THE NEEDS OF A COMMUNITY

The *American Hebrew* of New York published recently a very interesting symposium on "The Leading Immediate Need of the Jewish Community," and the opinions given by the well-known men who participated throw considerable light on the social needs of our greatest city.

J. L. MAGNES

Dr. J. L. Magnes wrote as follows on "A Bureau of Philanthropic Research":

"We cannot secure facts by means of a newspaper *enquête*. We need, once and for all, scientifically to determine what the philanthropic needs of the community are, how they are being met, how they ought to be met. Who are our poor? Who come to our institutions? Do the institutions meet the needs of the poor? What are the causes of their distress? How are the poor helping themselves? What is the relation of our charitable institutions to the State? Can a communal budget be prepared to meet our philanthropic needs? Can new sources of income be opened up to meet the requirements of the budget? Is a federation of Jewish charitable institutions or of contributors possible or desirable? Can a communal policy as to philanthropic needs be worked out?

"The establishment of such a bureau, in charge of a wise director, is a community problem. Within the course of two or three years, the bureau will have secured the facts. Only then will the leaders of the community know what the community's communal needs are. Upon the basis of facts, the community can then prepare to meet its philanthropic needs in a communal, statesmanlike, serious way."

MORRIS D. WALDMAN

"Mr. Henry Rice, for thirty-five years president of the United Hebrew Charities of New York," Mr. Morris D. Waldman said, "replied to a similar question with the Napoleonic phrase: 'Money, Money, and Money.'

"I. The chief philanthropic need, it would therefore appear to me, is some method which will insure a generous and stable income to the societies, adequate for their requirements. And this income, which in the case of several large organizations is decreasing year by year, should increase annually, not because the numbers of applicants are increasing, but because of the higher standards of social service demanded of them by an awakening social conscience. The meager service rendered in the past no longer satisfies that conscience. The hospitals are expected to furnish better accommodations, more wholesome food, more skilful medical and surgical treatment, more effcient nursing and that wider supplementary care, known as medical social service. The child-caring institutions are called upon to surround its wards with a more homelike atmosphere, improved secular, religious and vocational educational opportunities. Of the relief societies it is demanded that more generous relief and more intensive treatment be afforded and that more emphasis be placed upon what is commonly known as family rehabilitation, involving changes in policy that are well nigh revolutionary when judged by the standards which appeared adequate a decade or two ago.

"II. Another great need is what I would term philanthropic perspective. This involves first, a change in our attitude toward the poor. It is thoughtless and beside the mark to classify them as either worthy or unworthy. Even when 'unworthy,' their needs must be supplied. Nearly all dependency, and in a great measure delinquency, is caused by conditions over which the poor have little or no control. In some cases, this is due to heredity; in others to illness, and in others again it can be traced to the shortcomings of our industrial system. There is something altogether wrong in a situation in which the great masses of the people are overworked at times and underworked at others, frequently underpaid, often insanitarily housed, usually deprived of opportunity for wholesome recreation, and denied the assurance of a comfortable and self-respecting provision in time of accident, illness and old age. Not that living and working conditions are worse than they have been before; on the contrary, they are better, but still they fall short of what is commonly agreed to be a decent standard of living. Obviously, the remedies for this situation do not rest with the charitable organizations, but depend upon society as a whole. But none the less must philanthropic and social workers realize at the outset that charity, though necessary to assist the victims of these social forces, is, after all, largely a makeshift which, in happier days, will yield to the finer, more sensible, and more truly humane provisions of an awakened social state. By perspective, I therefore mean, first, clear social vision. Failure to realize this is 'social blindness.'

"Secondly, in our very philanthropies themselves, a truer perspective should prevail. Those who have watched closely the provisions in the wills of deceased philanthropists, must have observed that certain kinds of charities are more popular than others. If they classify their observations, they will find that hospitals and child-caring institutions are the favorites, and relief societies, institutions for industrial training, educational centers and agencies for delinquents, are frequently ignored or provided for in niggardly fashion. The average contributor to charities lacks imagination. He fails to realize, for example, that there are many more sick in the tenements than in the hospitals, and that these unfortunates are entitled to the same skilful ministrations as those afforded in the hospitals, and that relief agencies and home nursing agencies should be as generously supplied with funds to make this possible as are their sister institutions. He fails to recognize that to dependent children in the tenements should be accorded the same bodily comforts, religious training and secular education and protection from vicious influences as are rendered to their brothers and sisters in the child-caring institutions, and that the agencies established for these purposes should be as generously provided with means as the child-caring institutions. There are also other classes among the needy, not in institutions, for whom adequate provision must be made—the aged and infirm, the feeble-minded, the blind and crippled, deserted families, the unemployed and other handicapped persons who fall into a miscellaneous group. For these, adequate provision should be made. To provide for a few of these classes and to neglect the others is a lack of perspective that I would call 'philanthropic astigmatism.'

"Thirdly, we need more democracy in our giving. This involves, first, a realization of the fact that contributing to a charitable purpose is a public function, in which the community at large is legitimately interested and which it has the right to govern. This was strongly emphasized in the public's attitude toward the Rockefeller Foundation, when it applied for Federal incorporation. A charitable gift may often do as much harm as good, and the public is justified, for its own protection, in scrutinizing, analyzing and regulating the manner in which, and the purpose for which, large endowments shall be applied. In our community, a very large sum in the form of endowment was recently bequeathed for charitable purposes, under provisions of a very broad and liberal character. Certain experienced and well-informed charity workers decided to call the attention of the executors to what they agreed was the most pressing philanthropic need of the hour. Their suggestion met with a curt rebuff and they were politely told that they were intruding. Such an attitude I would call 'philanthropic myopia' (nearsightedness).

"Fourthly, there is a strong tendency, natural in the human heart, to insure the perpetuity of the giver's memory. We therefore find frequently that many bequests are permanent endowment funds. Some of our wisest and most generous philanthropists, notably Jacob H. Schiff and Julius Rosenwald, have come out publicly disapproving of endowment funds, believing that each generation should assume and carry its own communal burdens. Conditions of life change substantially, with changing generaations, and endowment funds, especially those left for specific purposes, may not only become useless but sometimes harmful. The fear of mortmain, the dead hand in philanthropy, is a wholesome fear and should be fostered. I might call this desire to leave funds in perpetuity 'philanthropic hyperopia' (abnormal far-sightedness).

"The cure for these four kinds of philanthropic lack of perspective, ocularly speaking—blindness, astigmatism, myopia and hyperopia—is the second urgent phil-

anthropic need of the Jewish community. Supply these two needs, money and perspective, and the different and constantly arising new needs of the community will take care of themselves."

DR. LEE K. FRANKEL

Dr. Lee K. Frankel lays stress on system in the collection of funds.

"In my opinion, the chief philanthropic need of the Jews of New York at present *unprovided for* is a systematic, efficient, comprehensive method of raising funds to carry on the activities *already provided for.* It is useless to attempt any consideration of general philanthropic needs unless there can be some definite assurance given that there will be sufficient financial resources to permit the officers of institutions, relief societies, etc., to carry on their work.

"The advertisements of the United Hebrew Charities, which have been appearing for the past week in the New York *Times,* are pathetic, not only in content but in the need for the insertion of such publicity. It is a satire on our Jewish philanthropies that an organization such as the United Hebrew Charities should be compelled to make an appeal for a paltry $30,000 through the medium of the daily press.

"I am not writing this as a special pleader of the United Hebrew Charities, nor do I hold a brief for any particular one of our Jewish communal institutions. I speak for all of them when I say that the crying need at the present time in the city of New York is concerted action on the part of the members of the community as a community and not representing any particular institution or group of institutions, to get together as sensible business men and attempt to apply common-sense business principles to the collection of funds for Jewish charitable purposes. Our present system of raising money is disorganized, inefficient —one might almost say chaotic, and certainly antiquated. It is competitive to the last degree.

"One has only to read what has recently been done in Cleveland to realize that scientific management can be applied equally as well to philanthropy as it can to the manufacture of steel or clothing. If Cleveland has found it possible to federate not only its Jewish charities, but all of its charities in one comprehensive unit, it is idle to assume that the same thing cannot be done in New York, at least so far as Jewish charities are concerned.

"I am confident that if the *American Hebrew* were to make a postal card canvass of the 25,000 or more contributors to the various Jewish charitable societies in the city of New York, a very large majority of them would be in favor of a centralized collection bureau and that they would welcome any effort which would do away with the present highly objectionable system of repeated and continuous appeals from a number of organizations.

"Why not try it?"

J. LEON SANDERS

Mr. J. Leon Sanders has a more specific need in mind, a lodging-house for immigrant men.

"The most pressing need, for a number of additional reasons I do not care to go into, is a lodging-house for Jewish immigrant men. There should be established a man's hotel, giving at cost all the comforts of a well-managed *kosher* hotel, for which the men are to pay, but where, besides physical comforts, they can be given that additional help that will make the transition to Americans more easy and less liable to dangers and unseen pitfalls."

NATHAN S. JONAS

Mr. Nathan S. Jonas also makes specific suggestions:

"In the Borough of Brooklyn, which I presume applies to the city in general, I would consider the two most important needs—first, relief for those afflicted with tuberculosis, and second, an adequate self-support fund so as to keep those who have been unfortunate from becoming pensioned paupers and to give them an opportunity to again climb the ladder and to retain their self-respect."

No longer will the New Orleans Council of Jewish Women spend money on flowers to send to the home of a dead member as a silent expression of sympathy. Instead a card expressing sympathy and stating that the sum contributed had been turned over to a specific charity will be sent to the family of the dead member.

IMMIGRATION SNAP-SHOTS

David M. Bressler and Abraham Solomon

Professor Ross, the erudite sociologist, doesn't like the "intellectual baggage" of our immigrants. It is all a question of taste. Some think that Robert W. Chambers, George Barr McCutcheon, *et al.,* provide hyper-intellectual reading. And really, Maeterlinck, Ibsen, Bergson, Hauptman, are *un*intellectual. Perhaps the Professor's definition of intellect does not include adherence to truth and reality—an adherence, by the way, so eloquently marked in the writings of the continental school.

Talking of reality, isn't it a fact that the American Federation of Labor thinks that an immigrant who cannot read or write is an inferior being with a low standard of living? The "aristocratic" skilled mechanic has no use for a "common" laborer. Verily, vanity and flatulence breed as readily amongst workingmen as among snobs and the idle rich.

The Great Subterfuge. Those in favor of the literacy test make no pretense of believing that literacy or illiteracy determine the character or fitness of an immigrant. The test is a disguised expression of their dislike for "foreigners." Afraid to admit that they want restriction in order to satisfy their prejudice, they hide behind the pretext offered by the literacy test.

Assuming, however, that the test is honestly advocated, does this government seriously desire to penalize immigrants because in the countries from which they come *no educational facilities were afforded them?* It is a fact that Russia and Roumania limit, proscribe, and prevent the attendance of Jewish children in elementary schools. The inadequacy of the Russian primary schools is too well known to require discussion. For example, in 1907 there were only 84,544 elementary schools in the entire Russian Empire with only four and one-half million pupils. Out of this number, it must be remembered that 42½ per cent. were parochial schools under the direct supervision of the Holy Synod.

The Division of Information at Washington. The world does move. Everywhere there are conferences of unemployment; the city, state, and government officials are investigating the problem and the crop of annual reports is the highest in years. Inasmuch as there is a growing recognition that the proper distribution of our population has some relationship to the question of unemployment, the report of the Division for the year ending June, 1913, is relevant. The report is a pithy, dignified document. Those in charge of the Division are doing nobly against heavy odds, against the handicap of limited funds, inadequate machinery, government torpor, and fear of paternalism. The Division points the way to the biggest constructive measure the government can undertake—the distribution of immigrants. Let some of our heavyweights in the academic world rest from their labors on taxation, the law of wages, etc., and look into the question. Contact with realities will refresh them.

The Industrial Removal Office has just issued its thirteenth annual report. In the face of all the disturbing symptoms of our social and economic life, it is good to know that 75,000 of our people were distributed from the seaport cities to the more wholesome and industrially superior sections of the interior. In an editorial comment by the New York *Evening Post* of March 14, 1914, the following terse analysis appears:

"The factor of urban congestion in the cities of the Atlantic Coast is concededly one of the outstanding problems of immigration. It is therefore of interest to see what has hitherto been accomplished in the way of a more even geographical distribution of immigrants. The latest report of the Commissioner General of Immigration says: 'There can be no question but that many of the evils that grow out of our present excessive immigration would be remedied, or at least alleviated, if the congestion of aliens in our large centers of population could be broken up. Distribution of admitted aliens is a thing much to be desired.' A commentary on this statement is offered in the thirteenth an-