

# The Transformation of Jewish Social Services in Atlanta, 1928-1948

Mark Bauman

Jewish social services in Atlanta underwent a dramatic transformation between 1928 and 1948. Several factors precipitated the transformation including the general end of immigration, the concomitant acculturation and rise of Jews into the middle class, the New Deal efforts to overcome the Great Depression, the Holocaust, the creation of Israel, and the availability of strong leadership. Atlanta's experiences exemplified certain national trends while varying from others. It thus provides an excellent case study. This study also illustrates how a city like Atlanta outside of the New York-Philadelphia-Chicago nexus offered regional and national leadership, thereby eschewing parochialism. Finally, unlike many works on Jewish social services which start and usually end from the vantage point of national organizations, this begins from the local perspective to elucidate both national and local developments. By doing so, it suggests a new paradigm concerning the ebb and flow of power within the American Jewish community. Atlanta's Jewish experience dramatizes the interplay of centralizing and decentralizing forces.

## **Background: From Decentralization to Centralization**

Prior to 1928 the history of Jewish social services in Atlanta typified that of similar communities throughout America.<sup>1</sup> When Central European (mostly German) Jews settled in the city in the decades proceeding and then following the Civil War, they created self-help and benevolent societies. For the most part, these were specialized organizations catering to group needs. They also occasionally contributed to Jews in need elsewhere in the United States and overseas. When East European Jews and then Sephardim arrived during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they replicated the process. The German Jews, now acculturated and more affluent, attempted to assist as well as control their brethren. Resenting the condescension and yet requiring the funds, the immigrants tried to maintain their pride, customs, and institutions even while having to cooperate.

Between 1909 and 1912, as in other cities since the 1890s, Jewish community charities came together in order to eliminate duplication, rationalize fund raising, and contribute to community control. The resultant Atlanta Federation of Jewish Charities served as the umbrella for the Montefiore Relief Association, the Hebrew Relief Society, the Free Kindergarten and Social Settlement, the Jewish Education Alliance (JEA), the Free Loan Association, the Central Immigration Committee (local affiliate of the Immigrant Removal Organization, or IRO), and the local section of the National Council of Jewish Women. Federation-type agencies had begun in Eastern Europe as early as the mid-1800s. Massachusetts established a board of charities in 1863, but the charity organization movement in America is dated to 1877 and activities in Buffalo. In 1895 the Boston Jewish community became the first to establish a Federation of Jewish Charities. The National Conference of Charities and Corrections (later the National Conference of Social Work) stimulated the creation of the National Conference of Jewish Charities. The national conferences of this organization stimulated the creation of Jewish federations after 1900. In Atlanta, although the earlier immigrants contributed the majority of funds and received fewer services, the officers and board of trustees of the new federation were integrated across divisional lines. The leadership, however, came largely from Rabbi "Doctor" David Marx of the Reform Temple and the key German Jewish layman, Victor Kriegshaber.<sup>2</sup>

A degree of professionalism had already begun with the appointment of paid professionals to the Jewish Educational Alliance and to the B'nai B'rith's regional Hebrew Orphans' Home, located in the city since the 1880s.<sup>3</sup> Yet it was not unusual for individual cases to be researched and discussed by the officers and board members, and volunteerism remained a major component of the work force.

The Balkan Wars and the First World War and its aftermath fostered a tremendous need for overseas relief. The various segments of the Atlanta Jewish community raised money and participated in these efforts through the different national agencies. Unlike Atlanta, for many communities including Columbus, Ohio, and Detroit, Michigan, the experience with overseas relief and the examples of Liberty bond and war chest drives contributed to a transformation of Jewish social services during the 1920s.<sup>4</sup>

World War I and the national laws passed thereafter essentially closed America's doors to immigration. As Louis J. Swichkow and

Lloyd P. Gardner noted in their account of Milwaukee Jewry, the Johnson Immigration Act of 1924 served as a critical milestone in that by 1940 the American-born Jewish population outnumbered the immigrants. With few new immigrants and with the gradual socioeconomic and educational rise of East Europeans and Sephardim, the old distinctions became gradually less pronounced. Work on the federation board, although sometimes wrought with conflict, also brought the leaders of the various Jewish subcommunities together on a more equitable basis. During the mid-1920s the federation assisted in the creation of and provided some of the leadership for the Atlanta Associated Charities (forerunner of the Community Chest and later the United Way). Much of the fund-raising and financing thus shifted toward cooperation with the larger society. Harry L. Lurie found that many Jewish federations throughout the country had given over fund-raising duties to these secular agencies by 1924. While most did so by 1936, large city organizations, for example in New York and Chicago, lagged behind.<sup>5</sup>

Although this first period was characterized by the move from specialized to central local agencies, and was marked by only peripheral national and international influence, the next represented greater variation. Far stronger national and international events greatly impacted the creation of specialized community-wide institutions. In turn, these organizations exerted substantial influence on national Jewish structures. The federations in conjunction with the welfare boards, assuming the broader roles of congregations and specialized organizations, rose as the driving forces because of their control over fundraising and their unified voice.

### **From the Depression to World War II: Local Centralization and Unity from the Bottom Up**

Few communities or community groups could meet the challenges of the Great Depression begun in 1929, and Atlanta and its Jewish agencies were no exception. The Depression exerted a decided impact on the Jewish community. All of the congregations experienced financial difficulties, especially since many were in the midst of building new facilities. Several rabbis voluntarily cut their salaries and still had difficulty getting paid.<sup>6</sup> Pledges to the federation were not met even by wealthy individuals, and months went by when

staff salaries could not be paid. The Atlanta Federation of Jewish Charities, largely dependent upon declining assistance from the Atlanta Associated Charities, supported about fifty or sixty local families and about an equal number of transients on a monthly basis through the mid-1930s. It was forced to repeatedly renew a bank loan for several thousand dollars while operating at a deficit. Sunday school classes were temporarily discontinued in 1932, as were other services. Requests for charities in other cities and countries were rejected with regrets due to the financial emergency. Edward M. Kahn, the federation's executive director beginning in 1928, reported the "absolute necessity" for a new JEA building the following year. The need was not met for two decades.<sup>7</sup>

The Depression resulted directly or indirectly in some unforeseen consequences. Ed Kahn joined the Executive Committee on Transients of the National Conference of Jewish Social Services to define a policy for a situation he described as "rather chaotic." Subsequently, Atlanta served as the regional headquarters for the Southeast Transient Clearing House. The federation switched to a membership basis, as did other community organizations, and invited all Jewish community agencies to send representatives to join its board. For the federation to undertake the latter required an analysis of intragroup conflicts and frank discussion to combat animosities. Efforts were not always successful. When Anshe S'fard, a strictly traditional congregation, contributed the proceeds from a Torah presentation to the closely associated Hachnosos Orchim (an organization providing assistance to transients), for example, the federation assigned a committee to discourage such independent efforts. In a newly approved agreement, the federation assumed responsibilities during the week, and the society accepted weekend duties. The typical East European charity now had to formalize record keeping, make the records public, and conduct regular audits. When changing to a membership basis also, the federation board indicated that the Jewish Educational Alliance should no longer be viewed as a charity organization geared to immigrant Americanization. The First World War and the stoppage of immigration were considered the causes of the transformation into a community center.<sup>8</sup>

The improvements in federation services won recognition from the general community. Because of their experience and efficient methods, federation president Louis H. Moss was asked to head the

city's Associated Charities executive board and Julian V. Boehm presided over the Red Cross. In 1935 Boehm led the first community chest drive to exceed its quota in four years.<sup>9</sup>

Greater interaction developed with public agencies as the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, the Fulton County Relief Administration and the Transient Bureau, and the County Public Welfare Commission in seriatim were asked for funds. Ultimately, the federation changed its name to the Atlanta Federation of Jewish Social Services, as its mission among the poor was assumed by the local affiliates of the national government agencies and its other functions expanded.<sup>10</sup> The fine arts department of the JEA, for example, was revised to nurture more creative activities like puppet making, drama, and dance classes.<sup>11</sup>

The federation/government relationship did not always work smoothly. Because of higher Jewish costs of living (the provision of kosher food, for example), government agencies sometimes subsidized only half the actual funding required. In 1935 a federal agency refused to work through the federation since the government dealt directly with individuals. Rhoda Kaufman, one of the foremost leaders of secular and Jewish social services in the state, spoke in favor of the Federal Emergency Relief Act over the less desirable Works Progress Administration (WPA) for family assistance.<sup>12</sup>

The interaction also precipitated changes. By 1936 the federation reorganized, creating committees with more specialized functions. The following year adult education classes were under WPA auspices and Kahn was called upon to provide information for a WPA *Guide to Georgia*. The local section of the National Council of Jewish Women, too, formed a committee in 1934 to ensure its compliance with National Recovery Act guidelines.<sup>13</sup>

During the 1930s the hardships of the Depression and the rising menace of Adolf Hitler intertwined, resulting in efforts to create local, regional, and national agencies in a better position to respond effectively. Atlanta's Jewish community, aware of the persecution of German Jews since 1933, both responded to and initiated regional and national changes. In that year American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress, and B'nai B'rith representatives created the Joint Consultative Council to unify their defense efforts against Hitler. As was to be the case for over a decade, the groups had difficulty working together and soon disbanded. In 1936 the General Assembly of the

National Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds (NCJFWF) applied pressure on the United Palestine Appeal (UPA) and the Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) to unite their fund-raising campaigns at its St. Louis conference. Edward M. Kahn, Rabbi Harry H. Epstein of Congregation Ahavath Achim, Julian V. Boehm, and A. L. Feldman represented Atlanta. The conference urged local communities to establish new agencies to meet the financial emergency. Mrs. Harry M. (Rebecca, or "Reb") Gershon presided over a session on "New Types of Jewish Welfare Organizations" at the NCJFWF regional conference three months later. Louis H. Moss, Atlanta federation president and southern region head, reported on the need to rescue one hundred thousand German youth.<sup>14</sup>

One month later the leadership of Atlanta Jewry met under Harold Hirsch to form the Jewish welfare fund Council. A *Southern Israelite* editorial praised this coordinated drive for nonlocal charities as "a test for the spirit and of the community." Hirsch's local, regional, and national prominence facilitated these pioneering efforts. Attorney for the Coca-Cola Company, one of only two southerners elected to membership in the American Jewish Committee, honorary national vice president of the UPA, and a member of the national planning board of the JDC, he presided over both the local UPA and the JDC. Foremost Atlanta Jewish layman of the era, he was respected by the various factions within the community. The nation watched Atlanta surpass its fifty-thousand-dollar goal. The welfare fund became a permanent organization and numerous cities followed Atlanta's example. As national leaders had come to the city to urge on Atlantans' effort, Atlantans traveled to other locales to spur their campaigns. It was no coincidence that the general assembly of the NCJFWF convened in Atlanta in 1941 with Atlantans Donald Oberdorfer and Henry A. Alexander as cochairmen and that this conference again exhorted the national Jewish agencies for overseas relief to unify their fund-raising efforts.<sup>15</sup>

The creation of Atlanta's Jewish Welfare Fund followed one of two national patterns. The first occurred during the mid-1920s as Jewish communities including Columbus, Detroit, Indianapolis, and San Francisco realized that community chests would not fund capital investments or national and international Jewish needs.<sup>16</sup>

Atlanta joined in the second wave beginning a decade later, which had international parallels. According to Joseph C. Hyman, executive

director of the JDC, "By April 1, 1935, the Jews of Germany were able to achieve an unprecedented unification of communal activity." In 1936 British representatives visited the United States to foster united action on behalf of German Jewry. The visit resulted in the creation of the executive committee of the Council for German Jewry, two weeks before the reorganization of the Atlanta federation.<sup>17</sup>

The rise of welfare funds led to the demand for central assistance and cooperation. In 1927 a National Appeals Information Service was established to evaluate national and international organizations requesting assistance from local Jewish charities. Five years later fifteen federations initiated the NCJFWF which integrated the Bureau of Jewish Social Research. The council, in turn, fostered the creation of welfare funds in other cities like Atlanta. It sponsored an investigation of federation programs and policies under Dr. Ben Selekman, executive director of Boston's federation. The resultant five-point program was published in the *American Jewish Yearbook* (1934-35).<sup>18</sup>

The 1936 Atlanta campaign was highly organized and unified, reflecting national trends and the substantial experience of the community leaders. The city's rabbis attended a dinner together, launching the drive. Systematic education sessions trained over two hundred volunteers representing Zionist, non-Zionist, and anti-Zionist Jews from Sephardic, Central European, and East European ancestry. People worked in various divisions usually categorized by occupation, but also including women's and junior classifications.<sup>19</sup>

The formation of the welfare fund reflected the growing acceptance and acculturation of various ethnic subcommunities even as it encouraged the same trends. Efforts toward centralization, refinement of functions, and unity seemed boundless. On the national level in 1937, Presidents Cyrus Adler and Stephen S. Wise of the American Jewish Committee and American Jewish Congress, respectively, sat at the dais together for the first time amidst a call for "unity without conformity" to celebrate the ninety-fourth anniversary of B'nai B'rith. The following year these organizations, along with the Jewish Labor Committee, adopted resolutions supporting cooperation.<sup>20</sup>

At the Union of American Hebrew Congregations meeting in Atlanta in 1939, fourteen regional entities were created, including one in the southeast. A southeastern region had been initially formed to

promote education in 1930. The Orthodox Congregations of the Southeast organized in 1943 with Sol Eplan as vice president and Rabbi Epstein on the rabbinical committee. The Southern Conference of Orthodox Rabbis had been formed as early as 1930 to formalize acceptable *kashruth* procedures, clarify doctrine, and raise educational standards. The fourth annual meeting of the Southern Regional Conference of Jewish Social Welfare Agencies met in Atlanta in 1937. One of five state Conferences on Human Rights organized to combat bigotry, the group convened in the city two years later with Henry A. Alexander presiding. Robert M. Travis, president of the Atlanta Zionist District, helped establish a Southern Regional District and served as its first presiding officer. When a rumor spread that England was renegeing on the 1917 Balfour Declaration, Travis convened a protest meeting at the temple including Zionists and non-Zionists, with Harold Hirsch presiding. The JDC met in Atlanta in 1938 to create a seven-state southern regional body. Three years later the Junior Hadassah formed a southern region to reflect the senior division's alignment and chose Atlanta's Sarah Tontak as president. In 1937 Dr. Abram Sachar, historian and national leader of Hillel, spoke at a meeting jointly sponsored by the NCJW, Hadassah, B'nai B'rith, and the Sisterhood of the Temple, Ahavath Achim (East European), Shearith Israel (East European), and Or VeShalom (Sephardic) intending to bring the community further together in the aftermath of the successful JWF campaign.<sup>21</sup> Clearly, the movement afoot moved from community to regional and national structure and coordination.

The issues of Zionism and overseas relief reflected both dividing and unifying forces within the Jewish community. In this as in so many other areas Atlanta serves as a microcosm of national and even international forces. On one side of the spectrum, David Marx represented the anti-Zionist element of Classical Reform Judaism. After the Columbus Platform of 1937 placed the Reform movement in the camp favoring a Jewish state, Marx became a national officer of the recalcitrant American Council for Judaism. As late as 1944 he gave a High Holiday sermon denouncing political Zionism.<sup>22</sup> The East European Jews and Sephardim were almost unanimous in their support for Zionism. The number of local chapters of Zionist organizations for youth, men, and women is almost limitless, as are the number of individuals who served on the state, regional, national,

and even international levels.

Shortly after his arrival in Atlanta, Rabbi Harry H. Epstein of Ahavath Achim lost a brother to Arab rioters in Hebron, Palestine. Epstein had already raised his voice as a leader of Zionist forces. He served as state JNF chair and member of the National Advisory Board. The rabbi committed to raise twenty-five million dollars to purchase one thousand dunams of land as the Georgia Nachlah at the 1943 Southeast Zionist Regional Conference and was elected in a citywide vote to attend the 1943 American Jewish Conference. Travis presided over the Southeast Zionist District, while his wife headed the region's Hadassah. An Atlanta Zionist District was formed in 1938 to coordinate efforts, only to be supplanted by an Atlanta Zionist Council two years hence. Zionists and Hadassah members held joint meetings. Adalbert Freedman became field director of the Southeast Zionist Region in 1940. When Marx gave his anti-Zionist sermon late in the war, Freedman responded in an open letter to the community. Yet by that stage the German Jewish community was clearly not unified behind their rabbi. Julian V. Boehm, a major leader in Atlanta social services and a prominent Temple member, and Elmer Berger, president of the American Council for Judaism, exchanged letters to the editor of the *Southern Israelite* in 1945, with Boehm openly denouncing council statements against the establishment of a Jewish state. The community usually spoke as one voice in protesting the changing British policies with reference to Palestine and immigration.<sup>23</sup>

Although the community had been somewhat divided over the issue of a Jewish nation, it unified in support (although not always the methods) of overseas relief. Leadership in activities to aid Jews overseas comprised a Who's Who of Atlanta Jewry transcending all divisions. The federation had given support for the German Jewish Relief Committee as early as 1933. Three years hence Paul Ginsberg became a member of the nondenominational National Committee Appeal for the Jews in Poland. Another specialized appeal was launched on the eve of the world war as the members of OrVeShalom established a local chapter of the Rhodes Aid Committee. The latter attempted to evacuate Jews from the Isle of Rhodes in response to Mussolini's antisemitic decrees. During the war Atlanta Jewry formed one of eleven national branches of the Jewish Council for Russian War Relief. Besides these and other specialized causes, the first conference

of a new southern region of the UPA met in Atlanta in 1929 with an Atlantian as state chair. A mass meeting was held at Ahavath Achim. Atlanta's 1932 United Jewish Appeal fully integrated the different subcommunities. As was the norm of such local efforts, Rabbis Marx, Epstein, Geffena, and Mennahim Sephardi joined together in a campaign to raise fifteen thousand dollars. The crises brought the community together behind ever-higher giving. In this as in so many other areas, the changes were taking place from the bottom up. Local communities behind the federations and welfare funds perceived the need for unity while national organizations continued to bicker. In 1941 the Welfare Fund campaign raised one hundred thirteen thousand dollars, an amount more than doubled four years hence. Such campaigns brought numerous speakers to the city including Nathan Sokolow, Abba Hillel Silver, Solomon Goldman, Nathan Billikopf, and Senator Richard B. Russell. By 1935 money was being raised to resettle European Jews in Palestine. A Jewish National Fund drive which raised four thousand dollars in three weeks sought to purchase land in Palestine, besides attempting to influence England's altered immigration policy. Atlantians attended national and international conferences with the goals of saving European Jews and resettling them in Palestine.<sup>24</sup>

As the need to rescue Jews from the Holocaust reached crisis proportions, military terms were used for fund-raising efforts. In 1940 the "welfare machine...promulgated a minor 'blitzkrieg'" and "attend[ed] to the 'mopping up' operation" toward the end of the campaign. Efforts to resettle and assist refugees in Atlanta began shortly after Hitler's rise to power. Refugees were among the recipients of loans granted by the Chevrah Tehilim and Free Loan Society in 1940. On an individual level Atlantians sometimes sponsored refugees and assisted their efforts. Sigmund Cohn, a Berlin jurist exiled from Germany in 1933, received a privately funded two-year position as assistant professor of German at the University of Georgia, arranged by Harold Hirsch.

The Jewish community's commitment to serve America during World War II was broad based. Besides individual efforts, the Jewish women of Atlanta participated in sewing circles, volunteered for the Red Cross, and worked with servicemen at the local military installations. Rhoda Kaufman headed the Social Planning Council of the federation developing activities for the GIs. In 1945 the B'nai B'rith

Women of the city won a certificate of merit from Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau for selling over one-and-a-half-million dollars in war bonds. Two years prior to this the B'nai B'rith AZA sponsored a "Buy a Bomber" campaign in which the four chapters doubled their one-hundred-thousand-dollar bond quota. At a meeting to fund a battleship, Atlanta Jews opened their wallets for the cause. Donald Oberdorfer led the Georgia USO in 1945.<sup>25</sup>

A chapter of the Jewish War Veterans organized at Atlanta in 1935 following the creation of the first chapter in New York. Mack Frankel, former commander of the Atlanta post, won the appointment as national deputy chairman of the Sons of Jewish War Veterans to organize the young people in 1938. When the national organization established a standing committee to fight communism in 1939, Atlantans Eugene Oberdorfer and Ralph L. Wilner, a furrier and former Army major, were chosen for the fifteen-member panel. The twentieth annual national convention was held at the city in 1942. Two years hence chapter commander Samuel L. Eplan was appointed by Governor Ellis Arnall to the Veterans Service Commission and a committee to erect a war memorial building. After the war in 1948 Paul Ginsberg, a distinguished disabled veteran appointed to various committees and commander of the Department of Georgia, JWV, conferred with Harry S. Truman on peace through universal military training. He asked the president to attend a nondenominational state rally for the cause.<sup>26</sup>

The relative unity of Atlanta Jewry and the dramatic increase in fund raising in response to the Holocaust were facets of the transformation of the community which can be traced back at least to the World War I era. The expansion of middle-class ranks through business and the professions during the 1920s and 1930s was only temporarily interrupted by the Depression. Prosperity returned by 1936 as it did in most Jewish communities throughout the United States.

As William Toll indicates in his study of the Portland, Oregon, Jewish community, the Holocaust promoted institution building and unity through philanthropy and the application of political pressure. It also intensified ethnic identity and loyalty. Many individuals coming together from the various subcommunities "defined their heritage as community service, a defense of civil liberties, and cultural instruction for their children."<sup>27</sup>

Sports became a unifying force and seemed to supplant financial

aid in terms of community needs. Barney Medintz was hired from Chicago as boys' work and athletic director of the JEA in 1934. As state commissioner he organized and encouraged softball leagues that same year. Basketball, baseball, golf, swimming, and numerous other activities flourished through various Jewish organizational outlets. The alliance also sponsored a summer camp, Daniel Morgan, in Rutledge, Ga., beginning in 1928. Camp Civitania was opened to Jewish Girl Scouts for a month beginning in 1930.<sup>28</sup>

Atlanta's Jews were incorrigible joiners. They formed social clubs, Zionist societies, and fraternities without end. Congregations organized their own youth and adult groups. But, if anything, the club activities tended to unify the various elements of the Jewish community rather than divide them. When one lists the business and professional leaders, the same list could serve as an index of Jewish social service, congregational, and organizational leadership. Success in business did not require separation from the Jewish community and, in fact, appears to have implied responsibility to it.

Jewish women's roles in social service continued and expanded. In its 1929 annual report, the Atlanta section of the NCJW outlined Red Cross work in community hospitals, the conduct of a state survey concerning needs of the blind, legislative lobbying, and cooking for foreign mothers so that "the more nearly like native born they become, the closer harmony will be between mother and child and fellow countrymen in the land of their adoption." By the mid-thirties, the national board of the council launched a crusade against the Nazi birth control campaign, supported old-age pensions, and uniform marriage and divorce laws, and the Atlanta section sent a letter to the Atlanta school superintendent in favor of coeducation. The broader-based Jewish Women's Club included the Bluebirds for nine-to fourteen-year-olds who raised money for the Denver Tuberculosis Sanitarium,<sup>29</sup> fourteen-to seventeen-year-olds who assisted the Hebrew Orphans Home, the unmarried senior division which brought cheer to the veterans at a Veterans Administration hospital, and the married women who arranged classes and oversaw the other groups. When Mrs. J. M. Alexander resigned after forty years at the helm of the Jewish division of the Needlework Guild, her "daughter," Mrs. Harry A. Alexander, took over. Mrs. Ernest Horowitz served on the board of the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods when it passed resolutions favoring a constitutional amendment banning child labor. In 1939

Mrs. Robert Travis was chosen as a national Hadassah delegate to the World Zionist Congress in Geneva. Mrs. Sol O. Klotz was perhaps the most active Hadassah worker, serving as local and regional president and emerging as a much sought after speaker. B'nai B'rith Women of Atlanta formed in 1944 for Red Cross work and cultural and educational programs. Many of the activities of the women's organizations had the added benefit of cutting across subcommunity boundaries, leading to greater intragroup cooperation in the late 1930s and into the 1940s. These middle- and upper-class women essentially conducted careers as full-time social service volunteers.<sup>30</sup>

### **The Postbellum Transformation: Unity with Diversity**

The decline in the need for charity and Americanization at home, with the exception of the small number of Holocaust refugees, marked the period from 1944 to 1948. The economic boom, only partly delayed by the Second World War, gained added momentum with the return of the troops from overseas. Businesses were refurbished and opened in new and multiple locations. The number of Jews in the professions dramatically increased. The economic rise was reflected in offices held in professional capacities and there was movement into the suburbs and out of the old core area, although patterns of residential clustering persisted. These changes also meant that less charity was required. Now aid to Jews in Palestine became the focus of philanthropy, and the rise of Israel ultimately dominated attention.

The flux of power and purpose turned back toward specialized agencies but now with centralized community methodology and funding. Everything was planned, surveyed by outside experts, and prioritized under the community umbrella. Money translated into power, but power was influenced by constituent needs and demands.

The changes in the structure and practices of the Jewish community began before the war reached their fruition in the aftermath. In September 1944 A. L. Feldman, president of the Atlanta Federation of Jewish Social Services, described the movement away from welfare and relief in the projected era of prosperity. Feldman emphasized recreation, education, and "preventive services," under which he included work against bigotry from the American Jewish Committee, Anti-Defamation League, and Jewish Labor Committee. The federation authorized the creation of a new central agency for

coordination of activities against discrimination and the stimulation of educational programs.<sup>31</sup>

Cooperation had been forced on the three defense agencies on the national level repeatedly. Reflecting divisions within the Jewish community over background and *modus operandi*, they had worked together and divided intermittently since 1933. In 1943 the General Assembly of the CJFWF considered a merger plan of the three agencies submitted by the American Jewish Committee's president, Maurice Wertheim. A National Community Relations Advisory Council was established by the next General Assembly with the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the Jewish War Veterans, and other organizations. The date was 1944 and in that same year Atlanta acted.<sup>32</sup>

In August 1944 Jake Jacobs had sent a letter to the editor of the *Southern Israelite*. In an August 11 editorial the newspaper had criticized a fund-raising effort undertaken for the establishment of a Jewish home for the aged and for support of the creation of a Jewish community council. The editorial maintained that the elderly were already taken care of by family or, for those requiring aid, by the federation. If there was a need, a survey should be conducted. Jacobs, a leader for the grass-roots home effort, responded that there was a need for a Jewish home free from the taint of charity. The last was a longtime criticism traditionalists had of federation methods. Julian V. Boehm answered Jacobs with a letter rejecting independent funding efforts and what he considered institutionalization. Boehm, a federation leader, advocated the federation process and indicated that there was no longer the "taint" of charity, but that aid was now rendered with "dignity and self-respect." He opposed "agitation" in a time of turmoil. The issue seemed like a classic German versus East European confrontation. It is likely that the longtime practice of keeping elderly family members within the household was breaking down with the move to suburbia and among those who could not afford a large house for the purpose. A similar conflict occurred almost simultaneously, in Columbus between the Jewish Welfare Fund and a grass-roots movement over the creation of a facility for the care of the elderly. This pattern of conflict between the central agency and community efforts to build old-age facilities was not new. Indianapolis experienced a similar confrontation during the early 1920s.<sup>33</sup>

Federation Executive Director Edward Kahn highlighted the need

for a new JEA facility in a year-in-review article at the end of September. Kahn urged a survey of community needs and centralized fund raising in clear rejection of Jacobs's group. These activities would be done under the auspices of a new Community Relations Council. A conference of the southern section of Jewish Community Centers, YMHA /YWHA's, was convened in Atlanta on September 23 and 24. The conference was announced at the beginning of September by federation leader and vice president of the parent NJFWF board Donald Oberdorfer and endorsed by the *Southern Israelite*. Reb Gershon and Philip Shulhafer represented the JEA. Frank Garson, in a gesture indicative of a new ability and willingness to contribute, donated the funds for the auditorium. In 1945 twenty-seven cities launched capital fund drives. Between 1948 and 1955 three hundred forty-eight new buildings went up nationally. Marc Lee Raphael reports that in 1949 over sixty-nine Jewish communities in twenty-two cities were involved with major construction projects.<sup>34</sup>

The American Jewish Committee under Judge Joseph Proskauer decided to move toward a broader membership base and to establish local chapters. An Atlanta chapter was formed in October with Herman Heyman as president. National Executive Vice President John Slawson addressed the group early the following year. The Anti-Defamation League's new regional headquarters was located in Atlanta during the spring of 1945. Donald Oberdorfer served as chair of the new National Council of the Joint Defense Appeal (JDA) in April 1947. The JDA attempted to raise six million dollars nationally to support American Jewish Committee and ADL efforts against discrimination.<sup>35</sup>

In November 1944 the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds conducted a national survey, the results of which strongly supported reorganization along the lines of Jewish community councils. This was in line with a move toward greater representation and the need for unity in fighting discrimination. Welfare fund president I. M. Weinstein established a committee to investigate the possibilities under J. B. Jacobs and Donald Oberdorfer. The committee held meetings and studied councils in other cities. By April 1945 all of the community agencies that had been invited to become charter members were given copies of the proposed constitution which was adopted the following month. The new council would study fund raising to avoid duplication, approve the budgets of all constituent

bodies, be responsible for the creation of bureaus of Jewish education and community relations, study other programs and needs, and raise standards. In the July election Donald Oberdorfer was elected president of the new Jewish Community Council by the majority of the fifty-four delegates representing twenty-three organizations and seven agencies.<sup>36</sup>

In that same November of 1944 the Atlanta Federation of Jewish Women's Organizations reorganized after a short hiatus to strengthen interaction, prevent duplication, provide central planning, and develop joint programs. All of the congregation sisterhoods, Hadassah, the Service Guild, NCJW, Pioneer Women, the women's auxiliary of B'nai B'rith, and the women's branch of the Arbeiter Ring were constituent groups which had cooperated together for years. Gender identity overcame national, religious, and Zionist differences among women more readily than found in men's organizations.<sup>37</sup>

Within a year of its founding the Jewish Community Council was called upon by the National Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds to provide a copy of its constitution. The national council viewed Atlanta as a model for other communities. The Atlanta organization created a community calendar and a public relations subcommittee under Reb Gershon. After an extensive study a Community Relations Program chaired by Boehm and jointly sponsored by the ADL emerged from the Gershon committee's efforts. In his annual report, Kahn indicated that Atlanta was now regional headquarters for the Jewish Welfare Board, the ADL, and the Zionist Organization of America (under Adalbert Freedman). Recognizing statewide responsibility, the federation subsidized religious and cultural programs for Jews at the Riverside Military Academy, a Gainesville prep school, and at the state mental hospital at Milledgeville (there were forty-seven Jews out of nine thousand in 1945).<sup>38</sup>

The education of Jewish youth in Judaica from the Depression to the World War varied. Much of it was done through the congregations or through private lessons after school and on the weekends. In 1939 the total school enrollment was about eleven hundred fifty.<sup>39</sup>

As early as 1931 an effort toward coordination and improvement of instruction had begun. In that year a conference on Jewish education convened with representatives from twenty schools. Of an estimated twenty-five hundred Jewish school children, only 40

percent were obtaining training in Jewish subjects. The United Hebrew School was reorganized as a community institution and moved from host Ahavath Achim to the Alliance. Henry A. Alexander was chosen as permanent chair.

It remained for the community council to set things in order. In 1945 the council hired Dr. Israel S. Chipkin, executive director of the American Association of Jewish Education, to conduct a survey of Jewish educational institutions in Atlanta. By March 1946, in accordance with the results of Chipkin's recommendations, a Bureau of Jewish Education was begun by J. B. Jacobs's committee. The constitution and bylaws were approved in August. The congregational schools became the foundation of the system. The long-running United Hebrew School now served as the Hebrew School for Ahavath Achim. Louis Schwartzman was hired away from the Baltimore bureau as director. Similar bureaus had recently been established in Schenectady and Syracuse, N.Y.; York, Canton, and Columbus, Ohio; and Bridgeport, Conn. The new organization held seminars and classes for religious school teachers, held student essay contests, and conducted citywide testing (developed by Dr. Noah Nardi of the Jewish Education Committee of New York) to determine the educational level of congregational school students. The test results were not positive. Only sixty out of four hundred seventy-three test takers received a score of 60 percent or above. The central office budget for 1947 was eleven thousand dollars with sixty-nine hundred dollars going to subsidize the congregational schools. The bureau and the school council recommended minimal bar mitzvah standards and the establishment of a high school for post bar mitzvah studies, as well as a Hebrew high school. The latter began in October 1947. Weekly adult education classes were also studied and then started. In 1947 the bureau and the Atlanta Federation of Jewish Women's Organizations jointly sponsored a Jewish Institute Day of workshops and lectures on contemporary issues. It was so successful that a study series on contemporary Jewish programs like intermarriage was inaugurated. As Schwartzman reported in 1948, the aim of the bureau (he might have said the entire new community system) was unity with diversity and the overcoming of factionalism in American Jewish life.<sup>40</sup>

In October 1945, when one hundred thirty-five people pledged thirty-nine thousand dollars for a home for the aged, they won the praise of Rabbis Epstein, Geffen, Friedman, and Weiss. A. G. Reisman

was elected president. Within a month the Jewish Community Council authorized a committee under Herman Heyman to study the need. Heyman's committee and Reisman's group worked together in the planning of a professional survey. Ben Grossman, director of the Chicago Home for the Jewish Aged and just returned from work on a similar study in Memphis, was hired for the project. In April 1947, upon receipt of the Grossman report, the council reorganized the home board under Frank Garson, expanded casework among the elderly, established a medical program, and launched steps to build a home.<sup>41</sup>

Under the council's methodical and professional process everything was studied and then appropriate actions taken. In June 1946 the Jewish population (one in four households would be interviewed under the leadership of Barney Medintz), old-age needs, and recreational and cultural resources and requirements were all scrutinized.<sup>42</sup> In August 1947 representatives from twenty-one agencies met. A cultural series had been run the previous four years, but this was the first time community-wide planning of cultural events had been undertaken. A Jewish Music Council, formed in 1948 with representatives from the Bureau of Jewish Education and the JEA, announced a series of lectures. The NCJW and the JEA created an "over fifty" group which would meet monthly at the alliance for bingo, gin rummy, and socializing. Services were becoming highly specialized and expanded as extensive, different, and new community needs were identified.<sup>43</sup>

The Hebrew Orphans Home had moved toward a program of foster care and subsidies for widows as early as 1930. This was in line with a series of White House conferences attended by superintendent Armand Wyle and social work leader Rhoda Kaufman. In 1937 the Hebrew Orphans Aid Society was reorganized to facilitate these activities by women under Mrs. David Marx. In the 1940 annual review it was reported that six other Jewish orphanages had closed during the previous decade again in accordance with recent White House Conference on Children's recommendations. The home had cared for one hundred six children, two-thirds of whom had received subsidies to remain with their mothers. Special attention was paid to the placement of young people with physical and behavioral problems. In 1948, after the now routine survey, the Hebrew Orphans Home was reorganized. Including the Montefiore Family Service Bureau of the federation and stressing local needs, foster placement, guidance, and

the elimination of overlap, the new Jewish Children's Services emerged. Between 1946 and 1951 this agency cooperated with an employment and vocational services committee, the NCJW, the congregations, and other community institutions to assist Holocaust survivors. Of the one hundred twelve refugee families who came to Atlanta from Europe, twenty-one left the city, seventy-four were self supporting, seven were partly self-sustaining, and only ten remained unemployed and dependent upon the community. More families were expected.<sup>44</sup>

The council, federation, and welfare fund moved to the chamber of commerce building downtown in January 1947 as a result of a northward shift in Jewish population and the new division of functions. In 1946 six hundred twenty-one thousand dollars was raised by the welfare fund. The following year, with over six thousand contributors or 50 percent of the Jewish population, that amount increased by one hundred forty thousand dollars.<sup>45</sup>

When the southern regional Jewish Welfare Federation and Welfare Fund council defined the Jewish community center concept and needs in October 1947, there was little doubt the direction Atlanta would take. A quarter of a million dollars was being raised to build a new JEA facility. The southern regional board of Jewish Welfare Federations and Welfare Funds held its basketball tournament at the old building in March 1947. A *Southern Israelite* editorial was both outraged and apologetic to the outside visitors because of the inadequacy and cold of the aging facility. In December 1948 a Peachtree Road site was purchased for eighty-five thousand dollars for a new Jewish community center to replace the old JEA.<sup>46</sup>

Even the young people had to be centrally organized and represented. In January 1947 a new Emory Hillel chapter under B'nai B'rith auspices replaced the former Jewish Students' Forum. In April of the following year a Georgia Institute of Technology chapter opened supported by B'nai B'rith, the Bureau of Jewish Education, and three Georgia Tech faculty members. The Intercollegiate Zionist Federation of America held its first annual ball to raise funds for the Jewish National Fund. Students from Emory, Georgia Tech, Oglethorpe, Agnes Scott, and the Atlanta division of the University of Georgia (later Georgia State) participated. A Jewish Youth Adult Council was formed in March 1947 from several youth groups, with two members from each to sponsor joint cultural programs, run a central calendar,

and represent the youth to the adult community.<sup>47</sup>

Clearly beyond and underlying all of these changes were the needs of Jews overseas. In 1946 Boehm chaired the Atlanta Zionist Council's Committee on Public Relations. The Palestine Economic Bureau sent I. M. Weinstein along with other American businessmen on a two-week mission to Palestine to investigate the economic situation. Atlantan Jewry chose three delegates to attend the first postwar World Zionist Congress in Palestine in 1946. In 1947, in a controversial maneuver by Robert Travis, the Atlanta B'nai B'rith forwarded a resolution to the national organization calling for President Truman to fulfill previous administration commitments in support of a Jewish homeland on the eve of a pivotal United Nations meeting.

The Holocaust and the establishment of Israel required concentration of efforts and altered priorities. The goal for the 1945 campaign was two hundred twenty-five thousand dollars. In the midst of the campaign an emergency appeal increased the goal to a quarter of a million dollars, a goal which was oversubscribed. In 1946 the poignant campaign slogan made real by the numerous stories of the concentration camps was the "Life Saving Campaign." The 1947 "Campaign for Sacrifice" set the impossible goal of one million dollars. A few months after the new Jewish state was proclaimed in 1948, that goal was surpassed. In 1944 the various local Hadassah chapters united in a massive membership drive to better prepare for medical aid in Palestine for concentration camp survivors. The National Council of Jewish Women worked closely with the Refugee Board to locate Holocaust survivors after 1944. It also provided housing, employment assistance, and social adjustment activities, while continuing its Americanization role by offering classes to immigrants. The Federation of Jewish Social Services conducted a location service to identify surviving relatives and offered guidance for survivors to obtain visas to the United States. Between 1946 and 1951 over one hundred families of survivors obtained aid for moving and adjusting to Atlanta. Joint Distribution Committee SOS ("Save Our Survivors") drives, begun in 1946, collected large amounts of food, medicine, and clothing which were flown to assist survivors. Between 1946 and its completion in 1949 the national SOS drive collected twenty-six million pounds of essentials including clothing and food.<sup>48</sup>

On November 29, 1947, the United Nations voted in favor of the

establishment of a Jewish state. Atlanta's Jews celebrated with a pre-Hanukkah program honoring Israel. An appeal to President Truman in March 1948 requested fulfillment of America's promises. During the fund-raising drive of that year the campaign borrowed three hundred thousand dollars with the endorsement of thirty-five individuals in emergency support of the United Jewish Appeal. With extensions over one million dollars was raised, the vast majority of which went to Israel. On May 14, 1948, Israel declared statehood. Thereafter, Israel was granted priority for community funding. On the national level, federation fund raising for overseas increased from thirty million dollars in 1941 to seventy-one million in 1945 to one hundred thirty-one million in 1946 to two hundred one million dollars in 1948. Thus Atlanta's experience clearly reflected national trends.<sup>49</sup>

The very nature of the community power structure had shifted. Before the Second World War it was possible to identify one key lay leader. The individual mantle went from David Mayer to Victor Kriegshaber to Harold Hirsch. Now functions and organizations were so diverse and so many individuals were involved that no one individual stood out. Was it Donald Oberdorfer, Henry Alexander, Robert Travis, I. M. Weinstein, A. L. Feldman, Frank Garson, or Julian Boehm? The choice would be determined by the issue. Although the rabbis were still respected, they were no longer the dominant force that David Marx had been at the turn of the century. Perhaps the dominant figure had become the pivotal professional, Edward Kahn. Clearly the decision-making apparatus established by the Jewish Community Council concept contributed to the influence of the professional staffs. The movement to professional power and philanthropic agencies over congregations was clearly national. It reflected almost a new Jewish identity of giving over congregational participation and the realities of finance. Harry Lurie reports that in 1935 federations and welfare funds provided 20 percent of the income for thirty-two national and international Jewish organizations. By 1946 this had risen to 80 percent.<sup>50</sup>

From another perspective the strength and growth of the community meant that action plans would flow from the periphery to the center and back again. Atlanta's Jewish community had matured into adulthood as it prepared for the second half of the twentieth century.

The Atlanta Jewish community was reconstructed on three

occasions during the entire period of this study. One of the amazing aspects of this is that the same reasons—the rationalization of fund raising and distribution of resources through scientific methods coupled with greater professionalism—were given each time. Yet what each did in actuality was to adapt to changing circumstances, needs, and constituencies. Although requiring future research, at least tentatively it can be said that the two transformations of the last quarter of the twentieth century revisited the same issues. History does repeat itself, albeit in varied distributive mechanisms.

---

*Mark Bauman is Professor of History at Atlanta Metropolitan College and editor of Southern Jewish History.*

#### NOTES:

1. For the overview and background in Atlanta, see Mark K Bauman, "The Emergence of Jewish Social Service Agencies in Atlanta," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* (Winter 1985): 488–508; Janice O. Rothschild, *As But a Day: The First Hundred Years, 1867–1967* (Atlanta: Hebrew Benevolent Congregation, 1967); Steven Hertzberg, *Strangers Within the Gate City: Jews of Atlanta, 1845–1915* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1978); Anne Lavinia Branch, "Atlanta and the American Settlement House Movement," (master's thesis, Emory University, 1964). For the development of social service agencies and their transformation, see Roy Lubove, *The Professional Altruist: The Emergence of Social Work as a Career, 1880–1930* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965) and Marc Lee Raphael, "Federated Philanthropy in a Jewish Community, 1904–1939," in Neil Betten, Michael J. Austin, eds., *The Roots of Community Organizing, 1917–1939* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990), 123–34.

2. Mark K. Bauman and Arnold Shankman, "The Rabbi as Ethnic Broker: The Case of David Marx," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 2 (Spring 1983): 51–68; Mark K. Bauman, "Victor H. Kriegshaber, Community Builder," *American Jewish History* (Fall 1989): 94–110. For parallels with other communities during this early phase, see Bauman, "Emergence." On the history of federations, see Harry L. Lurie, *A Heritage Affirmed: The Jewish Federation Movement in America* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1961), 13–15, 35–39. For the development of international efforts during the era of the First World War, see Oscar Handlin, *A Continuing Task: The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, 1914–1964* (New York: Random House, 1964).

3. Bradford Ward Trevathan, "The Hebrew Orphans Home of Atlanta, 1839–1930," (bachelor's thesis, Emory University, 1984). The movement toward professionalism was part of the larger thrust toward "scientific charity." See Lurie, *Heritage*, 63.

4. See Marc Lee Raphael, *Jews and Judaism in a Midwestern Community: Columbus, Ohio, 1840–1975* (Columbus: Ohio Historical Society, 1979), 244–49; Arnold Gurin, "The View from the Top: Dynamics of Volunteer Leadership," in idem, ed; *Understanding American Jewish Philanthropy* (New York: KTAV, 1979), 11.

5. Louis Swichkow and Lloyd Gartner, *The History of the Jews of Milwaukee* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1963), 290–91. Lurie indicates that the first

secular community chest was established in Cleveland in 1913. See *Heritage*, 39, 94–95. While the Associated Charities of Columbus was established much earlier, the federation was funded by the successor Community Fund, much like Atlanta's federation in the Depression. See Raphael, *Jews and Judaism*, 223, 250.

6. Rothschild, *As But a Day*; Kenneth W. Stein, *A History of the Ahavath Achim Congregation, 1887-1977* (Atlanta: Standard Press, 1978); Doris H. Goldstein, *From Generation to Generation: A Centennial History of Congregation Ahavath Achim, 1887–1987* (Atlanta: Capricorn Corp, 1987); Mark K. Bauman, *Harry H. Epstein and the Rabbinate as Conduit for Change* (Toronto and London: Associated University Press, 1994); Sol Beton, ed., *Sephardim and a History of Or VeShalom* (Atlanta: 1981); to trace this and the following trends on the national level, see Henry Feingold, *A Time for Searching: Entering the Mainstream, 1920–1945* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), especially 148–49.

7. Atlanta Federation of Jewish Charities Minutes, Ida Pearle and Joseph Cuba Archives, William Breman Jewish Heritage Museum, (hereafter, AJF Minutes and Cuba Archives), January 1928, September 25, 1929 (for example of rejection of request for outside aid and difficulty getting pledges redeemed), October 23, 1929, January 22, 1930 (for salaries going unpaid and decline of Associated Charities allocations), March 5, 1929 (for typical income from Associated Charities in relation to expenses), January 23, 1929–February 28, 1934 (for loan), September 28, 1932 (for discontinued classes), and April 3, 1929 (Kahn quotation) These references illustrate items which could be drawn from virtually any board minutes through at least 1935. To illustrate the relative differences between smaller and larger communities, the Jewish Welfare Society of Philadelphia ran a deficit of three hundred twenty thousand dollars in 1929. State agencies in Ohio pressured the Cleveland Jewish Social Service Bureau to lower its standards. Jewish unemployed actually rioted when the state issued a decree to cut off funds. The bureau, however, was vindicated when the New Deal agencies forced the state to raise its level to equal that of the Jewish organizations. See Murray Friedman, ed., *Jewish Life in Philadelphia, 1830–1940* (Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1983), 18; Lloyd P. Gartner, *History of the Jews of Cleveland* (Cleveland: Western Reserve Historical Society, 1978, 2d ed., 1987), 292–93. In Columbus the United Jewish Fund, which collected funds for overseas relief, was actually disbanded in 1930 due to lack of money. See Raphael, *Jews and Judaism*, 245, 249.

8. AJF Minutes, October 23, 1929, June 15, 1931 (on Kahn quotation and on transient board), July 23, 1930 (on changes in the federation), April 25, 1934, *Southern Israelite*, June 19, 1936, January 30, 1938 (for Anshe S'fard and the Hachnosos Orchim [Hebrew Sheltering Aid Society]) AJF Minutes, June 15, 1931, October 13, 1939. The National Conference of Jewish Charities supervised a Transportation Agreement as early as 1900. Lurie, *Heritage*, 69–70.

9. *Southern Israelite*, July 31, 1931, November 10, 1935 Moss was federation president for over eight years and also served as regional president of the federation and welfare fund umbrella organization. Milwaukee's Jewish community illustrates a variation. It turned over its beneficiaries to the community chest in 1933. Nonetheless, it too created a Jewish community council as well as a Jewish welfare fund in 1938. See Swickow and Gartner, *History of the Jews of Milwaukee*, 304–6, 312–13. In cities with larger Jewish populations like Los Angeles, the Jewish social service agencies were virtually inundated with demands. See MaxVorspan and Lloyd

P. Gartner, *History of the Jews of Los Angeles* (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1970), 193–96.

10. Harry Lurie states that by 1934, 70 to 90 percent of Jewish families in need nationally came under federal programs. See *Heritage*, 112–13.

11. AJF Minutes, November 30, 1932, March 29, 1933 (RFC).

12. AJF Minutes, April 30, 1934, January 30, 1935, June 5, 1935, December 18, 1935 (on changing New Deal programs and the resulting problems and adjustments); *Southern Israelite*, December 20, 1935. For some interesting articles on the issue of public versus private funding for charity, see Donald T. Critchlow and Charles H. Parker, eds., *With Us Always: A History of Private Charity and Public Welfare* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998).

13. AJF Minutes, August 26, 1936 (reorganization), February 24, 1937 (WPA); *Southern Israelite*, August 1933 (on NCJW).

14. *Southern Israelite*, January 24, 1936, March 27, 1936, March 29, 1936. Established in 1932, the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds brought together federations so that they could learn from each other's experiences, centralize services for economies of scale, encourage joint actions, and represent federations to the U.S. government. See Philip Bernstein, *To Dwell in Unity: The Jewish Federation Movement in America since 1960* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1983), 8–9. For the difficulties of unifying efforts during the interwar years, see Yehuda Bauer, *American Jewry and the Holocaust: The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, 1939–1945* (Jerusalem and Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1981), 24. For the difficulties in raising funds for the JDC during the Depression which contributed to the desire for a unified structure, see Yehuda Bauer, *My Brothers' Keeper: A History of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1974), 41–42. On CJFWF efforts to force the JDC and the UPA to cooperate, see Lurie, *Heritage*, 137; Handlin, *Continuing Task*, 67, 81; *Aiding Jews Overseas: A Report of the Work of the Joint Distribution Committee in Bringing Relief to Thousands of Distressed Jews Throughout the World During the Year 1940 and the First Five Months of 1941* (New York: American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, 1941), 12; Abraham J. Karp, *To Give Life: The UJA in the Shaping of the American Jewish Community* (New York, Schocken Books 1981), 67–69, 78–79. Bauer, *American Jewry*, 36, indicates that the occasions of unified action reflected both the rise of the East European American Jews and professional leadership. On the short-lived Joint Consultative Council and confrontation with temporary cooperation between national organizations, see Edward Pinsky, "American Jewish Unity During the Holocaust: The Joint Emergency Committee, 1943," *American Jewish History* (June 1983): 477–94. For the parallel story in the Durham-Chapel Hill, N.C., area, see Leonard Rogoff, *Homelands* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2001) and for Kansas City, see David M. Katzman, "Jewish Self Help in Kansas City: The Origins and Ascendancy of the Federation, 1933–1946," in Joseph P. Schultz, ed., *Mid-America's Promise, A Profile of Kansas City Jewry* (Kansas City, Mo., 1982), especially 324–42. Kansas City was somewhat unusual in that it had a highly developed, relatively unified, and organized Orthodox community. See Joseph P. Schultz, "The Consensus of 'Civil Judaism': The Religious Life of Kansas City Jewry," *ibid.*, especially 35–42. Robert P. Tabak draws virtually identical conclusions concerning the rise of unity begun on the local level, particularly peaking in response to Kristallnacht in "The

Transition of Jewish Identity: The Philadelphia Experience, 1919-1945," (Ph.D. diss., Temple University, 1990), 280, 281 (Table 28). Marc Lee Raphael also points to Kristallnacht and the German demand for a seven billion mark indemnity from its Jewish citizens as the key catalyst on the national level, although he does allow that the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds was "behind the drive" in 1938 and again in 1941. Yet this study argues that the momentum had already begun from the bottom up. See Raphael, *A History of the United Jewish Appeal, 1939-1982* (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1982), 5-6, 11.

15. *Southern Israelite*, April 3, 1936, April 10, 1936, April 17, 1936, April 24, 1936, May 1, 1936, May 8, 1936, March 29, 1929, March 15, 1935, November 1, 1935, January 10, 1936, February 14, 1936, December 11, 1936, and October 6, 1939; Mark K Bauman, "Role Theory and History: Ethnic Brokerage in the Atlanta Jewish Community," *American Jewish History* 73 (September 1983): 71-75; *Atlanta Constitution*, June 14, 1939, September 26, 1939; *Atlanta Journal*, June 16, 1925. Hirsch's counterpart in Birmingham for the identical meeting in July 1936 was Mervyn Sterne, in Milwaukee it was Nathan M. Stein in December 1938, and on the national level the key individual was Henry Montor. See Mark H. Elowitz, *A Century of Jewish Life in Dixie: The Birmingham Experience* (University: University of Alabama Press, 1974), 113; Swichkow and Gartner, *History of the Jews of Milwaukee*, 311-12; Charles E. Schulman, "Fund-Raiser Par Excellence," in Raphael, *Understanding American Jewish Philanthropy*, 97-101. Jews in Columbus increased their contributions significantly as the animosity toward German Jewry rose after 1934. Ohio's United Jewish Fund, organized in 1923, before Atlanta's equivalent, did not reorganize or become more democratic until 1939. Columbus's Jewish Community Council was also created later in 1940. See Marc Lee Raphael, *Jews and Judaism in a Midwestern Community: Columbus, Ohio, 1840-1975* (Columbus: Ohio Historical Society 1979), 244-49, 251, 290. In this and other ways the Columbus experience reflects local variations and varying time tables. For the 1941 conference in Atlanta and its efforts toward forging a united campaign, see *Aiding Jews Overseas*, 12. On the conflicts at the meeting, see Raphael, *History of the United Jewish Appeal*, 8-11.

16. Lurie, *Heritage*, 104-7; Bernstein, *To Dwell in Unity*, 13; Boris Bogan, "The Advantages of Federation," in Raphael, ed; *Understanding American Jewish Philanthropy*, 91; Raphael, "Federated Philanthropy." Daniel J. Elazar indicates that "it was not until the mid 1930s and the rise of Nazism that the federation movement became truly national, reaching into the smaller Jewish communities as well." See Elazar, *Community and Polity: The Organizational Dynamics of American Jewry* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1976), 162 (see also table 17, "Spread of Local Federations," 163-65). New Orleans and Los Angeles were two of the many communities to re-organize and create Jewish welfare funds in 1936. New York moved in the direction of democratic fund raising in 1935. The greater populations and financial resources in the larger enclaves meant that separate factions could organize independently and earlier. Nonetheless, these communities also had more difficulty responding to the Depression and ultimately were forced to unify and become simultaneously more representative to smaller communities. See Julian B. Feibelman, "A Social and Economic Study of the New Orleans Jewish Community," (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1941), 100; Vorspan and Gartner, *History of the Jews of Los Angeles*, 205-12; Deborah Dash Moore, *At Home in American: Second Generation New York Jews* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), 160. For a

good example of a community initially ahead of Atlanta and part of the first wave, see Judith E. Endelman, *The Jewish Community of Indianapolis, 1849 to the Present* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984). During the 1930s and 1940s Endelman's account makes clear that Indianapolis either slightly trailed or essentially lockstepped Atlanta's activities. Cleveland's Jewish community preceded Atlanta's but then re-organized and became more inclusive in 1935 in what has been called the "Pittsburgh Plan." See Gartner, *History of the Jews of Cleveland*, 306–10.

17. Joseph C. Hyman, *Twenty-five Years of American Aid to Jews Overseas: A Record of the Joint Distribution Committee* (New York: rev. ed., 1939), 46 (quotation), 49–50.

18. Twenty-three additional welfare funds were created in 1934, followed by thirty-five the following year. By 1941 federations or welfare funds existed in two hundred sixty cities. A National Advisory Budgeting Service advocated by the board of the CJFWF failed to gain approval in 1940. However, in 1948 nine federations from cities outside of New York created the Large City Budgeting Conference of Welfare Funds. See Lurie, *Heritage*, 105–6, 115, 120–88, 148–57. See also Bernstein, *To Dwell in Unity*, 13; Feingold, *Time for Searching*, 165.

19. Although Cincinnati held a federated campaign as early as 1896, the real shift to mass campaigns with divisions began in 1915 in response to the needs of war refugees. The 1917 New York campaign established a five million dollar quota, listed potential givers by occupation through a Business Men's Council, and included a women's division. See Raphael, *Understanding American Jewish Philanthropy*, 8; Harold D. Hahn, "Synagogue—Federation Relations," in Raphael, ed., *Understanding American Jewish Philanthropy*, 229; Handlin, *Continuing Task*, 26–27; Moore, *At Home in America*, 158; Raphael, *History of the United Jewish Appeal*, 17–19.

20. The federations and welfare funds clearly encouraged national unity and served as the driving force behind such efforts, even as many national organizations fought for their independence and continued to conflict over priorities and governance. For numerous examples of this from 1937 into the 1940s, see Lurie, *Heritage*, 132–37, 143–49, 151–56; Hyman, *Twenty-five Years*, 55.

21. There were numerous other such activities. The S.O.S. Club held a buffet supper and skate party, mixing children of Sephardic and Central and East European ancestry, and the Shearith Israel and Or VeShalom religious schools held annual picnics together. Temple and Ahavath Achim brotherhoods met together in 1940 for "unity and cooperation." See *Southern Israelite*, October 29, 1937 (Adler/Wise), June 14, 1930, November 12, 1943, March 17, 1944 (Orthodox), March 26, 1937 (welfare conference), October 6, 1939 (human rights), October 20, 1939 (UAHC), November 5, 1937, October 14, 1938, February 17, 1939, April 5, 1940, March 28, 1940 (Zionism), October 21, 1938, January 4, 1946 (JDC), March 5, 1937, February 14, 1941, February 25, 1944, November 24, 1944, May 25, 1945 (women).

22. Bauman and Shankman, "Marx." Many members of the German Jewish group were more likely non-Zionists than outright opponents. Little is known concerning any Orthodox elements which might have opposed Zionism as they awaited the coming of the Messiah and opposed the secular nature of many in the Zionist camp. On the parallel forces of unity and disunity in Nashville, see Rob Spinney, "The Jewish Community in Nashville, 1939-1949," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* (Winter 1993): 237.

23. Bauman, *Epstein*; *Southern Israelite*, August 13, 1943, November 26, 1943, January 14, 1944, October 13, 1944, February 23, 1945, January 8, 1943, June 21, 1946,

*The Transformation of Jewish Social Services in Atlanta, 1928-1948*

October 2, 1936, September 22, 1939, December 6, 1940, January 5, 1940, April 5, 1940.

24. For this and the following paragraphs tracing Atlanta's reaction to the Holocaust, see *Southern Israelite*. The items appeared almost weekly, so that a list of dates would be unnecessarily long.

25. *Southern Israelite*, May 4, 1945, November 12, 1943, September 27, 1944, February 2, 1945. For similar efforts in Nashville, see Spinney, "The Jewish Community in Nashville, 1939-1949," 227-28.

26. *Southern Israelite*, February 15, 1935, February 21, 1935, January 30, 1938, January 13, 1939, February 20, 1942, October 13, 1944, and February 13, 1948. The Jewish War Veterans chapter was also established at Columbus in 1935. See Raphael, *Jews and Judaism*, 290.

27. Toll, *The Making of an Ethnic Middle Class: Portland Jewry Over Four Generations* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1982), 161.

28. Columbus's Schontel Center, the former JEA and later Jewish Community Center, sponsored a summer camp in 1927. See Raphael, *Jews and Judaism*, 283.

29. Harry Lurie indicates that the CJFWF first pressed for national cooperation and the breakdown of barriers in the funding of the institutions that treated tuberculous at Denver and Los Angeles in 1937, unsuccessfully. *Heritage*, 132-36.

30. *Southern Israelite*, May 18, 1929, February 14, 1936, April 15, 1929, August 31, 1934, November 15, 1935, November 24, 1944, May 25, 1945, June 2, 1939, May 25, 1945, and September 27, 1944.

31. *Southern Israelite*, September 1, 1944. Columbus, Ohio, again initiated many of the following changes a few years before Atlanta. See Raphael, *Jews and Judaism*, 290-94. For other parallels in this and the following, see Hasia R. Diner, *Fifty Years of Jewish Self-Governance: The Jewish Community Council of Greater Washington, 1938-1988* (Washington, D.C.: The Council, 1989); Isaac Franck, "The Changing American Jewish Community," in Eugene Kohn, ed., *The Tercentenary and After* (New York, 1955), 38-42 (Jewish community councils); Julian Grier, "Philadelphia Jewish Philanthropy, Its Evolution and Maturation," in Murray Friedman, ed., *Philadelphia Jewish Life, 1940-1985* (Ardmore, Pa., 1986); Robert Morris and Michael Freund, eds., *Trends and Issues in Jewish Social Welfare in the United States, 1899-1952* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1966). The latter offers primary sources from professionals directly involved in these events in various communities.

32. The divisions on the national level concerning Zionism and governance are well documented. See for example Pinsky, "American Jewish Unity," 477-94; Lurie, *Heritage*, 137, 143-48. For the unification of defense agencies in Philadelphia, see Tabak, "Transformation of Jewish Identity," 268ff.

33. *Southern Israelite*, August 25, 1944, September 1, 1944, and September 8, 1944. Raphael, *Jews and Judaism*, 291-93; Endelman, *Jewish Community of Indianapolis*, 128-30.

34. *Southern Israelite*, September 1, 1944, September 8, 1944, September 27, 1944, January 19, 1945, and January 11, 1946. On capitol fund drives, see Lurie, *Heritage*, 191-95. On similar building activities in Columbus, see Raphael, *Jews and Judaism*, 325, 342, 345. On the 1945 building of a Jewish Community Center in Charleston, see Charles Reznikoff with Uriah Z. Engelman, *The Jews of Charleston* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1950), 231-33.

35. *Southern Israelite*, October 6, 1944, October 27, 1944, January 19, 1945, September 14, 1945, and March 8, 1946. See also Leonard Dinnerstein, "Anti-

Semitism Exposed and Attacked, 1945–1950," *American Jewish History* 71 (1981).

36. *Southern Israelite*, November 17, 1944, March 9, 1945, April 13, 1945, May 25, 1945, May 21, 1945, July 13, 1945, and July 20, 1945. Cleveland had organized a Jewish Community Council in 1936. It is possible that some cities may have started earlier where there was a higher incidence of local antisemitism. Lurie, *Heritage*, 126–31. Columbus's Jewish Community Council had been established in 1940. See Raphael, *Jews and Judaism*, 290. Harry Lurie documents the movement of federations from 1945 to 1960 in this direction of systematic planning. In 1950 the CJFWF established an Advisory Committee on Social Planning. See *Heritage*, 204–6.

37. *Southern Israelite*, May 25, 1945.

38. *Southern Israelite*, August 3, 1945, September 7, 1945, March 8, 1946, and September 14, 1945.

39. *Southern Israelite*, April 30, 1931, May 30, 1931, and October 20, 1939.

40. *Southern Israelite*, August 3, 1945, March 8, 1946, August 16, 1946, September 6, 1946, October 11, 1946, October 18, 1946, December 27, 1946, January 3, 1947, January 10, 1947, March 7, 1947, April 11, 1947, May 23, 1947, May 30, 1947, September 19, 1947, October 31, 1947, and September 24, 1948. Columbus conducted a survey of Jewish education in 1942 with similar results, and Milwaukee reinvigorated its bureau of Jewish education in 1944. See Raphael, *Jews and Judaism*, 290, 322–25; Swickow and Gartner, *History of the Jews of Milwaukee*, 325. The first Bureau of Jewish Education had been established in New York in 1917. The fourteen largest cities had such bureaus by 1932. The movement spread quickly thereafter, as twenty-four additional cities sponsored community schools within four years. The end of World War II fomented renewed interest. See Lurie, *Heritage*, 98–99, 206.

41. *Southern Israelite*, October 26, 1945, November 23, 1945, November 30, 1945, February 1, 1946, June 21, 1946, August 23, 1946, and April 18, 1947.

42. In 1948 nine city federations created the Large City Budgeting Conference (LCBC) to analyze "budgets, programs and finances." The LCBC leadership met with the heads of major agencies to solicit funds and offered recommendations on allocations to local federations. Bernstein, *To Dwell in Unity*, 17. Portland conducted its population study in 1947 and Nashville's Jewish Community Council conducted its own in 1949. See Toll, *Making of An Ethnic Middle Class*, 164; Spinney, "Jewish Community in Nashville," 226. Thus still again what was happening in Atlanta paralleled and was encouraged by national tendencies. This is not to argue that such studies had not been conducted previously (Cleveland, for example, conducted a Jewish community study in 1924, and New York did so in 1926), but rather that this emerged as a widespread phenomenon during this period. See Gartner, *History of the Jews of Cleveland*, 268–69, 284–86; Moore, *At Home in America*, 162–69. The latter offers the social scientific background for the surveys.

43. *Southern Israelite*, June 21, 1946, October 4, 1946, February 13, 1948, August 29, 1947, and September 10, 1948. Such studies became commonplace during this period. See Lurie, *Heritage*, 168–69. For the same type of methodological approach in Columbus, see Raphael, *Jews and Judaism*, 342, 345; Spinney, "Nashville," 239, n. 3 (for that city's 1949 population study).

44. *Southern Israelite*, February 7, 1930, November 29, 1930, April 16, 1937, April 5, 1940, September 14, 1945, April 9, 1948, April 30, 1948, August 6, 1948, and September 17, 1948; Joint Meeting of Committee on Family Service and Employment and Vocational Service Committee Minutes, Cuba Archives, June 19, 1951. For the

similar gradual transformation of these homes elsewhere, their relationship with national secular trends, and the move toward broader and less charity-oriented educational and vocational service agencies, see Lurie, *Heritage*, 75–77, 90; Swichkow and Gartner, *History of the Jews of Milwaukee*, 336–38; Endelman, *Jewish Community of Indianapolis*, 184.

45. *Southern Israelite*, January 31, 1947, and December 1947.

46. *Southern Israelite*, October 17, 1947, March 7, 1947, and December 10, 1948. For parallels, see Spinney, "Jewish Community in Nashville," 226; Raphael, *Jews and Judaism*, 342–45; Myron Berman, *Richmond's Jewry, 1769–1976* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1979), 309.

47. *Southern Israelite*, October 12, 1945, January 3, 1947, April 23, 1948, March 26, 1948, and March 21, 1947. Philadelphia's Jewish Youth Council, established in 1940, represented a coalition of eighty organizations with fifteen thousand members. Tabak, "Transformation of Jewish Identity," 341.

48. With the creation of Israel, Sam Eplan headed Georgia's B'nai B'rith food drive for Israel to aid incoming immigrants; Jack Maziar served the regional ZOA in a similar capacity. A Southeast Conference on Displaced Persons convened in 1948 with Barney Medintz chairing the opening session and Herman Heyman leading the convention. For the national drive, see Maurice Berman, "The American Scene," in "The Year of Deliverance," *JDC Digest* 9 (April 1950): 16. For similar experiences, see Spinney, "Jewish Community of Nashville," 228, 235; Raphael, *Jews and Judaism*, 286–90. For the national picture, see idem, *History of the United Jewish Appeal*, 26–40.

49. *Southern Israelite*, May 21, 1948, December 5, 1947, March 5, 1948, March 12, 1948, May 14, 1948, July 16, 1948, and September 24, 1948. See Bernstein, *To Dwell in Unity*, 14.

50. Solomon Sutker, "The Jews of Atlanta: Their Social Structure and Leadership Patterns," (Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina, 1950); Daniel J. Elazar, *Community and Polity: The Organizational Dynamics of American Jewry* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1976). See Lurie, *Heritage*, 125, for examples of the rise of the number of professionals.