the AJC affirms its commitment to four basic policies. First, "the elimination of all forms of political, social and economic discrimination on grounds of race, color, religion, ancestry, sex, or national origin."

Secondly, fostering meaningful and creative American Jewish life through promoting "broader and more democratic communal organization," and "awareness of Jewish affairs," encouraging "Jewish scholarship and adequate opportunities for Jewish education and generally foster[ing] the affirmation of Jewish religious, cultural and historic identity." Thirdly, assisting "the people of Israel to develop in freedom, security and peace" and promoting "mutual understanding between America and Israel and between the Jewish communities of both lands." Finally, affirming "the unity of the Jewish people" and helping to "secure and protect the civil, religious and economic rights of Jews everywhere" through joining "in democratic association, through the World Jewish Congress, with the Jewish communities in other lands." Most AJC leaders characterize themselves and AJC policies as liberal and supportive of Jews and Judaism. Now the terms liberal and Jewish are symbols. That is, they are not simply generic terms which refer, in the case of liberalism to AJC's first policy commitment and in the case of Jewish to its last three policy commitments. Rather, they carry independent meaning evoking a positive resonance. This is particularly true of liberalism. Many AJC leaders believe it is appropriate for them to adopt a particular policy or pursue a course of action because "that is the liberal position." Some of these same leaders are, nevertheless, troubled with the meaning "liberalism." AJC leaders are also troubled by the meaning of Jewishness. Policy commitments as elaborated upon in the constitution suggest that Jewishness has two meanings -- a spiritual cultural meaning is suggested in the second policy whereas a protection of Jewish rights in the U.S., Israel, and the rest of the world is suggested in policy commitments one, three and four.

1. Liberalism and the Jewish Spirit

AJC has no difficulty obtaining consensus for those policies associated with liberal, left-of-center orientations as long as they do not conflict with what AJC perceives as a Jewish interest. On women's rights, ERA, abortion, capital punishment, unemployment, social security, welfare reform and opposition to the war in Vietnam, AJC's position was and is unequivocally that of the American liberal, left-of-center camp. What relationship do these policies bear to Judaism? Convention resolutions are sometimes phrased in terms of specific injunctions of the religious tradition. For example, the resolution on capital punishment. Sometimes they are phrased in terms of the broad Jewish tradition of social justice. For example, the resolutions on Vietnam or the war on poverty.

Both to myself as an outsider and to many though not all AJC leaders who were interviewed, the relationship is somewhat remote. It appears that those who framed the resolutions looked for a Jewish thrust and paid lip service to the Jewish tradition. No one doubts that an identical position would have been adopted even if no legitimation could have been found from within the Jewish tradition. In other words, in none of these cases, did the framers begin by asking: what policy is consistent with the Jewish tradition? Where no legitimation is readily available, Congress is not deterred from adopting resolutions. Thus, for example, the EC in 1974 deplored then President Ford's pardon issued to the former President Nixon without asking whether this was or was not within the Jewish tradition. AJC's stand on abortion is a better example. It has consistently opposed legislation limiting abortion. Anyone who reflects upon the subject knows that the prima facie case in terms of the Jewish tradition and Jewish survival needs is on the side of opposition to abortion. The best the proponents of abortion do from a Jewish point of view is to present a case that would neutralize the Jewish factor. When a former AJC president noted at an EC meeting that the organization's position was contrary to the Jewish tradition the vast majority of speakers felt that this was irrelevant. The president of the WD noted that the WD position in favor of abortion rested on "policy considerations" and not "arguments based on Jewish religious tradition". This, on an issue which according to Shad Polier, "is basic to AJCongress policy".

On the other hand, the Jewish legitimation that Congress prefers to tack on to its resolutions is more than a public relations tactic. There are a number of AJC leaders, perhaps even a majority, who believe that their own political liberalism is not only fully consistent with but draws from the Jewish tradition. I will return to this point. I raise it here only to note that the relationship between AJC's liberalism and its understanding of Judaism is more complex than appears at first glance. My impression is that while it has no appreciable impact on AJC policy, that as in the case of abortions, Congress is ready to affirm a policy contrary to the Jewish tradition, the belief in Judaism as a tradition and culture which nourishes political liberalism is an important component in reinforcing AJC leaders' affirmation of both Judaism and liberalism.

Has AJC's stand on these kinds of issues - issues of a general political nature only remotely related to perceived and immediate Jewish self interests - changed at all in the past thirteen years? I don't mean has it changed in this or that detail but rather is it still consistent with the

position one would associate with a liberal-left-of-center orientation. The answer is a qualified - no change. There is evidence, however, that seeds of change have been planted. It is expressed in two ways. First of all, the number of individuals who maintain that AJC's responsibility is to protect Jewish interests has grown. Some of these individuals see no need for Congress to adopt a stance on issues not related to Jewish needs. This philosophy, "Jewish protectionism", found virtually no expression a decade ago. It is a minority position today but it is shared by a few leaders. Furthermore there is one issue in recent times where the liberal-civil libertarian position was defeated. This was the issue of gay rights. The EC minutes cite Lou Yavner as saying, "the issue was simply irrelevant to his sense of purpose as a Jew working for the protection of Jews." But other participants at that EC meeting demurred from the substance of the bill; that is they found the bill unacceptable in substance rather than relevance. The EC approved, by a thirteen to two vote, AJC support for a New York City gay rights bill and defeated, ten to five, an amendment that would have exempted from its provisions institutions in which children could be subject to the influence of homosexual employees. Yet this position, so consistent with the orientation of liberal-left forces, was reversed in the GC by a 28 to 25 vote. On the other hand, there are those who feel that even this kind of vote is unlikely to recur; that it stemmed from the proclivities of the former executive director and her intense concern over the issue in question.

2. Liberalism and Jewish Self-Interest

AJC liberalism is more problematical when it is perceived as in conflict with concrete Jewish interests. Of course the two need not always be in conflict. AJC in recent years justified its concern with Black organizations and the Black media and rationalized adopting a position sympathetic to the Blacks in terms of making them pro-Israel. This attitude is expressed in GC and EC meetings and finds particular force in LCBC Reports: "we are seeking a restoration of confidence between the two groups in the conviction that renewed good relations will strengthen support in the Black community for Israel." Of course, I don't know if this is only a rationalization for what Congress wants to do or a reflection of real concern for Israel. Probably both, and probably the advocates themselves don't know which is more important. But the lip service that AJC pays to the notion, even if it is only lip service, suggests the priority it gives to Jewish interests.

There are occasions, however, where AJC's perception of Jewish interests conflicts with its liberal political orientation. As the present CLSA chairman noted, according to the December 1978 minutes of his Commission, "we are frequently faced with the problem of determining whether we should adopt a libertarian position or whether we should pursue the perceived interest of the Jewish community." Now the Jewish interest, in turn, is interpreted as having two components: the Israel-World Jewry component and the American Jewry component. It is my estimation that the former is given greater weight than the latter.

An example of how commitment to Israel can mitigate AJC liberalism was its activity against the war in Vietnam. By the late 1960's it was clear that in opposing the war in Vietnam AJC was, at least indirectly, associating with anti-Israel groups. Although in May 1971, the GC on principal, sanctioned participation in war demonstrations where sponsors were anti-Israel, the GC withdrew from a November, 1971 demonstration on the grounds that some of the sponsors intended using the opportunity to demonstrate against Israel as well. AJC opposition to the war in Vietnam, the willingness of some of its leaders to involve AJC in activity in association with groups hostile to Israel, its apparent refusal to bow to Israeli pressure to mitigate its opposition, may be cited as evidence of its readiness to subvert Israeli interests to liberal ones. I don't think this is a fair evaluation. I think, instead, that AJC attitudes toward the war in Vietnam are the limiting case. On the one hand, the whole liberal-left was united in its opposition to U. S. policy. The Israeli interest in mitigating American-Jewish opposition was remote. Pressure from then Prime Minister Golda Meir and particularly Ambassador Rabin was interpreted by many American-Jewish leaders outside AJC as offensive and illegitimate interference in the affairs of the American Jews. Despite all this, AJC had second thoughts about its activities, it postponed passage of one resolution on Vietnam when a leading Jewish personality suggested that such passage would harm Israel, and some though not all AJC leaders sought even greater restraints. Consequently, whereas one can interpret the evidence in two ways, I see the Vietnam case as an example of the important weight that an even remote and indirect Israeli interest has when balanced against a direct and immediate liberal interest. The willingness of the GC, despite the obvious reservations of many of its leaders, to entertain a guest speaker on the topic of why American Jews must support a strong defense establishment for Israel's sake, suggests how far beyond the liberal-left AJC is willing

to move when a case can be made for an opposing Israeli interest. World Jewries' perceived interests are also a constraint on AJC liberalism. Despite some opposition, AJC has adhered to a policy of non-support for Soviet dissidents out of fear that this would jeopardize Soviet Jewry in its struggle for their right to leave.

The issue, however, that Congress finds most challenging and most controversial is that of its attitude toward Black demands when juxtaposed to the interests of American Jews. There is a danger of oversimplification here. The issue is not only liberalism or universalism versus Jewish particularism, it is also old style liberalism versus 1960 radicalism.

Life was much simpler for all of us, AJC included, before 1966. Support for Blacks meant support for that which was just, but it was also perceived as helping Jews. It meant strengthening an alliance with political partners and fighting discrimination on another front in the general battle in which Jews had an obvious stake.

Whatever private fears AJC leaders may have had from the ghetto riots in the late 60s, and the looting of Jewish stores, or the overt expressions of Black anti-Semitism, did not find immediate public expression. Social scientists have shown that the initial response to events which seemingly challenge the reality content of a belief system is to reaffirm the belief system with greater vigor. This appears to have been the AJC response both in convention resolutions and GC discussions. The blame for Black riots lay with the white community which had discriminated against Blacks. The gist of a November 1966 GC meeting was that Jews themselves were guilty of not doing enough for Blacks. Black Power was viewed favorably whereas media sensationalists were held guilty for seeking to exploit it. As Black-Jewish tensions became more severe AJC reconstituted a Commission on Community Interrelations. Its chairman, Murray Gordon, was to subsequently resign from AJC's Metropolitan Council when the Council refused to support a proposal for independent Black school districts.

The first evidence of an AJC break with the liberal-left-of-center position on Blacks came over the issue of integration. At the October 1967 GC meeting, statements that Black riots must be understood and more must be done "to achieve Negro concrete equality" were only mitigated by the statement of

Theodore Bikel who "urged we do not condone looting." The statement that drew objection came in the speech of a guest, Dr. Francis Piven. She noted that law and order are traditionally the shield of repression and "Black racism may be necessary for the building of community pride." The minutes make no mention of anyone taking exception to that. Rather, Naomi Levine and Judge Polier challenged Dr. Piven's conclusion that Black segregation should be accepted since integration was impossible. Four months later, however, another guest speaker, Rabbi Arthur Herzberg, spoke of the present incompatibility between Jewish "goals" and those of other minorities. During the following year AJC became more sensitive to the issue of Black anti-Semitism. It placed an ad in the New York Times prepared by Richard Cohen and Arthur Lelyveld attacking WBAI and Thomas Hoving of the Metropolitan Museum for providing a forum for Black anti-Semites. (Four AJC leaders including past presidents of Congress and the WD-- Joachim Prinz and Virginia Snitow,--found the ad inappropriate.) On the other hand, the turmoil over the projected low income housing project in Forest Hills which pitted local Jews against Black spokesmen found AJC on the side of Blacks.

The national convention resolution on affirmative action in 1972 signalled a new emergent consensus in AJC in its relation to Blacks. The resolution was a compromise. It expressed opposition to quotas favoring Blacks but affirmed support for goals and timetables in employment, and advocated measures, short of goals, to increase the number of Blacks in institutions of higher education.

Implementation of that policy rather than concerted efforts to change the policy stirred controversy in the next few years. In the end, the basic policy position remained unchanged but its application tilted toward a Jewish protectionist side, though not in every instance. When, in 1975, the New York State Board of Regents announced that school districts making serious efforts to integrate its schools need not adhere to a particular ratio of Whites to Blacks (or Hispanic) students, AJC called the policy a "retreat" and said they don't oppose numerical measurements to favor educational goals of school integration. On the other hand, the GC reversed the CLSA and voiced opposition to a Brooklyn legislative re-districting which would have maximized Black representation and reduced Hasidic political influence. AJC charged that a City College biomedical program discriminated in favor of minority students and AJC supported redefinition of poverty

programs so that eligibility requirements wouldn't disadvantage Jews.

AJC did not enter the DeFunis case but in March, 1977 the EC, with two dissents, voted to submit a brief on behalf of Bakke. Proponents pointed out that it was not a hard line brief and that it affirmed that factors such as being disadvantaged (but not race) were legitimate criteria in selection for medical school.

There has, as I indicated, been a tilt, though not much more. The EC, for example, was unable to reach a consensus opposing the assigning of teachers to schools on the basis of race in New York City. AJC's position as reiterated most recently by its president is that "racial quotas may be imposed only when there has been a formal finding of racial discrimination and only as a last resort remedy." AJC like the American Jewish Committee refused to join ADL in submitting a brief on behalf of Weber in the case now before the Supreme Court.

One might argue that AJC has not changed its position at all. It may be argued that it has remained consistent in defending integration, helping disadvantaged minorities obtain social and economic equality without resort to quotas or measures that are inherently undemocratic or compromised principles of equality before the law. In pursuit of this goal, it might be argued, AJC has adopted positions which some Blacks on the one hand and some Jews on the other may have interpreted as being pro one side or another. But these are byproducts of a legal and social philosophy. It is the minority within AJC, so it might be said, who have sought to change the policy. On the one hand, some urged greater identification with Black demands even if that means supporting application of racial criteria. At the other extreme is the minority who urge the AJC to adopt a protectionist position toward Jewish civil servants, teachers or lower and middle income Jews and abandon the goal of seeking to correct the effects of the deprivation of Blacks and other minorities.

Whereas the two minority groups within AJC are oriented towards Blacks on the one hand or narrow Jewish interests on the other, the majority position addresses itself to a very different set of issues. It is only within this context that one can talk about tilts to one side or another.

This analysis of AJC's position would be more persuasive if AJC was not, after all, a Jewish organization. When a

Jewish organization adopts a principled position in a Black Jewish controversy maintaining that it is concerned with the justice of the issue not with which side benefits, it gives one pause.

On the other hand, many AJC leaders would argue that helping Blacks is not only just but is in the long run interest of Jews not only because it cements alliances with Israel but because Jewish interests are best protected by an absence of social unrest.

An important assumption to many AJC leaders is that Jewish self-interest requires raising the income and educational level of disadvantaged minorities. Jews, it is argued, are likely to become scapegoats and to suffer most severely in the event of social unrest. Helping disadvantaged minorities is good for society in general and Jews in particular. Therefore, even if one ignores general liberal principles, or moral and ethical convictions, one must balance the temporary disadvantage helping Blacks might bring to certain segments of the Jewish population with the long run benefit to all Jews. This view rests, in turn, on the assumption that doing more for minority groups will alleviate social unrest. To the best of my knowledge, no one at AJC has ever sought to explore this assumption.

The church-state issue like the minority rights issue is also intertwined with political principle and Jewish self-interest, but it has been far less controversial. AJC traditionally assumed that separation was both inherently right and good for the Jews. Along with all other Jewish organizations, it assumed that Jewish rights and Jewish freedom were best protected by strict separation of religion and State. AJC's traditional position was an absolutist one. It even contemplated filing a brief favoring a plaintiff who attacked the tax exempt status of religious institutions. According to the 1978 CLSA minutes, AJC policy would oppose government financing of Jewishly exclusive nursing homes. "...it would be unfair to ask taxpayers to pay for nursing homes they would not use solely because of their religion." I am not concerned with exploring the validity of the assumption that separation of religion and state in the United States is helpful to Jews. My concern is how AJC responded to recent challenges to some of the operative implications of this assumption.

There is passing reference in the October 1967 GC meeting to other Jewish organizations who counseled AJC not to "rock

the boat" on the church-state issue because it would tend to diminish support for Israel. This view was, to the best of my knowledge, never taken seriously.

The challenge to AJC's assumption that its church-state position was good for Jews on the issue of Jewish education and government aid to day schools. The question has come up a number of times in the last decade. Over some initial opposition that seemed to have virtually disappeared, AJC adopted a position favoring Jewish day schools and advocating greater Jewish communal support for them. (Initial opposition to this stance was based in part on the notion that day school education was not an important factor in Jewish identity but more significantly, that day schools competed with public schools. After 1970 there was little further mention of the importance of AJC support for public schools.) AJC continued opposing government aid but called upon Jews to do more for Jewish education. (However, a 1972 proposal that AJC establish a special Day School Fund, an act which it was said would help meet the charges of the Orthodox community that AJC really didn't favor day schools, was defeated.) For example, a proposal that AJC endorse tax deductions for tuition payments to Day Schools (a proposal especially helpful to Jewish parents since a large proportion of Catholic parochial school costs are covered by the Catholic diocese to whom contributions are tax deductible) was defeated though it was supported by then president Hertzberg and former president Lelyveld. Another AJC leader, Paul Berger, talked about AJC's church-state position as one we were "frozen into twenty-five years ago."

The pressures on AJC to modify its church-state position stemmed from a sense that Jewish education was in need of financial assistance and government aid was a major potential source, but also a sense that AJC was increasingly out of step with the rest of the Jewish community. Amram Nowak, according to December 1974 GC minutes said that AJC "is in danger of being left behind in the Jewish community," and Shad Polier, opposing a motion to support tax deduction for parochial school tuition said that Congress mustn't "bend to the wind."

A little bending did take place. Despite fears of where it might lead, AJC supported speech therapy aid to parochial schools in 1974. In EC discussions explicit reference was made to the resolution as meeting the criticism that AJC opposed Jewish schools. The point was further emphasized

in the 1975 LCBC Report.

AJC's position hasn't changed since then. If anything, it may have even hardened a bit. In 1976 the GC voted 54-7 to file a brief against a New Jersey law providing parents with \$1,000 deduction for each child in parochial school. Naomi Levine, the then executive director, argued such a law served the Jewish community whose main problem, Jewish identity and assimilation, could only be combatted by Jewish education.

In matters not affecting day schools, AJC continues to interpret church-state separation in absolute terms and maximal scope. In 1977 the EC approved a motion to oppose (albeit without press releases) the act of the municipality of Long Beach in setting aside a portion of public beach to be partitioned for men and women -- an act done for its Orthodox Jewish bathers. As indicated, AJC policy is opposed to government aid to nursing homes that admit only Jews. CLSA does not make policy but is influenced by and in turn influences AJC policy. A January 1979 CLSA meeting suggested an extension of the church state separation doctrine. It opposed government aid to special programs in private, non-sectarian colleges lest this open the way to government support to sectarian colleges.

It is my impression that a growing number of AJC leaders believe that its policy ought to be more flexible. On the other hand, when the present executive director suggested this to a WD Board meeting a number of WD leaders expressed their unhappiness with his statement. The incumbent AJC president, unlike both his predecessors, has expressed no reservations about AJC's church-state policy.

AJC's position opposing the Nazi march in Skokie indicates a tilt in the civil liberties area toward Jewish protectionism. At its November 1977 meeting the EC defeated 11-8 a motion to file a brief in support of the municipality of Skokie. The proposed brief would not have supported barring the American Nazi party march but would have opposed their right to demonstrate using the swastika. The issue was clearly drawn between those who favored a civil libertarian position and those who preferred giving policy expression to their Jewish sensibilities. At the January 1978 GC meeting, a motion passed 48-25 to adopt a statement (not file a brief) leaving open the possibility of entering the

case in the event of an appeal to the Supreme Court. The statement placed AJC on record in opposition to granting permission to the Nazis to march in uniform with the swastika. There was no precedent for the case. But observers saw it as a reversal of policy and evidence of growing sympathy for Jewish protectionism. The GC vote reversed the EC; a repetition of similar reversals in recent years especially on Black-Jewish issues. Secondly, while the vote didn't reverse AJC policy it did reverse an NJCRAC policy with which AJC sympathized of never entering a case seeking to restrict the "breath of the first ammendment." Finally and perhaps most significantly, many respondents believed that the GC position was motivated by a response to Jewish pressure outside AJC rather than a principled position among the GC member themselves.

It might be a mistake, however, to draw too broad conclusions from the Skokie case. According to one AJC leader, the former executive director had "packed" the GC in order to get the vote she wanted on issues like Skokie or gay rights. He termed the last few years an "abberation" and was convinced that AJC would now reaffirm its traditional libertarian position.

3. Jewish Affairs

We have suggested that AJC's position on domestic political affairs is influenced by its liberalism and its Jewish commitments. In many instances the liberal issue is irrelevant. Many, in some years most, National Convention resolutions deal exclusively with Jewish matters. At the international level, Israel, Soviet Jewry, Syrian Jewry, sometimes South American Jewry, aliyah, are subjects of resolutions though only Israel and Soviet Jewry are matters of continuing involvement and concern. AJC's Israeli policy is one of unequivocal support for Israel, a policy which puts it out of touch with its non-Jewish allies on domestic political issues but in line with those of all national Jewish organizations. On the matter of Soviet Jewry, AJC has permitted itself some public expression of opposition to the policies of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry (NCSJ). The basis for the deviation is AJC's conviction that it is acting in the best interest of Soviet Jewry. The controversy over whether it should or should not express a position on Soviet Jewry at variance with other national Jewish organizations was heated but the controversy certainly cut across any liberalism versus Jewish self-interest lines. Similarly, many of those who were most outspoken in their

insistence that AJC ought not to engage in public criticism of Israel were among those who adopt the most principled liberal positions on domestic political issues.

On domestic issues, AJC also has acted upon its concern for Jews. We already noted its political efforts in opposing the implementation of poverty programs which disadvantaged the Jewish poor. In 1973 AJC received a grant of \$50,000 which permitted it to provide legal services for the Jewish poor and develop a program to help secure bank loans for small Jewish merchants.

The most Jewishly problematic aspect of AJC's policy is its implementation rather than verbal commitment to "foster a meaningful and creative Jewish life;" that is, to the spiritual or cultural-religious dimension of AJC's Jewish commitments. Each year, the National Convention adopts at least one resolution on the topic. AJC favors havurot, pledges its members to more Jewish study, to more ritual observance, to support for Jewish education, to Jewish survival; but these resolutions are remote from organizational activity. Respondents, in my oral interviews, staff and laymen, were almost unanimous in their lack of clarity about the function of the Commission on Jewish Life and Culture and what AJC's role ought to be in Jewish life and culture.

There is difficulty in developing programatic material on Jewish life. But this is true of urban affairs, law and social action and international affairs as well. Translating policy into a program in which rank and file members can participate is a difficult task. The rare program like the shareholders action against the Arab boycott succeeds in involving members at the chapter level. For the most part, as we indicated, chapters and regions function on their own.

What remains true is that AJC is less clear about what its spiritual-cultural dimension means than it is about its political dimension. This is not surprising. Politics is a more clearly defined area of activity. Secondly, AJC activists are politically oriented people who perceive of Jewish life in political terms. That is why AJC rather than the synagogue is the primary focus of their Jewish concern. This is a point to which we return in the next part.

In one respect, AJC policy is quite clear. It seeks in its institutional practices, as distinct from its policy positions, to do nothing to violate the religious tradition.

It has a long-standing policy of Kashrut observances in its own kitchen and at public functions. It does not sponsor functions in violation of the Sabbath. Indeed, in 1967, according to the GC minutes of March, one reason it declined to participate in the Spring Mobilization for Peace was that the mobilization would take place on Saturday. The fact is that AJC also refused to participate because of the presence of some radical groups and the latter reason was probably a sufficient factor. But the fact that the Sabbath was even offered as a rationale is significant since not many other secular Jewish organizations would have done so.

We already discussed AJC's principled support for Jewish education. AJC has expanded its Jewish cultural activity in the last few years. The director of its Commission on Jewish Life and culture has a national reputation for his expertise in the field of Jewish media and he has long been active in developing Jewish media resources. In the Fall of 1977 AJC received a \$560,000 CETA grant, since renewed, to employ fifty persons to develop and present programs on Jewish culture in public schools, hospitals, nursing homes and similar institutions.

The activity of the Steinberg Center in encouraging Jewish artists to learn more about Judaism and to express their art in Jewish forms has impressed many. The workshops, classes, exhibits, and radio programs and performances which owe their origin to the Steinberg Center have enriched Jewish cultural life in New York and have a potential for making a major contribution to Jewish culture in the United States. But no other major AJC activity involves so few of its members or seems to have so little implication on the rest of its program.

4. Is AJC More Liberal or More Jewish?

Although there are those within and outside AJC who wonder whether Congress is more liberal or more Jewish, others feel the question is a loaded one. It is posed by non-liberals who, I believe, give too simplistic an answer to what is often assumed to be a rhetorical question.

First, AJC policy is not simply the record of its formal resolutions. Its Commissions, EC, officers, and professionals all have a role in interpreting and administering policy as well as in initiating specific policy recommendations to which the National Convention and GC respond. Hence the relative

Jewish-liberal weight must be asked of both the leadership groups (lay and professional) as well as of the groups formally charged with making policy.

More to the point, most AJC leaders at all levels don't see liberalism juxtaposed to Judaism. It is the firm belief of a majority of AJC activists that the spirit of the Jewish tradition is entirely compatible with political liberalism. In a sense, they believe the greater the fidelity to one principle, the greater the likely fidelity to the other. Incompatibilities and conflicts may take place on a specific issue, but there is no basic conflict in orientation.

A minority within AJC feel that the "ultra-liberals" are hostile to Judaism. According to one layman, some of the older leaders "made a religion out of liberalism and then turned it against Judaism." This is too harsh a judgment, I believe, because it misses the subtle dynamic of the self legitimation of the "ultra-liberals" in Jewish terms.

Thirdly, there are technical, organizational and environmental factors that may be more important in pulling an organization in one direction or another than the values of its policy makers.

Two of AJC's commissions, Law and Social Action and Urban Affairs are concerned with domestic political affairs. It is their responsibility to recommend policy. There is a liberal or reformist bias built in to AJC by virtue of the existence of such commissions. The very act of initiating policy recommendations, other things being equal, means a liberal rather than a conservative bias. On the other hand, events themselves dictate priorities. Concern with Israel in particular but Soviet Jewry as well, has dominated the agenda of AJC for the last few years. Given limited staff, both professional and clerical, limited meeting time and limited resources, certain Jewish concerns have absorbed AJC's attention at the expense of liberal-domestic concerns. My own impression is that this becomes especially noticeable at GC meetings beginning in 1974-75.

AJC's own leaders are aware of the shift in the balance of concerns. According to the September 1978 EC minutes, president Howard Squadron observed that once basic policies on Israel and Soviet Jewry are "clearly understood, we would concentrate on domestic programs at future meetings. AJC, he said, has traditionally played a pioneering role on domestic issues. They have been subordinated in our discussion for too long."

Our previous discussion of policy suggests that commitment to Israel and the physical safety of Jews is a first order priority for AJC. On the other hand, my impression is that principles of church-state separation take precedence over Jewish spiritual-cultural survival interests; and the economic interest of Jewish civil servants, teachers and the masses of urban lower middle income Jews are subordinated to principles of "social justice," and to raising the income, social and educational levels of disadvantaged minorities. Many AJC leaders would deny the validity of this observation. They would argue that government aid to Jewish schools threatens more than it enhances Jewish survival, and the long run interest of Jews is in raising the levels of disadvantaged minorities. My impressions, however, are not only based on my assessment of policy outcomes but my evaluation of the relative enthusiasm and personal commitment AJC leaders display toward various proposals. For example, the specific interests of the vast majority of Jews in economic programs that will benefit the urban middle class, that is the American Jewish stake in economic affairs, welfare and unemployment, are never seriously raised. The Jewish interest in domestic economic programs is not entirely clear, but nobody ever suggests clarifying it. In this respect, it is quite unlike, for example, the Jewish stake in American defense policy, which is a subject about which AJC leaders, regardless of their sympathies, think of as two-sided.

Within AJC itself there are all kinds of divisions, but some generalizations are possible. CLSA stands for the most part, at the liberal end of the continuum. The Commissions on International Affairs and Jewish Life and Culture at the Jewishly protective end. The past and present executive directors make no secret of their feeling that AJC ought to place greater emphasis on a Jewish orientation, whereas a substantial number of officers and other EC members, perhaps a majority, oppose this orientation. They feel their opponents are too "inward looking" or "protectionist" or "conservative." According to one staff member, the EC decision that the staff required its approval before they could enter any reverse discrimination case was an expression of the EC fear of the staff's "Jewish propensities." For the last few years the GC has been less liberal and some would say more Jewish in orientation than has the EC, with more of a tendency to support the staff.

PART TWO

AMERICAN JEWS AND AJC

America's Jews are not the same as the constituents of the American Jewish community. There are somewhere around 5.5 million Americans who identify themselves as Jews. Around 60% are members of synagogues and/or make an annual contribution to their local Federation/UJA campaign or some other overtly Jewish philanthropic cause. In other words, by the minimal criteria of communal involvement there are far more nominal Jews than members of the Jewish community. Hence we will look at American Jews and the American Jewish community separately. There is a great deal of interaction between the marginal Jews and the communal Jews. The former are a periphery group whom the latter seek to influence. There are familial ties between the two. And there is some movement in both directions. Lines are not sharply drawn. I emphasize the distinction because it is too often ignored.

The description of American Jews which follows points to general trends and tendencies. There are, of course, many exceptions. American Jews differ by age, region, generation in the U.S., place of residence, occupation, and Jewish identity. Even if the argument I will offer is correct, that AJC's policy and style characterize the policies and style of an older generation of American Jews, it doesn't preclude the possibility of finding a few thousand younger people who share AJC's orientation. Or, if AJC is out of step with trends in Jewish life, perhaps its function is to change these trends rather than "get into step."

I. AMERICAN JEWS

A. Changing Perceptions of Reality

The proportion of marginal Jews is apparently growing. We have only indirect measures to estimate the number of such Jews, but there is no question that measures of Jewish commitment reveal a diminution in Jewish identity by generation. Such measures include ritual observance, Jewish knowledge, attitudes toward intermarriage, proportion of Jewish vs. non-Jewish friends, and support for Jewish philanthropy. But it is easy to oversimplify. There are also signs of Jewish revival.

There are young people from marginal Jewish backgrounds who are active in Jewish life. There is greater interest in Jewish culture today than a decade or two ago, increasing interest in adult Jewish education. These phenomena but especially the success of Orthodox Judaism in attracting some young people and successfully socializing their own youth, the growth of the Havurah movement, the proportion of Jewish children in day schools and the assertion of Jewish self-interest among many Jewish voters has led some observers to suggest a polarization of Jews. The majority may be becoming less and less Jewish but a minority is becoming more Jewishly committed. The evidence is not clear. But, it should be stressed, the polarization hypothesis is the optimistic assessment of changes in Jewish life. However, more subtle changes in cultural orientation seem to cut across differences among all Jews and to have particularly affected the younger, third generation American Jews.

Middle class urban American Jews live in an environment which might best be labeled a "therapy culture." Not every Jew under 35 has been in therapy, but it is unlikely that he/she doesn't know a peer who has been in therapy and unlikely that he/she has been unaffected by the cultural images and reality perceptions which are part of the therapy culture. Jews in their fifties and older have more firmly fixed notions of reality and are less likely to have been influenced by the new culture.

I am referring to changes in notions about what is really important. Second generation American Jews, children of foreign-born parents, constitute the largest generational group among American Jewish heads of households. In 1970, 58% were second generation and 19% third generation or more. Among heads of households under 30, a majority were third generation. Between the ages of 30 to 70 a majority were second generation. Age and generation are associated. Both, I believe, are of independent importance.

Second generation American Jews, urban, upwardly mobile, middle class, well-educated, thoroughly secular in their orientations (even if they belong to a synagogue) who are in their fifties and older objectify reality in political terms. They view the real world as having existence and meaning outside of and independent of themselves, but amenable to human control. Political issues are expressed in choices and options through which man controls his world. Their vision for the world: peace, individual

freedom and social justice is attainable through human effort. It requires intelligence and appropriate values. Jews are in some respects, uniquely suited to realizing the vision because they seem to possess a disproportionate amount of intelligence and a Jewish tradition which emphasizes values of peace, freedom, and social justice.

Third generation American Jews in their thirties and to some extent perhaps even in their forties have a totally different set of assumptions about reality. Because they are assumptions they are often unarticulated.

Reality, to them, is a projection of self. The really real and really true is what one feels and senses. That which might exist independently of oneself is trivial and irrelevant. The measure of reality is how I feel and my obligation is to guard my sense of self and "work out" the guilt which previous generations instilled in me. My sense of self is also formulated and my well be measured in part by my interrelationships. But, what counts are the personal interrelationships with others.

Political issues are, in a sense, phony issues. They suggest an objectified reality that exists independently of me, yet subject, in some sense to my control. This is in part untrue -- things outside me are not subject to my control -- and in another sense trivial, because political issues don't talk to my concern with self. This doesn't mean that I don't participate in Jewish events or am not involved in Jewish life. Indeed, participation in events or happenings like a seder, or Soviet Solidarity Day, even regular prayer, can be a moving and meaningful experience. It can "talk to me" and my needs, "turn me on," help me "get it all together" and "I can be comfortable with it" since it is a part of my "lifestyle." It can "put me in touch with myself." This is one reason, I believe, for the explosive popularity and success of Jewish art and culture of all kinds in the last decade.

But the political world and political issues are not interesting or relevant. That is, there is a sense that sustained efforts in political participation are pointless because they involve me in relationships with things, not people. Indeed, for that reason, formal organizations are particularly suspect because they conceal the person behind the seemingly objective impersonal institution. To the extent that I relate to an objectified world I am overwhelmed by its complexity. It is not amenable to human control, not subject to human will. I will suggest other factors that have diluted the liberal

political orientation of American Jews within the organized community. Here, I am suggesting that it is not political liberalism that seems trivial to large numbers of third generation and/or younger American Jews, and I would add to older Jews who have been influenced by the same culture, but rather, the absorption in political issues of any type.

Nothing in the foregoing should suggest any necessary permanency about this newer orientation. But it does suggest that, at present, AJC active leaders live in a very different sort of world.

B. AJC and the New American Jew

My interviews with most AJC leaders began by asking them to describe how they became active in Congress. Most gave the same reply. They reached a certain point in their lives (often grown children in the case of women, and career achievement in the case of men) when they "looked around for an organization to join." Now, some admitted that there was a social dimension to the "looking around." But my impression is that this was secondary. They "looked around" for an organization through which they could express their political orientation which was both Jewish and liberal. If the respondents are typical of the broad spectrum of AJC activists, I can only emphasize how unrepresentative they are of younger American Jews. Even thirty years ago most Jews didn't "look around" for an organization to join. But I don't think they would have considered someone who did so -- peculiar. I think they would have considered it honorable and meritorious and bemoaned the fact that they didn't have the time, or energy to do so themselves. Thirty years ago the question - why don't you belong to a Jewish organization? would have elicited an apologetic answer. Today, the question is a joke.

The concerns of the GC reflect its age distribution. Table six compares the age distribution of the GC with the age distribution of American Jews according to the 1970 National Jewish Population Study. It should be born in mind that the American Jewish population has aged since 1970 but differences between its age distribution and that of the GC would still be substantial. (See Table 6 on page 51)

18% of Governing Council members are foreign born and 61% are second generation Americans, that is, the children of immigrants. The GC then is comprised of the late middle

TABLE 6

Age Distribution of Governing Council Members and Jews Over 30*
(in percentages)

<u>Age</u>	<u>Governing Council</u>	<u>Total Jewish Pop.</u>
30-39	5	20
40-49	14	24
50-59	30	24
60-69	37	17
70 or over	13	13

*Source: 1970 National Jewish Population Study

aged and elderly second generation Jews. The second largest category of members are elderly first generation Jews. There are twice as many first generation Jews over fifty on the GC as third and fourth generation American Jews under fifty. The question is, are the policy preferences of AJC members distinguishable by the age or generation of its members or is AJC attracting a member and/or active leader with a traditional AJC orientation despite his/her age and generational status?

The answer is the latter. The political orientations of GC respondents are not readily distinguishable by age and generation, despite differences in background and income. Age and generation correlate. In each case, I will cite the factor where differences are more pronounced. (Because of the small number of respondents under forty, they were grouped with those under fifty and this raises some questions about the utility of the analysis which follows.)

Younger respondents (under fifty) enjoy a much higher family income than those aged fifty to fifty-nine or those aged sixty or more. For example, 60% of those under fifty report family incomes of \$60,000 or more, compared to 46% of those aged fifty to fifty-nine and 29% of those aged sixty or more. (This might be accounted for by the greater likelihood of a household with two wage earners among younger respondents.) Younger and third and fourth generation respondents are far less likely to come from homes where being Jewish made a difference in everything done. They are also less likely to agree that being Jewish makes a difference in everything they do. On the other hand, younger respondents are less likely to be neutral or accepting about the decision of a child to intermarry, somewhat more likely to strongly oppose it. Finally they are more likely to be affiliated with a synagogue. 80% of those under fifty compared to 61% of those over sixty are affiliated with a synagogue.

In terms of political orientation, the younger third or fourth generation respondents are no more likely to think of themselves as radical or very liberal, and no less likely to be very interested in domestic political issues. They are somewhat more favorable to AJC activism in matters of church-state and urban affairs, somewhat less favorable than others to expanding AJC's level of activity in Jewish culture. Finally, they are somewhat less likely to favor AJC's emphasis on Jewish rather than universal issues and needs.

In summary, younger third and fourth generation GC members differ from older first and second generation members in terms of Jewish background and social class. In terms of political orientation they do not differ greatly but their orientation is somewhat more universalist-liberal rather than Jewish-particularist.

One qualification must be introduced. Differences by age are more pronounced than differences by generation although both move in the same direction. One outstanding characteristic of the younger age group is the disproportionate number of females among them. 64% of those under fifty, compared to 44% of those fifty to fifty-nine and 58% of those over sixty are female. Female respondents in our sample have a more universalist and political, less of a Jewish and cultural orientation.

In conclusion, the orientation of younger third and fourth generation American Jews on the GC are, if anything, moving further away rather than closer to the orientations which I feel characterize growing numbers of American Jews. This orientation is also out of step with that of younger AJC members as described by a number of regional directors. It was their feeling that their younger people were political liberals but only a "shade" more liberal than their counterparts who are not AJC members. According to the regional directors, their younger members were more concerned with Jewish issues and had less concern with the church-state issue where they felt Congress should, if anything, modify its position. They were most attracted to activities like kallot or study sessions on Jewish identity of the family. They looked to AJC to provide a vehicle to express and respond to their own problems, interests and concerns which were more private than public.

My impression that the younger members whom the regional directors describe are more representative of American Jews than the younger GC members is reinforced by my sense of where AJC has achieved its greatest success in recent years. The two programs which generate the most favorable publicity, and have the greatest impact on the Jewish community are the Overseas Tours and the Martin Steinberg Center. These happen to be the two least political of AJC's programs and I suspect among the activities which many of its leaders suffer rather than welcome. The benefits from both programs are so obvious that no one would dream of abolishing them. But no one

also asks the obvious question: is there some ingredient in the two programs that ought to infuse AJC's total program? The common ingredient seems to me to be that both serve individuals by providing a Jewish dimension to a human universal experience.

II THE ORGANIZED JEWISH COMMUNITY

A. Changes in the Jewish Community

Part of the evidence for the polarization hypotheses described earlier is the changes in the outlook of Jewish communal leaders; particularly within the Federations. Much the same, however, applies to organizations such as the American Jewish Committee.

Only within the last 10 or 20 years have these organizations turned from what might be termed Jewish universalism to a policy emphasizing Jewish survival. I have written about this change most recently in a study of the New York Federation of Jewish Philanthropies that appeared in the 1979 American Jewish Yearbook. Actually, the New York Federation of Jewish Philanthropies was the last of the major Federations to reflect the changes that I will describe. I do not mean to suggest that the changes have been total, that nothing remains of the older universalist outlook, or that some of the old universalists do not remain in the leadership of Federation and similar organizations.

From the universalists' point of view, Judaism was not so much a common set of rituals and beliefs, as a set of ethical imperatives of universal concern. But unlike the East European secularists or Zionists, who also rejected the religious tradition, this group did not perceive itself as being in revolt. The data suggests that this was instead, a group relatively uninformed about things Jewish. There were exceptions. Perhaps such people reconciled their knowledge of Judaism with the prevailing currents in Jewish communal life by finding support for their position in the currents of classical reform which prevailed in New York's Temple Emanu-El 20 or 30 years ago. This may account for the incorrect perception of outsiders that the majority of Federation leaders were members of Temple Emanu-El.

Another "Jewish" rationale for Federation activities was

the notion that by serving all needy, regardless of race or religion, Jews enhanced their status in American society. It was felt that non-Jews would appreciate how much Jews were doing, and this would reduce anti-Semitism and cement alliances between Jews and non-Jews. This argument suggests a particular sensitivity to anti-Semitism on the part of a group whose achievements and status might be thought to have insulated them. In fact, some members of this group experienced anti-Semitism in a more traumatic way than did the middle-class descendants of East European immigrants.

The Jewish upper classes of New York, the wealthy descendants of German Jewish immigrants who were born in the first two decades of this century, were well aware of what their families had achieved. At the same time, they were conscious of sharp barriers to the penetration of Jews into the upper circles of New York society. The best clubs were closed to them. While German Jews built their own distinctive city and country clubs, this was as much out of necessity as choice. Those who sought admittance to fine private schools and prestigious colleges were often accepted. Precisely because of their high status and sense of personal or familial achievement, however, they were sensitive to the fact that not every club, group, or type of association was open to them in these schools. The pain of discrimination, even when it assumed a petty social form, was compounded by the fact that they lacked a compensatory Jewish pride. It was not, in their opinion, better to be a Jew than non-Jew; although having been born a Jew, it was a matter of self-respect not to deny one's identity. This was thin armor with which to shield oneself from anti-Semitism.

Juxtaposed to the "universalists" were the "survivalists." From their perspective the gravest threat to American Jews was loss of Jewish commitment and assimilation. Hence, the prime responsibility of Jewish organizations rested in strengthening Jewish identity and pride. Coincident with this was the assertion of Jewish political interests not only with respect to Israel but within domestic political life as well.

Important factors in effecting a change in outlook from universalism to survivalism were the Black power movement and manifestations of Black anti-Semitism. The late 1960's was the era of the teacher's strike, of Oceanhill-Brownsville, of anti-Semitic remarks by Black spokesmen. The assertion by

Blacks of their rights led Jews to wonder why they should not think in terms of Jewish rights. Increased government responsiveness, particularly at the municipal level, to demands by ethnic groups, meant that the "rules of the game" had now changed. More and more Federation leaders believed that the growing emphasis on the distribution of resources along ethnic lines required that Jews insist upon receiving their fair share. Finally, Black anti-Semitism was a traumatic experience for many liberal Jews who had been deeply committed to the civil rights movement, who saw themselves and other Jews as champions of the Negro cause, and who believed that anti-Semitism, except from the extreme right, had disappeared.

A second factor in the transformation in the outlook of some Federation leaders was the growing disenchantment with the conceptions of the "common good." This disenchantment could have been a product of the war in Vietnam, a letdown from the Kennedy era, or a gradual erosion of earlier liberal political beliefs. Whatever the case, it reinforced a feeling that Jews had best be more attentive to their own interests.

The increased visibility of Jewish survivalists also served to alter the views of some Federation leaders. The upward mobility of East European Jews brought increasing numbers of them into professional and social contact with Federation's leaders. Some of the East Europeans had deep Jewish commitments and beliefs; a number were Orthodox. These were not exotic Hasidim, but people with whom Federation leaders related as peers.

Finally, a factor that lead some Federation leaders to change their Jewish outlook was the Six Day War and its aftermath. Both Israel's victory and the renewed threat to its existence contributed to their Jewish pride and concern. It is possible that perceptions of Black anti-Semitism heightened such feelings by serving as a further reminder that Jews were threatened in the 1960's as they had been in the past. This time, however, Jews had showed that they could fight back and emerged victorious. Perceptions of Israel and threats to it are particularly important because they stand in dialectical relationship to the survivalist thrust. That is, threats to Israel helped trigger a survivalist orientation within the American Jewish community, but the survivalist orientation, stemming from other sources as well, led to an emphasis on the importance of Israel. To a lesser extent, the same may be said about Soviet Jewry.

There are two important consequences to these changes that merit discussion. They are, a growing political conservatism among communal leaders and secondly, a shift in the balance of power within the Jewish community.

The political conservatism must not be overstated. I am talking about relative shifts in orientation. This shift is attributable to a number of factors which I have mentioned. But the importance of Israel and Soviet Jewry has led to three other consequences that have diluted the previous leftist orientation of many Jewish communal leaders. First, the concern for Israel and Soviet Jewry has shifted effort and energy even among organizations with greater resources and a much larger staff than AJC so that less time and effort is devoted to domestic political issues. Secondly, Israel as the center of concern has certain policy byproducts. For example, a strong America and strengthening America's global position is now viewed by many as essential for Israel. Recent discussions among American Jewish Committee leaders are instructive in this regard. A meeting of its national leaders heard two presentations on the subject of American foreign policy and American will. Both papers were described as approximating the positions reflected in Commentary magazine and were well received. According to a Committee leader, this would not have happened a few years ago. I asked why this was an appropriate topic for a leadership meeting? What did American foreign policy have to do with the Committee? The answer was that both papers phrased their policy recommendations in the context of Israel's needs. I suspect that this shift in orientation is not entirely accounted for by Israel's needs. But even if this is true, it is significant that it is Israel's needs which legitimated this shift. Thirdly, concern for Israel is a "gut" issue to many communal leaders. It cannot help influence attitudes toward other groups. By and large the left and Blacks and liberal Protestants are perceived as hostile or indifferent to Israel. While many Jewish communal leaders want to maintain alliances with these groups they cannot help but feel differently about them and their causes than they did 20 years ago. Other Jewish communal organizations, ADL is the best example, have become their outspoken critics.

A second important change that is attributable in good part though not entirely to the increasing importance of Israel and Soviet Jewry is the changing balance of power within the American Jewish community. Israel's financial needs and American Jewish response to these needs created powerful fundraising mechanisms which, when combined with or undertaken by the local Federations, placed enormous

resources at their disposal; even when two-thirds or more of the funds were for overseas needs. Even earlier, Federations no longer confined themselves to fundraising but entered the area of planning, coordination and even some control of local agencies whom they funded. Increasingly, they viewed themselves as the Jewish community. Israel's important role in American Jewish life strengthened their hand. Israel lent its prestige and the prestige of its leaders to the Federation elite. It was Federation leaders who welcomed or were welcomed by Israeli dignitaries, were photographed with them and received the coveted invitations to cocktail parties, parlour meetings, or intimate dinners. No local hospitals and universities (not even symphonies and museums) could confer that kind of status; at least not in the short run. In addition, Jews were asked to support Israel politically as well as financially, so coordinating groups gained in status and prestige since they spoke for American Jews on the subject dearest to the heart of American Jews. At the national level the coordinating body was the President's Conference and not the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds (CJF). CJF is not entirely satisfied with this arrangement. It is the outcome of a decision by Israeli leaders and it is unlikely, though not inconceivable, that Israel will seek a new instrument. At the local level, however, it is Federations and the Community Relations Councils (CRC) which are funded by and often created by Federation, that take the initiative on matters affecting Israel.

Finally, the increased political sensitivity of Jews to their domestic as well as international political interests further strengthens the role and status of coordinating groups who signal to both the Jews on the one hand and American political leaders on the other what Jews are demanding and what is or is not a satisfactory settlement. The status of Federation leaders soared as a result of all this. This, in turn, generated a desire by other Jewish elites to enter their ranks.

The institution which has suffered most in status and prestige as a result of these developments is the synagogue and rabbinate. Had all the synagogues organized together at the local and national level, even if synagogues had united according to denomination into authoritative associations with strong leaders, they might have retained their national prestige and influence. They are, after all, the organization with which more Jews are identified than all other organizations combined, and by and large, they play a far more central role in the lives of their members than do other organizations in

the lives of their members.

But synagogues did not unite; perhaps because those to whom the synagogue is most important perceive it as speaking to their inner, private, familistic selves and as being an inappropriate vehicle for public, collective, ethnic concerns; perhaps because they are less efficient instruments than explicitly secular organizations; perhaps for other reasons.

National secular Jewish organizations also felt the impact of the shifting balance of power. I will confine myself to some general observations.

The rise in importance of Federations and CRCs has had three consequences. First of all, in many localities, Federations offer national organizations funding in return for which the national organizations either abstain from conducting a local campaign, or limit the nature and timing of their campaign. Some national organizations have found that without a fund raising effort their local chapters lack focus and a prime instrument for self education. In other words even if a local Federation is giving the national organization as much or more than it could have raised on its own in that locality, the Federation arrangement "smothers" the local chapter of the national organization. Secondly, Federations and CRCs have greater strength, glamor and importance than the local chapters of national Jewish organizations. They are able to recruit more talented, wealthier, brighter leaders. They have coopted leaders of national Jewish organizations who often transfer their major allegiance from the national organizations to the Federation or CRC.

Finally, the CRCs have larger staffs and budgets than the local chapters of the national organizations. They increasingly undertake functions which were the traditional preserve of the local chapters. Arrangements and relationships vary in different cities. There are, for example, CRCs which are run by ADL. In other places, there are very amicable relations and a clear division of labor. But there is a sense among the national leaders of the three major community relations organizations that the CRCs constitute a threat to their local chapters and there is very little they can do about it.

B. AJC And Changes in the Jewish Community

Financially, the growth of Federations and CRCs has helped AJC more than handicapped it. The limitations on fundraising under which Committee and ADL, for example, chafe, which has led to an increasing boldness on their part in independent or unapproved fundraising ventures has not hurt AJC. AJC only has chapters in a handful of cities outside the New York/New Jersey/Philadelphia area and lacks the fundraising apparatus to raise on its own the sum it now receives from local Federations. AJC has benefited from its image as a "good boy" in Federation circles. Part of its increases relative to Committee and ADL are signals of Federation's unhappiness with the increasingly dependent role which they have assumed.

AJC regional directors complain that local CRCs are fulfilling functions that were traditionally those of AJC. They are troubled by their loss of prerogatives. I don't know if AJC suffers more or less in this regard than do other national organizations.

Most painful of all is the loss of elites to Federations and CRCs. It is hard to judge if AJC is better or worse off relative to other national organizations. On the one hand, AJC has fewer leaders whom local Federations and CRCs are anxious to attract. AJC's local leaders tend, as one professional put it, to be second stringers. They are people without the local influence, the money, or the talent of ADL Board members or local Committee leaders. Hence, AJC elites are less likely to be invaded. On the other hand, the loss of a few top leaders is a more serious blow to AJC than to other Jewish communal organizations. The WD reports that it has suffered from Federation's women's groups who provide more glamour, prestige and a more elitist social setting than the local WD group can offer. When this is coupled with fewer demands on the women's time, it is easy to predict which organization will be more attractive.

GC members were asked to list in order of importance to them up to four Jewish organizations with which they are affiliated.. They were specifically asked to include AJC and a Synagogue if these were important organizations to them. Twenty-two respondents listed the CRC or NJCRAC and twenty-seven respondents listed Federation or UJA as one of the four Jewish organizations which are most important to them.

Of the respondents who listed Federations, UJA, NJCRAC, or the CRC as an important Jewish organization with which they were affiliated, 30% listed it ahead of AJC. (It is not entirely clear what the few respondents who listed UJA meant by it. Some or all might have meant it as synonymous with Federations, but some or all might have meant it as a purely fundraising organization. Omitting UJA would raise, not lower, the percentage who list a roof organization ahead of AJC). This 30% figure is a significant one because one has to assume that among GC members who are responding to an AJC questionnaire, the tendency would be to list AJC as the most important Jewish organization. On the other hand, one may interpret the figures more optimistically; 70% of members who are identified with the powerful and prestigious Federations and CRCs nevertheless rank AJC as more important in their lives.

The data do not answer the most important question: what happens to AJC members who are coopted by Federations and CRCs? Are they lost to AJC or do they serve its interests in their new roles? AJC is envious of the number of Committee members who play active roles in Federations and CRCs. AJC feels that ADL and Committee are assured of Federation support regardless of how "bad" they are in Federations eyes, because their members hold influential positions in these organizations. On the other hand, both Committee and ADL complain that as their members become active in roof organizations, they transfer their loyalties. The question is, therefore, whether the balance is favorable or unfavorable. AJC emphasizes to its regional directors that it wants to recruit Federation leaders. In the EC discussion over association with Moment magazine, three different speakers mentioned that Moment was attractive to Federation leaders and would bring such people close to AJC. But if AJC succeeded, what price would it have to pay in autonomy? In some cases, AJC has clearly lost leaders to CRC's. In other cases, they have clearly not lost, but gained in status by the leadership positions assumed by former activists. I am not sure anyone knows what the net balance has been.

A footnote to the foregoing is an analysis of the relative importance of synagogues to GC members. Whereas 70% of the respondents are affiliated with a synagogue (6% Orthodox, 30% Conservative, 28% Reform, and 2% Reconstructionist), only 52% listed it as one of the four Jewish organizations which was most important in their lives. However, 9% felt it was more important than AJC, and 20% listed it as second in importance after AJC. Of those GC members who are also synagogue members, this means that 13% felt their synagogue was more important than AJC to them.

How do AJC's policies relate to those of the Jewish community? On Israel, as indicated, AJC is in the mainstream. It is somewhat less defensive of Israeli policy than ADL and somewhat less critical than Committee. Committee, for example, has called upon the Israeli government to cease establishing settlements on the West Bank. But differences between all three organizations are minor.

On domestic political issues AJC is no more liberal than prevailing opinion at the NJCRAC. Generally, on issues upon which both it and Committee adopt positions, policies are virtually identical. The differences, according to a Committee leader is that his organization won't adopt policies on the variety of issues that AJC does. Thus, for example, Committee has no position on social security or abortion, nor would it adopt a position on gay rights. It, too, adopts positions on issues that are Jewishly extraneous, but it does so because policy positions on some issues cost nothing, are not controversial, and help maintain alliances with non-Jewish organizations. When Labor asked for support on Humphrey-Hawkins, or Protestant groups on a World Hunger resolution, Committee was forthcoming.

AJC appears a shade more liberal than Committee for two additional reasons. Other things being equal, AJC prefers an activist, aggressive position, whereas Committee is more comfortable with a moderate one. AJC supports ERA and voted to boycott states which haven't passed the ERA amendment. Committee supports ERA but straddled the boycott issue a bit. Secondly, AJC has a leftist element which though often a minority doesn't even exist in Committee or ADL. For example, no one in Committee favors quotas to assure preferential treatment for Blacks. A number of AJC leaders do.

ADL on the other hand is far narrower and specific in its political concerns than AJC or Committee, far more protective of Jews and Jewish interests at the expense of liberal universal principles or other minority group interests. ADL's position, some feel, reflects the sentiments of the majority of organized American Jews; the interests of Jewish teachers, civil servants, and small businessmen, who constitute the core of Bnai Brith. But they do not reflect the political propensities of the leaders or organized Jewry. The paradox is that whereas Committee can be out of step with most Jews and remain true to its elitist orientation, it is somewhat peculiar for AJC which thinks of itself as spokesman for the Jewish masses, to be out of step with the political pro-

pensities of those masses. Two respondents felt that AJC's unwillingness to defend Jewish academicians, civil servants, and teachers in a forthright vigorous way in the late 1960s and early 1970s resulted in a decline in its fortunes.

The interesting question is why has AJC changed relatively less than other Jewish organizations? That is, it seems to me that the changes I have described in the organized Jewish community have affected AJC, but less than almost all other Jewish organizations with which I am familiar. In the last 20 years ADL, Committee, Federation, have moved much further from a universalist to a particularist position than has AJC. I don't know the answer, but I suspect the age composition of its active leadership may have a good deal to do with it.

An AJC leader of many years has suggested that AJC leaders, unlike Federation leaders, don't become more Jewish through their continued association with AJC because most of AJC's program is not Jewish. It is, he said, "secular and concerned with secular events, except for Israel which is top priority." He emphasized the role of the WD and noted that the other organizations with whom AJC women talk are people who agree with them. "They associate with groups with like-minded purposes; and our women are the ones who do things." On the other hand, within the Jewish community, both the UAHC and the National Council of Jewish Women are more liberal than AJC. The ultimate paradox, my informant went on to say, is that among non-Jewish liberals, AJC isn't considered liberal.

There is only one issue on which informants from other Jewish groups perceive AJC policy as at variance with theirs-- that is the church-state issue. There is a paradox here because the formal position of virtually every Jewish organization is identical to that of AJC.

The vast majority of Jewish organizations, religious and secular, customarily join AJC in its briefs on church-state issues. Only the Orthodox demur on aid to parochial schools.

I, for one, had always assumed that church-state was an issue in which AJC was the leader of the organized Jewish community, that except for the Orthodox, and solitary voices among some other organizations, the Jewish community welcomed AJC activity and simply deferred to its expertise.

This, I discovered, is not quite correct. According to a Committee leader, issues weren't the major reason for the collapse of the Congress-Committee merger talks. But the one issue of any significance was AJC's stand on church-state. It was, he indicated, both their "strict church-state separation stand and their zealously and abrasiveness to Catholics."

Leaders of ADL also commented on their negative view of AJC's church-state position.

In discussions with an LCBC leader, I asked how he and other LCBC members viewed AJC. He began by discussing AJC's legal services. AJC, he said, is "the legal counsel of the Jewish community." Not, he went on to add, on the church-state issue "This is of no particular concern to anyone. This is one of Congress' aberrations. This is their backwater."

He indicated that one reason Naomi Levine's oral presentations to Federations were so well received stemmed from her awareness of the growing disenchantment of the Jewish community in fighting aid to day schools. Our public schools are terrible, he went on, we have to help parochial schools for the sake of Jewish survival, and Congress is spearheading the opposition.

Finally, the leader of the World Jewish Congress, in a talk in March, noted that American Jews should reassess their opposition to government aid to parochial schools on the basis of the experience of Jews in other countries. The World Jewish Congress is not an American Jewish organization but Philip Klutznik's voice does carry some authority.

C. AJC's Image

An open-ended question to GC members asked them to assess AJC's image in the Jewish community. The question invited a variety of answers. Some answered that AJC had a positive image, others felt it had a negative image, many felt it had no image among the vast majority of Jews, or was indistinguishable from Committee (regional directors also expressed this last view). A few mentioned AJC's negative image among the Orthodox Jews. Another issue that some GC members thought created a negative image of AJC was its stand on Blacks. "More pro-Black than Jewish," or a similar

comment, was the response of a few GC members.

Jewish leaders whom I interviewed had varying images of AJC. A few had a very positive impression. One sounded almost envious as he talked about AJC's courage and principled position. Rich people, he noted, have too much to protect. The nature of AJC's membership permits it to adopt principled positions. But this same individual, as well as others, talked about AJC's stridency and abrasiveness. One respondent attributed this posture to AJC's lack of influence. They always condemn or deplore something, he said, because they rely on press releases, not real action. And harsh words make better press release copy. (My own impression is that AJC press releases are not characterized by "condemning" or "deploring" something. But this is the image that AJC has among Jewish leaders to whom I spoke.)

Whereas some GC members complained that AJC was not better known throughout the U.S. because of the inadequacy of its publicity, leaders of other organizations credited AJC with ingenious press releases. "They are too quick to go to the newspapers" a few said. I'm not sure this wasn't, as one of them admitted, simply envy that AJC had gotten there first.

There were those who said they thought of AJC primarily as a tour program. But this was not said entirely in condescension. One ADL leader compared it to Bnai Brith's insurance program. "That's the way mass organizations stay alive in the Jewish community when the era of lodges and chapters has passed."

What impressed me most was the acceptance AJC had even among those who were harshest in their criticism. Part of this stems, I think, from a general diminution of inter-organizational tension. The executive directors of AJC, Committee, and ADL, for example, meet more often and are far more open with one another than was true a decade or two ago. ADL, not AJC, is the most disliked and distrusted organization in the world of Jewish community relations. Whether this is out of fear of ADL's influence and power, or its behavior ("they act like they are the whole Jewish community" according to a Federation leader) is the subject of another study. But part of the reason for the acceptance of AJC stemmed from the conviction that it was fulfilling an important role in the community. There is respect for AJC's

legal work. There is high regard for the ability of many of its staff. There is a sense that even when duplication occurs, such as activity on behalf of Israel, it serves as needed reinforcement. And there is a feeling that AJC can call upon allies that may be needed by all Jews in a time of crisis. One critic of AJC made the following comment. He said that when he heard that AJC, like Committee, was not going to file a brief in the Weber case, on the side of the plaintiff, and against reverse discrimination, he thought "When are [they] going to learn that you have to draw the line somewhere, and sooner or later you're going to have to fight." But on the other hand, he thought "there is room for divergent interests in the Jewish community; who knows when they can help us all if they have an alliance with the Blacks?"

PART THREE

PRIORITY ISSUES

I: THE NEED FOR PRIORITIES

An organization can function without a formal determination of priorities. The process of determining priorities is fraught with pitfalls. It invites conflict over issues which time or events may resolve before the organization is called to act upon them. There is much to be said for responding to events rather than undertaking a conscious effort to establish priorities. After all, it may be argued, common sense is a sufficient standard. Many Jewish communal organizations who have no sharper or self-conscious sense of priorities than does AJC don't seem to feel its absence.

I believe that there are special circumstances that require AJC to determine priorities. I would list the following major reasons, not necessarily in order of importance.

1. AJC is severely understaffed. The present staff cannot adequately service the laymen (for example, preparing for Commission or Committee meetings, recording minutes, discussing issues with the lay chairman and clearing issues with other key lay people, speaking to Congress chapters and divisions), stay abreast of developments in their field, service the community (answering inquiries from Federations and CRCs, other Jewish and non-Jewish organizations, preparing memoranda on current issues, etc.), and perform the special assignments which AJC leaders thrust upon them while at the same time being innovative about programs and activities. Yet AJC has no money to expand its staff. This means one of two possibilities. Either one or more types of activities should be de-emphasized in order to permit greater emphasis in others (for example, abolishing Commissions would save a great deal of staff time), or Congress can de-emphasize one or more areas of activity freeing staff members to concentrate on others (for example, abolishing Urban Affairs or concentrating on selected legal issues).

2. Many staff members complain about a general absence of purpose. A senior staff member felt that AJC could not exist if the next year was as bad as the last. He was expressing his sense that while he is certainly busy he isn't clear about AJC's purpose or the relationship of his work to AJC. This lack of purpose is the single most demoralizing

factor among a staff with professional orientations. I was surprised by the number of staff members who said they would be happy to leave AJC. They can be replaced. But AJC must ask itself: why are they prepared to leave?

3. AJC's concern for Israel provided focus for its program. While the CLSA is sometimes considered the "heart" of AJC, it is concern for Israel which has tied the different factions in AJC together. Support for Israel provided the only policy objective with which all staff and lay leaders were in total sympathy. It served to legitimate other policies with which some groups had little sympathy -- e.g. pursuing alliances with Blacks to make them pro-Israel. It provided a Jewish issue which could be handled with secular instruments (legal action, political action, legislative testimony, etc.) rather than the more illusive issue of Jewish identity and survival in the U.S. which is best handled by instruments with which AJC or many members of AJC are not particularly comfortable. But Israel may recede in importance.

4. AJC views itself as a liberal-left-of-center organization. But a number of respondents and staff members are not clear about the policy implications of being liberal. This is even shared by some who are part of the leftist element in AJC.

5. The domestic Jewish issue of greatest concern is labeled "creative survival" but I suspect most would be satisfied with an assurance that American Jewry will survive, creatively or uncreatively. Almost every respondent is troubled by absence of clarity about what responsibility or program, if any, AJC can or should adopt to meet the problem of survival. Almost no one tacitly assumes, as I think many once did, that AJC's pursuit of political liberalism is itself a contribution to creative Jewish survival. But what should AJC do?

6. The kind of fundraising breakthrough which will permit AJC to undertake new and imaginative programs, assuming they can be found, would certainly be helped by an image of a new AJC. Part of that image, part of AJC's own self-esteem, can be helped by a renewed sense of its own direction.

I: THE MEMBERSHIP AND AJC PRIORITIES

GC members were asked whether they felt AJC should expand, maintain, or contract its present level of activity in a number of areas. Table 7 presents the distribution of opinion.

Percentages don't add up to 100 since a few respondents did not answer, and the category "no answer" was not included. (See Table 7 on page 70).

There is no level of activity which a majority of respondents would prefer to expand rather than maintain and no level they would prefer to contract rather than maintain. There are, however, two areas, Soviet Jewry and church-state in which a very small proportion of members want AJC to expand its activity and an almost equal number would like a contraction. At the other extreme, Jewish culture stands out as the area of activity which most members would like expanded.

Let us focus on church-state and Jewish culture and ask how different sub-groups among the GC feel. My assumption is that levels of activity with regard to Soviet Jewry will be dictated by events beyond AJC control.

Fewer members under forty than over forty would expand Jewish culture. In the case of church-state, only among those over seventy is there substantial sentiment for expansion. Among those who agreed to the statement that being Jewish made a difference in everything they did, more respondents favored expanding than just maintaining the present level of Jewish cultural activity. More of them favored contracting rather than expanding the level of activity in church-state but even among this group 60% favored maintaining the present level of activity. Finally, EC members responded no differently than non-EC members on Jewish culture, but a higher percentage recommended contracting church-state activity (once again, the vast majority of both groups favored maintaining the present level of activity.) Respondents were also presented with three sets of priority choices and asked where they felt emphasis should be. (See Table 8 on page 71)

The fact that a majority favor a political rather than cultural orientation may be surprising in the light of the previous emphasis on Jewish culture. It suggests that while GC members want more emphasis on culture they don't want it to come at the expense of political concerns. There is no evidence that they seek a total reorientation of AJC. Finally, respondents were asked to check the statement which most adequately expressed their feelings about the question of Jewish assimilation and survival in the U.S. 22% said the question was very important to them but need not assume a high priority on AJC's agenda. 69% felt the

TABLE 7

REACTION TO DESIRED LEVEL OF ACTIVITY (IN PERCENTAGES)

<u>Area of Activity</u>	<u>Expand Activity</u>	<u>Maintain Activity</u>	<u>Contract Activity</u>
Israel	19	76	0
Soviet Jewry	12	73	10
Church-State	14	69	11
Jewish Culture	41	44	7
Urban Affairs	30	53	11
Civil Liberties	24	63	7

TABLE 8

DIRECTION IN WHICH AJC SHOULD MOVE (IN PERCENTAGES)

<u>Issue</u>	<u>More</u> <u>Empahsis</u>	<u>Same</u> <u>Emphasis</u>	<u>Less</u> <u>Emphasis</u>
Jewish rather than universal	34	56	5
Political rather than cultural	28	56	10
American Jewish life rather than Israel	33	61	2

question was important to them and ought to assume a high priority on AJC's agenda. 8% felt the question was of some importance to them and none said the question was of little importance to them.

In an open ended question, respondents were asked to indicate in what new areas of activity, if any, they felt AJC should engage. Fifty respondents, 38% of the sample, took the trouble to write in an answer. This is an unusually high proportion of write-ins to an open ended response coming toward the end of a fairly lengthy questionnaire. Many respondents listed more than one topic. Responses could be classified into forty areas. Twenty-six different respondents (roughly half those responding) listed at least one area of Jewish activity. The largest number (seven) listed youth activities. The next largest group (six) listed Jewish culture and education. Two respondents wanted greater attention to AJC itself. Responses in the area of Jewish activity ranged from Israel to intermarriage and Jewish-Christian relations.

The non Jewish activities which respondents felt AJC should engage in included energy (six) defense appropriations and the arms race (three) and coalition activity or help to minorities (three).

Clearly, there is no broad demand for AJC to engage in new areas of activity. It seems to me that two characteristics of the responses merit mention. First, the fairly even division between the number of respondents as well as the number of responses which emphasize Jewish and/or non-Jewish activity. The responses suggest that an increased activity in one area at the expense of another will cause some unhappiness. Secondly, the issue orientation of the responses was interesting. Only a handful interpreted activity to mean something other than studying an issue and/or arriving at a policy position on that issue.

III PRIORITY EMPHASES

The alternative emphases presented here are not all interrelated. They are different ways of looking at the kinds of decisions AJC must make in the near future.

It seems to me, given the nature of AJC as I understand it and its own organizational needs, priorities ought to be dictated by two standards in addition to the value orientations which Task Force members bring to their work.

First of all, the interests of American Judaism. People may differ as to what constitutes American Judaism, whether it is the interests of Jews or the dictates of the Jewish tradition and how one defines the interests of Jews and/or the tradition. I don't propose that we argue through this very basic and fundamental question. But I do think that Task Force members must be clear, in their own minds, about how they understand American Judaism.

The second criterion for determining priorities ought to be AJC's need to expand its financial base. Fundraising is not an end in itself. Indeed, as an end, it is self-defeating. There are leaders of great institutions who say they are concerned with projects and programs -- not fundraising. "Find the right proposal", they say, "and the money will come easily". Maybe. But the right proposal generally means one that excites the imagination of the funders.

The following eight issues seem to me to those which the Task Force ought to confront. Recommendations with respect to these issues will do much to add direction and purpose to AJC. I have tried, as far as possible, to phrase the alternatives objectively. In some cases, however, the first issue is the best example, the formulation is the result of my own sense that AJC should be more self-conscious about what it is doing. When I express my own opinion, it is, I hope, clearly labeled as such.

1. The Program Emphases of AJC

AJC, as we noted, devotes considerable effort to deciding upon issues of a political nature. This is particularly true at the national level. Divisions and chapters also discuss policy, but their primary function is implementing

the national policy rather than recommending new policy. At least, so the national leadership views it.

An alternative emphasis to the "policy model" is the "service model" best reflected in the activity of the San Francisco Division. According to this model, AJC would not eschew policy making, but would emphasize two functions. First, its role as speaking to the personal needs of its members and secondly, providing services to the local Jewish community in areas where other organizations do not provide a needed service or do so inadequately. The San Francisco director speaks of AJC's function to provide, "nurture, support and an extended family" to its members. He notes that "programs which work are those which provide for emotional and psychological needs of the members." The outer-directed aspect of the program which is also presumably more meaningful to the membership than policy discussions is service activity to the broader Jewish community. Securing loans, legal assistance, counseling, etc. Some of these activities are funded by government grants. The "service model" need not follow the outlines of San Francisco. Nor is it incompatible with policy formulation. It would, however, have AJC redirect its interests from asking "what ought to be our stand on this or that issue?" to "what unmet needs exist in the Jewish community and how can we meet these needs?"

An alternative to the "policy model" and the "service model" is the "culture model." Here priority emphasis would be given to the symbolic and/or educational aspects of Jewish life.

The advantages of the "policy model" are that it is what AJC activists like to do, what AJC with its GC and national commissions is structured to do, and what AJC has always done. In addition, policy orientations bring AJC leaders into association with political leaders in the Jewish and American world, make its activity newsworthy, make AJC a medium whereby its members feel they participate in the great decisions of the world. To paraphrase Will Maslow, AJC's role is to be an advocate, not a surrogate for other forms of Jewish life. Only a few members want kallot, according to Maslow. Our responsibility, he says, is to serve someone who wants to know more about Jackson-Vanik. If you are a teacher, you want AJC to protect you on racial quotas.

Such a model does not preclude education or even service.

But it is education and service of a special kind centering around the political issues that confront American Jews.

The disadvantages of this model are that it is difficult to translate political policy into local programming. It precludes the majority of members from a sense of continued participation in AJC decisions. It is not an activity to which the younger, or third generation of American Jews are attracted; in part because they aren't issue oriented and in part because the nature of the issues which AJC confronts are not, for the most part, things about which they believe AJC can have a real impact.

The "service model" may be more attractive to younger people. It would provide a natural tie to AJC's tour program. The tours themselves represents a "service"; tour participants are far more likely to continue their membership if the tour experience, the sense of warmth and association which develops among tour participants, can be extended upon their return. Service to the community opens up the greater potential for government or foundation funding and can provide members with a real sense of accomplishment.

Some of the disadvantages are evident from the advantages of the "policy model". In addition, service emphases would necessarily overlap activity which other agencies now undertake.

The "culture model" has a number of advantages. Art and culture have become enormously attractive to growing number of Jews. The most successful WD fundraising activities are built around art and culture programs. Synagogues across the U. S. are becoming increasingly aware that art and culture programs can attract large audiences.

Secondly, art and culture have fundraising advantages. AJC has received a CETA grant for Jewish culture but hasn't yet learned to benefit financially from the program. This stems, I suspect, from the fact that it is not integrated into other AJC programs, so there is no overlap in which the same program can be utilized in two different ways; or costs of administering one program can be charged to another. But the potentially greater financial benefit from an art and culture emphasis is that it is likely to attract large givers. Association with art and culture assures status. It provides the opportunity to develop particular projects, large or

small, specialized or diffuse, to meet the interests of potential givers. Simply put, art and culture are sellable to benefactors in a way that even service programs and certainly policy programs are not.

A base for expanding AJC's cultural activity already exists in the CETA program, the Martin Steinberg Center, and the skills of a number of AJC personnel. The culture model lends itself to semi-educational, semi-Jewish consciousness raising programs that are not only important in terms of strengthening Jewish identity but, when elaborated upon in kallot and shabbat programming are, according to field directors, among the most successful of AJC's membership activities.

Some of the disadvantages are similar to those of the "service model". In addition, although the GC respondents want more emphasis on Jewish culture, they don't want a change in AJC's orientation away from political issues and needs. Secondly, other national and local organizations are concerned with Jewish culture. The shift of AJC focus in this direction would not only overlap the activity of other groups (at least on paper) but would probably cost it some support from Federations.

2. Policy Planning Versus Political Decision Making

Regardless of any shift in emphasis, it is unlikely that AJC will cease concerning itself with political issues. But, the question may well be asked, ought it to put greater emphasis on procedures whereby issues are decided and on policy planning rather than the issues themselves.

One might argue that policy planning is the real need of American Jewry today. American Jews lack an orientation toward policy-making rather than another voice to tell them where they should stand on one issue or another. Jewish organizations increasingly view themselves as part of a political network, but this network lacks information and long-range policy guidance. In fact, the first responsibility of a policy planning orientation would be a study of policy-making in the Jewish community. AJC's own policy-making bodies tend, one could argue, to oversimplify issues. Too much weight is given to issue symbols ("liberal" or "Blacks are for it" or "it's good for Israel") rather than substance and far too little weight to the cumulative effect of issues on the

Jewish community.

Some disadvantages of a policy-planning orientation are that it severely limits the number of issues to which AJC could address itself, if it is to study each in depth. It would reduce the role of laymen and increase the role of the professional staff. Finally, other institutions are beginning to engage in policy planning. If AJC were to enter the field, it would encounter tremendous resistance from existing groups who are now in competition for the available funds.

3. Particularism or Universalism

The issue of particularism versus universalism has two dimensions, scope and substance. The issue of scope is whether AJC ought to limit its political decisions to issues of Jewish concern, or broaden its political involvement to matters of general political concern.

The arguments for limiting the scope of AJC's political concerns are: addressing many issues dissipates energies or means that lip service alone is paid to resolutions. If AJC is to concentrate at all, it makes sense to ignore those issues like health insurance, ERA, social security, welfare reform or unemployment where the Jewish stake is minimal or unclear. If, one argues, that it is not Jewish self-interest but the Jewish tradition of justice and humaneness that compels AJC involvement -- then what are the limits? Why should AJC not adopt a position on the brutal murder of animals to obtain their skins -- an issue on which both the letter and spirit of the Jewish tradition is far less equivocal than ERA or legalized abortion. In addition, adopting positions on a host of issues that are marginal to Jewish self-interest alienates people who might otherwise be attracted to AJC.

On the other hand, confining itself to issues of Jewish interest is an admission of the narrow scope of Judaism. It suggests that Judaism is irrelevant to many, perhaps most of the central concerns of American politics. Secondly, AJC's involvement in broad social issues is what so many activists find most attractive about AJC. AJC affords them the opportunity to express their Jewish and general social concerns in one organization in cooperation with like-minded Jews; according to the open ended responses of many GC members.

The second dimension to the universalist-particularist issue is the standard upon which AJC policy ought to rest. Should AJC ask; what is good for the Jews, or should it ask, what is right, just and humane? Of course, where the two coincide there is no problem, but what happens if they don't coincide?

I don't intend proposing the advantages and disadvantages of alternative positions. Much attention has been devoted to this topic by AJC's own leaders. I don't believe I can contribute fresh ideas. AJC leaders, for the most part, recognize that they are hyphenated Jewish liberals. That is, they are both Jews and liberals and no longer believe that to be one thing is necessarily to be the other. The next step is greater concern with the meaning of "liberalism" on the one hand and "Judaism" on the other.

Judaism and Jewish interests are not the authority and source for all AJC values. My own opinion is that this is not only inevitable given the composition of AJC leadership but also appropriate. In fact, I don't believe that an exclusively Jewish ethic is an adequate one. But I believe there ought to be more of an interplay between the Jewish and liberal visions of man and society. AJC, I think, stands accused of an inadequate attentiveness, I would say a closed mind, to the Jewish ethic. On the other hand, a hyphenated Jewish liberalism means that it is possible to emphasize one's Jewish orientation in one setting and one's liberal orientation in another. Perhaps AJC ought to think of itself as expressing a liberal orientation when it is among Jews and a Jewish orientation when it is among liberals? The advantages or disadvantages to such a policy are also self-evident and I do not present them here.

Finally, there are a few in AJC who feel that juxtaposing particularism and universalism does not provide an adequate alternative. According to this argument, AJC calls itself "the cutting edge of the Jewish community" but no longer is. It has become a staid, middle class organization paying lip service to liberal values which neither influences anyone outside AJC nor attracts that small but activist radical Jewish element who now have no organizational expression within the Jewish community. Such people believe that AJC should adopt a much more radical position -- to return to its own traditions. The very fact that AJC hasn't changed its policies, they feel, is symptomatic of the greatest change in AJC. The adoption of a radical posture, it is argued, may not make AJC

popular among the masses of American Jews but will attract a certain young element which will replenish AJC's ranks.

4. Mass Oriented or Elitist Organization?

Although the Task Force's charge is to confront policy priorities and a separate committee has been charged with reviewing problems of membership and structure, the two areas overlap. It would be unfortunate if structural decisions were made without regard to their policy consequences.

The advantages of a mass-based organization are: it increases the number of Jews over whom AJC has an immediate impact and increases AJC's status in the community. It provides a natural constituency to whom AJC leaders are accountable curbing any propensity to move too far afield from the self-interests of Jews.

Some would see this last point as a disadvantage. If Congress is to be principled, radical and prophetic it can never hope to attract masses of Jews. Other disadvantages are the time and expense necessary to build a mass-based organization; time and money which may well bear no fruit given the failure of other Jewish organizations with a mass base to expand their numbers in the last decade.

The issue in some respects is an artificial one. Very few people believe AJC can, in the near future, become a mass-based organization. If the preceding discussion is correct, there is little potential for any mass-based national organization in the Jewish community. But, at a more subtle level, AJC can choose those groups to whom it will respond, to whom it is accountable, for whose welfare it is responsible. It is not by chance that in the 1960's it was Committee, not AJC or ADL that raised the issue of discrimination against Jews at the corporate executive level, in Banks and University presidencies. And it is not by chance that ADL is especially sensitive to Jewish groups whom it perceives as constituting the core of the Jewish lower middle-class. To whom should AJCongress respond, who does it represent, for whom does it do battle? The answer need not necessarily be in economic terms, or demographic terms, or ideological terms. Or it can be in terms of more than one group? But I do believe that it would be helpful for AJC's own image if it clarified this to itself.

5. Law and Legal Action

Legal action has been a distinguishing feature of AJC activity. The advantages to emphasizing legal action are that it is an area in which AJC has experience, and an established reputation. Both those inside and outside AJC look to it for leadership in the use of this instrument of action. Preparing and filing a legal brief is a relatively efficient means of spending resources with a large potential yield in terms of success and publicity. There is a large community of Jewish lawyers. If AJC mounted a successful membership drive among lawyers alone, the result would be a vastly improved image and a solid financial base. Finally, legal action is an instrument which can serve a variety of needs -- whether there is greater emphasis on Jewishly particularist or liberal universalist policy, legal action is appropriate.

On the other hand, the major issues which confront the Jewish community are not primarily legal ones. Even where there is a place for legal action it is a secondary support for more crucial political action. Legal activity occupies the staff but gives the lay leadership little to do. Finally, increased emphasis on legal action means hiring new staff rather than shifting the present staff from one area of activity to another.

6. Church-State Issues

The Task Force's charge is to recommend areas of emphasis not to determine if AJC's specific stances are right or wrong. But the question whether church-state should remain an area in which AJC assumes a leadership position cannot be distinguished from the propriety of its past policy. In point of fact, despite the publicity which its position on church-state receives, AJC devotes relatively little resources in time or money to the problem. A deemphasis of church-state would be of great symbolic importance but would have few implications for the present operation of AJC. Church-state is an emotionally charged issue whose specific policy consequences are difficult to measure. There are advantages to avoiding the issue. After all, hardly anyone suggests greater emphasis on church-state. Even the strongest proponents of strict separation are of the opinion that the battle has been won and what now remains is to maintain a defensive posture.

To the extent, therefore, that one avoids discussing the issue, time alone may serve to deemphasize its importance and AJC will have avoided internal strife. Meanwhile AJC ought to maintain its principled support for separation. This serves both religious freedom in the U. S. and the basic interests of Jews. As elaborated upon in Part One, once one opens the door to government participation in religious activity, the results will be disastrous for Jews.

Those who feel that AJC should deemphasize its church-state activity are really adopting a position on the merits of the issue. This is particularly true because, at least according to Leo Pfeffer, AJC's role is central among the network of non-Jewish as well as Jewish organizations who favor strict separation. (Others argue that it is Leo Pfeffer and not AJC who is central, and Pfeffer could continue to file briefs, publish and otherwise campaign for church-state separation just as effectively without the AJC cover.)

The arguments for deemphasis of church-state center on the assumption that the basic principle of church-state is well-established in the U. S. Jews' religious freedom is not threatened. The basic issue, therefore, is not separation but borderline interpretations of the meaning of separation. In such instances, it is reasonable for Jews to ask about the consequences of such interpretations for their community. The survival interest of the Jewish community dictates support for day school education. AJC has fought government support. The consequences are harmful to Jews and create a negative image of AJC.

In addition, AJC's church-state position has antagonized some Christians, Catholics in particular. Many of them, along with many Orthodox Jews believe that AJC not only opposes them on principle but opposes them out of bigotry.

If church-state is not explicitly deemphasized, those most zealous in the cause of separation may extend its principles even further. Some AJC spokesmen have turned the abortion controversy into a church-state issue on the basis of the argument that some opponents of legalized abortion base themselves on religious grounds. Others feel that the church-state principle extends to opposition to government funding for Jewish nursing homes or government aid to non-sectarian private colleges lest it then be extended to sectarian colleges.

(Authors note: I have presented the arguments for deemphasis within a context of general support for the principle of church-state separation which, to the best of my knowledge, everyone in AJC shares. I do not share that point of view. My personal opinion is that given the prominent role that government plays in our life, and given the previous swing of the pendulum, both American Jewish survival and the maintainance of traditional Western humanitarian values dictates a more active policy of government support for religion.)

7. Israel or American Jewish Needs

AJC responses to threats to Israel's security and political support for Israel will necessarily remain priority items on its agenda as long as Israel is troubled. Decisions about priority emphases are appropriate only in the case of peace. That is not a likely occurrence in the short run but AJC might do well to prepare itself in the event, as Israelis like to say that "peace will break out". The issue of priority emphases will then become a real one precisely because the interest and concern with Israel on the part of the vast majority of American Jews is likely to diminish.

If one assumes that "Israel" is a basic component in American Jewish identity, a shift of attention away from Israel will threaten the strength of that identity commitment. From an AJC perspective Israel is an ideal forum to play out many of its liberal-universalist values in a Jewish context. Women's rights, civil liberties, religion and state, are issues that are very relevant to Israeli life. AJC can address itself to these issues, thereby increasing American Jewish involvement in Israel and contributing, from a liberal point of view, to Israel's welfare. Finally, such involvement provides a built in focus for the tour program or perhaps for specialized educational-political tours centering around issues in Israeli politics.

On the other hand, there may be so little interest in this kind of involvement that AJC will be wasting resources. The likelihood of AJC having any real impact on Israel is remote. The danger then becomes that this involvement will backfire. Those initially most involved will not only lose interest but may turn their frustration upon Israel. In addition, the right of American Jews to involve themselves in domestic Israeli issues which divide Israelis themselves is not clear-

cut. The experience of other ethnic groups in America, Greek and Poles are the two best examples, who involved themselves in the domestic political affairs of their mother countries, was that it badly divided the ethnic groups and promoted the dissolution of ethnic ties. Finally, if American Jews are to survive, they must focus on their Jewishness, the meaning and nature of Judaism, and find adequate and appropriate symbols to express it. Efforts to retain Israel as a central focus for American Jews comes at the expense of the real task that lies before American Jewish leaders.

I have not dealt with the question of whether AJC ought to expand or contract its present projects in Israel. My focus has been on AJC activity in the United States which is concerned with Israel. AJC does maintain

a part-time representative in Jerusalem. Its two major activities in Israel are support of the Louise Waterman Wise Youth Hostel in Jerusalem, and the annual Dialogue in Israel. AJC raises funds for the Louise Waterman Wise Youth Hostel, which provides its WD members in particular with a sense of having their own institution in Israel, a kind of mini-Hadassah. The Dialogue provides AJC with good publicity in Israel and associates it with a group of distinguished American Jewish intellectuals whom it brings to Israel for purposes of participation in the Dialogue. It seems to me to be beyond the capability of the Task Force to consider whether the present expenditure of funds by AJC for its Israel program in Israel is an appropriate expenditure. Expansion of the program in Israel also seems to me to be a question which is best left to the professionals and top leadership of AJC.

8. Where does "Jewishness" Fit into AJC's Program: in a Specialized, or Diffuse Manner?

This question is related, though not identical, to a structural question; is there room for a Commission on Jewish Life and Culture? In other words, ought AJC's Jewish commitments to be expressed in all its activities, or is AJC's Jewish commitment just one aspect, albeit a central one, of its program?

Assuming one believes that AJC's Jewish commitments ought to infuse its entire program there may still be a place for a separate Jewish commission. Such a commission can play at least two roles. First, it can become a source of

Jewish information. Its role would be to educate members at all levels about the nature of Judaism, Jewish interests and Jewish values, to insure that its programs and resolutions are informed by the Jewish component. The disadvantage of such a role is that, if it is taken seriously, it may make the Jewish commission into a kind of Jewish ombudsman or place it in a potential adversary position with other agencies within AJC.

A second role which a Jewish commission might fulfill is to isolate one or more aspects of American Jewish life upon which it will concentrate its energies. The name of the existing commission -- Jewish Life and Culture -- suggests an emphasis on the non-political dimension of Jewish life. The Commission might also choose to focus its attention on political aspects of Jewish life -- for example, the organization of the Jewish community, the role of Federation, policy-making in the Jewish community, etc. Finally, it might turn its attention to target populations. A previous administration prevented it from considering problems of Israeli yordim and Soviet Jews in the United States on the grounds that this was too political although the problem of their successful integration into Jewish life is likely to be a priority item on the agenda of every Jewish organization in the next few years. But there are other target populations around whom a Commission can focus its attention.

A third option is for the Commission to concern itself with the Jewish education and Jewish needs of AJC's own members. It is not clear, however, that many of AJC's members feel an absence of Jewish content in their own lives.