

## U.S. Jewish news

### Demographic study sparks debate over predicting the future

By GAYLE HORWITZ  
WASHINGTON (JTA) - A recent study that projects the shape of the world Jewish community through 2080 has touched off debate among some demographers who question the value of reaching so far into the future. "Long-term projections from demographers have the same accuracy as economists today predicting the economy 80 years from now," said Gary Tobin, president of the San Francisco-based Institute for Jewish and Community Research.



GARY TOBIN, a Jewish demographer: Questions value of a study forecasting Jewish populations 80 years from now.

Because projections are made on the presumption that present conditions will not change, their conclusions have "no value," he said. "We cannot predict

significant changes over time," he added. "Their only value is in examining where we are at in the present." The findings of a team of scholars from Hebrew University, published two weeks ago by the American Jewish Committee in the American Jewish Year Book 2000, predicted that in the next 80 years, America's Jewish population would decline by one-third to 3.8 million if current fertility rates and migration patterns continue. In the same period, according to the study, the number of Jews in Israel will likely double, swelling to 10 million.

The study also anticipated a severe decline in the number of Jews in the former Soviet Union. By 2080, the data suggested, the Jewish community there will be virtually wiped out. Among the study's conclusions was that Israel would be home to the world's largest Jewish community as early as 2020, and the majority of the world's Jews by 2050.

The article, "Prospecting the Jewish Future: Population Projections, 2000-2080" offers demographic projections for Jewish communities throughout the world in the years 2020 and 2050, as well as 2080. It also offers adjusted scenarios based on changes in fertility rates. Sergio DellaPergola, chairman of the Harman

Institute of Contemporary Jewry of Hebrew University, who headed the study, readily concedes that the science of making projections is imprecise and likely to be affected by unforeseen political and technological changes.

But he defends the usefulness of his research. "Don't be swept up by the 2080 numbers," said DellaPergola, whose research team spent three years sifting through hundreds of population studies from around the world. "Our main interest is in the short term. I do not believe 2020 will be so different than 2000."

Population projections have long been an important tool in helping governments, international organizations and even local communities plan for the future. DellaPergola points out that the United Nations, for example, utilizes projections though 2150 to make decisions on how its resources can be best deployed. Jewish communities, struggling to stretch limited financial resources, are no different, he said. The study noted in particular the rapidly aging Diaspora community, saying that by the year 2080, more than 40 percent of Diaspora Jews will be 65 and older.

The study warned that Jewish social services to the elderly could be overwhelmed as a result.

### New debating program launched at Gray Academy

By BERNIE BELLAN

The Gray Academy of Jewish Education has launched a program designed to instill good communication skills and self-confidence in all students by teaching them the art of debating.

The program, known as *Speech and Debate for Better Communications*, was introduced last February as a pilot program in the Grade 9 class. This school year the program has been extended to include all students from Grades 7-10.

The driving force behind the program has been well-known businessman Ray Kives, whose son, Michael, was the winner two years running of the World Public Speaking Debating Championship (for high school students). Michael Kives is a graduate of St. John's Ravenscourt School, and it was during his time there that he honed his debating skills, says his father.

"What I saw was what debating did for my son at St. John's Ravenscourt. I want to transfer some of that to the Gray Academy," says Ray Kives.

Working closely with Miriam Maltz, principal of Joseph Wolinsky Collegiate and acting director of education for the Gray Academy, Ray Kives has been instrumental in helping to raise funds for the new program. As well, The Jewish Foundation of Manitoba has contributed to the funding of the program.

"The funds that are being raised will be used to pay the salaries of a program co-ordinator along with instructors," says Maltz. Currently two former St. John's Ravenscourt students, Kris Aide and Jason Quinton, are providing instruction to some 140 students at the Gray Academy.

The program is compulsory for all students in Grades 7-10, according to Maltz, although she acknowledges that "not everyone's going to be a debater." Nonetheless, the skills acquired through debating instruction can be expected to be of enormous help in almost any field, according to the brochure produced for the program, "from law, medicine and politics to education, marketing and technology."

Ray Kives admits that he, himself, was not a debater in his youth, much to his regret. "The two greatest fears that people have in life," he says, "are dying and having to make a speech in public."

It was while his son, Michael, was a student at St. John's Ravenscourt that Ray Kives got to know the debating teacher, John Robinson, who has served as a mentor for many students at that school. As a result, the program at the Gray Academy has been closely modelled on the one that exists at St. John's Ravenscourt.

Debating will be taught in one 40-minute class per cycle to the students in the program at the Gray Academy by Aide and Quinton. The program is intended to teach students how to reason logically and think quickly on their feet.

During the course of the school year, students from the Gray Academy will also compete with students from other schools that have similar programs, including Ravenscourt, Balmoral Hall and St. Paul's High School. As well, there will also be a debating club at the Gray Academy.

Great debate to be held October 5 at Shaarey Zedek Synagogue

In conjunction with the introduction of the new debating and public speaking program at the Gray Academy, a special debate will be held October 5, beginning at 7:30 p.m. at Shaarey Zedek Synagogue, that will pit champion debaters of two different generations against each other. The topic for the debate will be: "Are we giving our children too much?" There will be no admission charge for the program.

Billed as the "Great Debate", the participants will include well-known Winnipeg lawyers Paul Walsh and Jay Prober on one side, against the team of Jason Quinton and Michael Kives on the other.

Quinton and Kives bring with them very impressive credentials. Having partnered as debating competitors all through their high school years at St. John's Ravenscourt, they both went on to achieve tremendous success at the world debating championships in both 1997 and 1998. In both years, Kives finished first, and Quinton third among a field of 60 debaters from all around the world.

When asked whether there were any particular factors that might have contributed to his outstanding success as a debater, Kives noted that he has "three older sisters, so I've been arguing all my life."

"Debating is a wonderful opportunity to communicate effectively that opens all sort of doors," Kives says. "I started in Grade 8 at SJR."

Currently a political science student at Stanford University, Kives attributes a great deal of his success so far to the experience he developed in debating.

For his part, Quinton, who is enrolled in film studies at the University of Manitoba, is also one of the two instructors in debating at the Gray Academy (the other being another former international debating champion, also a graduate of SJR, Kris Aide).

Notwithstanding the credentials these two young debating champions will bring to the debate at

Shaarey Zedek, the team of Walsh and Prober remains confident (cocky might be a more appropriate adjective).

"It's like putting two amateurs in with two pros," says Jay Prober, who, as a law student partnered with fellow student Paul Walsh in 1967, won both the McGoun Cup (awarded to the top debaters at the University of Manitoba), followed by the Canadian university debating championship that was held in Calgary that same year.

"We're the guys with the finesse, the experience," Prober brags. "We'll take Quinton to the cleaners."

When asked how a duo of aging lawyers like Walsh and he would be able to match wits with two much-younger competitors who would clearly have the advantage of having participated in international top calibre debating competitions so recently, Prober had this to say: "Paul and I haven't debated together for 13 years longer than these guys have been alive...If there would have been an international championship (in debating) back then (1967), we would have won that, too."

As for Paul Walsh, he clearly relishes the generational spin that is being put on the upcoming match. Having teamed up with Prober in 1967 to win both the McGoun Cup and the national university debating championship (which required them to participate in a series of 11 gruelling debates), Walsh is clearly not concerned with having to face the team of Quinton and Kives.

As a matter of fact, Walsh readily accepted a challenge from this reporter to offer himself as the first Jewish Post & News "sunshine boy", should he and Prober lose the debate. (Walsh did admit that sophisticated photo doctored might be in order should he end up on the losing side.)

Incidentally, there seems to be a certain amount of controversy surrounding the manner in which Prober and Walsh were invited to participate in the debate. According to Prober, he was "conned into this" by Ray Kives.

"Kives called me and asked me to be a judge" of the debate, Prober claims. When he got to the meeting that was called to discuss the program for the evening, however, he was told by Kives that he was a participant.

No matter, though, for Prober, since, as he insists: "I'm not afraid of anybody."

As a footnote to this, however, Ray Kives was asked to comment on Prober's charge that he was lured into the debate under what amount to false pretences. Kives' retort was: "Prober has what is called 'selective hearing'. He hears what he wants to hear."

Sounds like an interesting evening coming up.

## U.S. Jewish news

Focus on issues

### Donors discuss how to spread word of the Jewish day school alternative

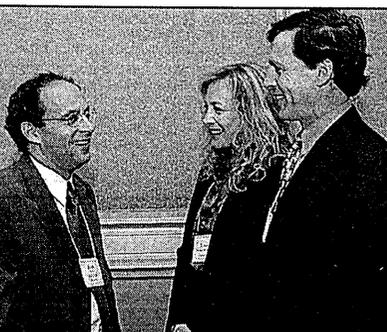
By JULIE WIENER

WHITE PLAINS, N.Y. (JTA) - Carol Nemo vividly remembers the day almost 20 years ago when her son came home upset from a Shabbat "honors" retreat for teen-agers from various Atlanta Jewish schools.

As they were pulling his bag out from the luggage compartment of the bus, Dan stopped and said to her,

"Mom, why didn't you send me somewhere where I'd learn something?" He hadn't known any of the Shabbat prayers or the blessing after meals and "felt like a fool the entire weekend." For Nemo, the comments of her son - who attended Hebrew school at a Reform temple - were "like a dagger in my stomach."

"He was saying in that one sentence what I'd felt all my life," said Nemo, who had always felt her own religious education



Rabbi Josh Elkin, executive director of the Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education, left, speaks with donors Elissa and Robert Bildner of New Jersey last week at the inaugural Jewish Day School Donor Assembly in White Plains, N.Y. Credit: David Hollander.

was insufficient. "I figured out something had to be done." Soon after, Nemo became enamored of day schools, which offer a more intensive Jewish education than congregational schools. Although it came too late for Dan - who his mother proudly says "only dates Jewish girls" - Nemo found a key role in founding Atlanta's Reform day school, the Alfred and Adele Davis Academy, and went on to help create the New Atlanta Jewish Community

High School.

Both schools are among the scores of non-Orthodox day schools that have sprung up around the country in the past decade. Nemo was one of almost 300 major donors - people who had made a recent gift of \$100,000 U.S. or more to Jewish day schools - gathered last week at a first-time national "donor assembly" sponsored by one of the leading forces in the day school movement, the Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education. The group, known as PEJE, was founded three years ago by 12 partners - including Michael Steinhardt, Edgar Bronfman and Charles Schusterman, who also recently came together for a philanthropy devoted to synagogue transformation and renewal - each committing \$1.5 million U.S. over five years.

PEJE has largely focused on fostering the growth of new day schools, providing grants and expertise to 41 schools. It is now looking to step up support for existing schools as well, and is planning to provide a consulting network for day schools as well as assist them with fund raising.

Day schools vary tremendously in terms of their operating costs and tuition, but according to a 1997 study commissioned by one of PEJE's partners, the Avi Chai Foundation, most function with far less money budgeted per pupil than is used in public schools.

### Some ADL donors annoyed at group's Lieberman rebuke

By MICHAEL J. JORDAN

NEW YORK (JTA) - He is an elderly gentleman, a \$5,000 U.S.-a-year contributor to the Anti-Defamation League, who is said to be such a supporter that he will bequeath his sizeable estate to the agency. But when the ADL publicly criticized vice presidential candidate Joe Lieberman for an August 29 speech in which he appeared to blend religion with politics, the man wasn't satisfied with firing off an angry letter to the ADL. He vowed to withhold his \$5,000 U.S., and have his lawyer remove the ADL from his will.

"While he agreed with us in principle, he thought the timing was off and wondered why we couldn't wait until after the election," said Peter Willner, ADL's associate national director, responsible for development. After a recent 35-minute conversation, though, the man "came around" and said he wouldn't make that call to his lawyer after all. "That's why I think this has been a wonderful opportunity to reach out to the community, to explain why we took the position we've taken," said Willner.

But ADL officials concede they have not won over all of their irate supporters; some are "serious donors" who let their donor dollars do the talking. While the ADL boasts roughly 400,000 financial supporters, the agency has received some

400 letters, phone calls and e-mails in the weeks following the highly publicized ADL rebuke. The ratio is 2-1 against the ADL position, said spokeswoman Myrna Shinbaum.

Not all threatened to withhold donations, she said. The criticisms, said Shinbaum, have generally fallen into three categories: those who feel "you don't criticize a Jew, no matter what"; others who were partisan, as in "Democrats who said, 'What are you trying to do, we're trying to get him elected'" (Republican Jews, meanwhile, "applauded us," said Shinbaum with a laugh); and others who misunderstood, believing "we were criticizing Lieberman for being too Jewish when we were criticizing him for bringing religion into the public policy arena."

Willner said it is still too early to tell whether the "serious donors" will follow through on their threats, as the traditional season of giving begins in December. On the other hand, said Shinbaum, it is not uncommon for an angry caller or writer to threaten to withhold their contribution, when in fact they have never given to the ADL.

A few betray their empty threats when they pledge to revoke their "membership," when the ADL is not a member organization. All in all, though, the ADL has no regrets about its actions.

### THE CITY OF WINNIPEG APPOINTMENT OF CITIZENS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WINNIPEG IS SEEKING CITIZENS TO FILL POSITIONS ON ITS VARIOUS BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS.

Vacancies for citizen member positions exist on the following Boards and Commissions:  
Access Advisory Committee  
Advisory Committee on Aboriginal Affairs  
Board of Adjustment  
Board of Revision  
Committee For Safety  
Concordia Hospital Board of Directors  
Library Advisory Committees  
Records Committee  
St. Boniface Museum Board  
Winnipeg Arts Advisory Council  
Winnipeg Public Library Board

An information package, which includes application forms, may be obtained from the City Clerk's Department, Council Building, 510 Main Street, Winnipeg, R3B 1B9, between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday.

Applications must be received in the City Clerk's Department no later than 4:30 p.m. on Friday, November 17, 2000, or postmarked no later than November 17, 2000.

All applications will be reviewed by the Selection Committee of the Executive Policy Committee.

General inquiries should be directed to the Information Coordinator at 986-5971.

Richard Kachur  
Acting City Clerk

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With Best Wishes for a Happy Holiday Season and a Wonderful New Year

LARRY LEE  
Financial Advisor

MICHAEL STOLLER  
Financial Advisor

JEVE ERHUIS  
Financial Advisor

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