

# THE JEWISH FEDERATION MOVEMENT IN AMERICA SINCE 1960

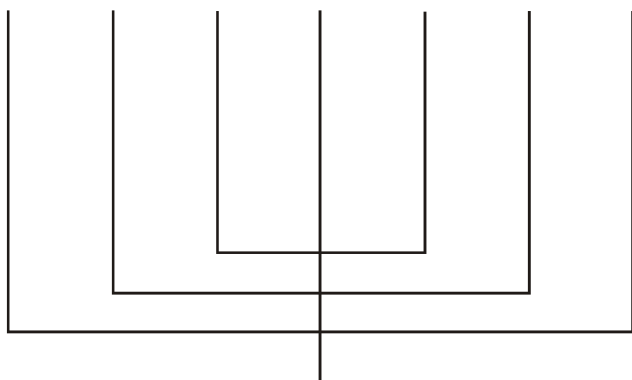


# PHILIP BERNSTEIN

# TO DWELL IN UNITY



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THE JEWISH FEDERATION  
MOVEMENT IN AMERICA  
SINCE 1960

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PHILIP BERNSTEIN

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## *For Florence*



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# ACRONYMS

AAJE	American Association for Jewish Education
ADL	Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith
CJF	Council of Jewish Federations
CJFWF	Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds
GJC	General Jewish Council
HIAS	Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society
JDC	American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee
JESNA	Jewish Education Service of North America
JOC	Jewish Occupational Council
JWB	National Jewish Welfare Board
LCBC	Large City Budgeting Conference
NAJVS	National Association of Jewish Vocational Services
NCRAC	National Community Relations Advisory Council
NFJC	National Foundation for Jewish Culture
NJCRAC	National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council
NYANA	New York Association for New Americans
ORT	Organization for Rehabilitation Training
UIA	United Israel Appeal
UJA	United Jewish Appeal
UPA	United Palestine Appeal
USNA	United Service for New Americans
WZO	World Zionist Organization

# PREFACE

The 1960s and 1970s were years of turbulent events and historic changes for the Jewish federations of North America. There is no comprehensive account of those developments. The Council of Jewish Federations invited me to write one.

Harry L. Lurie, my predecessor as executive of the council, analyzed the origins and growth of the federations from their beginnings in 1895 to 1960, in his lucid history, *A Heritage Affirmed*. My book begins where Lurie's history ends.

My purpose has been to set forth the issues, actions, and trends as objectively as possible in order to let the facts speak for themselves. Although the book's contents have been shaped by the insights gained from my forty-five years of involvement (from 1934 to 1979) with the Cleveland federation and the Council of Jewish Federations, this is not a personal memoir. *To Dwell in Unity* deals with the events, not with the author.

I have tried to identify the major issues addressed by the federations and their associated agencies, the actions taken and the principles and policies guiding these actions, and where possible, the differences between the goals and the achievements. I have also tried to identify the new issues that the federations will be facing in the future.

An account of the federations must include the services of their associated agencies, which give living expression to the bulk of the purposes and responsibilities of the federations. Beyond their work to accomplish the goals of the federations, their concentration on specialized functions and their creativity and initiative have helped shape the federations' purposes and policies. The local agencies are an im-

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portant part of the structure of the federations. The national and overseas organizations are supported in part by the federations and collaborate with them on policies and programs through the Council of Jewish Federations.

The work of the agencies is the basis of federation financing, planning, budgeting, and community education. A knowledge of their activities is essential to understanding how the federations organize the communities, develop leadership and other human resources, and build commitment to Jewish responsibilities.

The issues with which the federations have grappled during the past two decades are unprecedented in scope and gravity. I have sought to synthesize them in major groupings: the international and overseas services; the domestic services—local and national; the relations with the total society nationally in the United States and Canada and locally in each community; and the procedures and principles by which the federations carry out their responsibilities.

Within each area or field, I have tried to bring together and relate activities that affect each other, although they may be conducted by various agencies that are often viewed separately in their own universes. For example, the chapter on Israel encompasses the actions taken for Israel's peace and security; the work of rescue and rehabilitation of immigrants; the efforts to build the strength and quality of a society that must underpin the nation's security; the role of the federations in shaping the structures, policies, and programs of the organizations in North America and in Israel that perform the services; the influence of federations in helping to design new ventures such as the Israel Education Fund and Project Renewal; the roles of the various organizations that serve Israel and to which the federations relate, such as the United Israel Appeal, the Jewish Agency for Israel, the Joint Distribution Committee, and the Organization for Rehabilitation Training, and the relationship of federation responsibilities to other enterprises, such as Israel bonds; and projects undertaken by the federations in Israel.

Throughout, I have attempted to identify and describe the advanced developments of the leading federations, as well as to recount what has been characteristic of federations generally. There are great differences among the federations, as I point out repeatedly, in what they do and in how effectively they operate. I have not given equal emphasis to the practices of the less developed federations because they continue to learn from and emulate the greater achieving ones, which continue to innovate and move ahead. What the most advanced ones did in the 1970s, others will do in the 1980s.

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In preparing this analysis, I have kept in mind what has been sought by the officers, boards, committee members, and staffs of the federations and agencies; namely, the background out of which the present practices emerged, the rationale for them, the directions in which they are moving, and how the work of each community relates to what other federations do generally. My goal is to provide information and understanding to people preparing for leadership and for professional careers in Jewish communal services, to contributors, to other religious and nonsectarian organizations associated with Jewish agencies in their shared purposes, and to leaders in Israel and other countries who want to know what the Jewish federations of North America are and how they operate.

The title *To Dwell in Unity* was chosen because unity is the hallmark of the federations. It is taken from Psalm 133: "Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." The federations, uniquely among Jewish organizations, have brought together the broadest range of people with the most diverse philosophies, views, and priorities, to work together for purposes and needs they all share. In their combined power the federations have found unparalleled strength. It is this unity that has pervaded the many federation developments in the historic and dramatic years of the 1960s, 1970s, and early 1980s.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My deepest gratitude goes to the many persons whose assistance was indispensable in the preparation and production of *To Dwell in Unity*: to Nora B. Donegan, executive assistant of the Council of Jewish Federations (CJF), who coordinated the research and preparation of the manuscript; Addie Sneider, office administrator of the CJF, who supervised the typing; S. P. Goldberg, retired assistant director and director of budget research of the CJF, who compiled and analyzed many of the basic statistics on finances and services and who drew on his extensive knowledge from his long involvement in federation developments over almost four decades; Gloria Rocke, secretary to the executive vice-president for her invaluable aid; the members of the CJF staff and the executives of the national and overseas agencies who graciously supplied information regarding their respective fields.

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xv *Acknowledgments*

I owe much, also, to the leaders, executives, and staffs of the federations across the continent, whose communities it was always a joy to visit, to share in working for their goals and in trying to help resolve their problems. I am also indebted to the leaders and staffs of the national organizations and those in Israel and other countries, as well as to those in the voluntary sector, with whom I have worked closely over many years with great gratification.

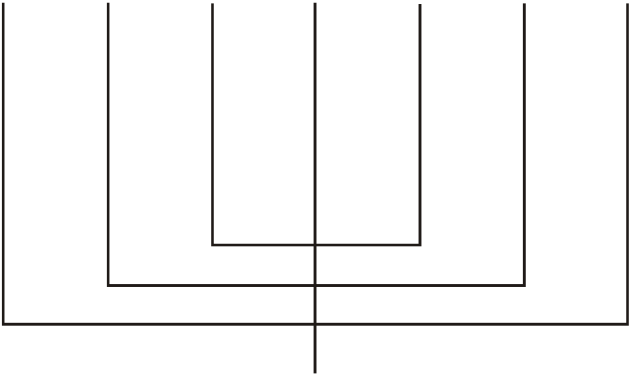
I am profoundly indebted to all of the greatly committed persons who served on the board of directors and the committees of the CJF, the ablest leaders drawn from the highest offices in their own communities, and—beyond expression—to the extraordinary group who served as presidents of the CJF, each of whom brought his exceptional abilities to this foremost responsibility, from whose creativity I learned and gained so much, and whose wisdom and friendship have been a treasure.





P A R T O N E

FEDERATIONS  
1895–1960





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# THE FEDERATION IDEA AND DEVELOPMENT

The logic of Jewish federations is so clear and convincing that it is disarming. Yet the Jewish federations of North America were the first organizations—Jewish or other—in the world to apply it.

The idea was more than logical. It was successful. So successful that the first two federations, in Boston and Cincinnati, were followed by 200 more in other Jewish communities, including every community with a Jewish population large enough to maintain one.

What the Jews initiated, the general community emulated. In 1913, Cleveland established the first community chest. That example was followed by more than 2,000 other cities.

## JOINT FUND RAISING

What was the federation idea? At first it was to institute a combination of joint fund raising and central budgeting. Later came community planning and coordination for welfare, health, and educational needs and service. It was the conviction that it made more sense for the charitable organizations, supported by voluntary gifts, to raise their funds together, rather than to have each agency seek gifts separately. The joint campaigns would cut fund-raising costs; save the time of voluntary solicitors; spare contributors from many separate requests; and enable the staffs and volunteers of each agency to concentrate their funds and energies on services to people, for which the agencies and the funds were intended, rather than on solicitations.

Although new in form, the federations were an expression of an-