

Daniel J. Elazar

Professor Elazar is Director of the Center for the Study of Federalism at Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

KINSHIP AND CONSENT IN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY: PATTERNS OF CONTINUITY IN JEWISH COMMUNAL LIFE

The American Jewish community has been substantially shaped by the American environment — every American Jew is familiar as to how unique the American Jewish experience is. Our community has also been shaped by the modern age — that, too, is common knowledge. Yet with all the revolutionary changes that have given Jewish life in the contemporary United States a special character of its own, there is also a very real continuity in Jewish history and culture which plays no small role in shaping organized Jewish life. The continuities in Jewish life are less immediately visible than the changes because they are the products of cultural and historical factors that, by their very nature, are expressed subtly.

It is always a mistake to underestimate the continuity of culture. Individuals are formed early in their lives by the cultures into which they are born. So, too, is a people. The seeds of whatever Jews are today were planted in us at the very birth of the Jewish people — when God decided, in His infinite wisdom, to take us in harness, to take our impulses and force them along His path and to push us in His direction. And we, whether because we were foolish or because we were desperate, decided to accept His offer. In sum, when we were formed as a people, we acquired (or already had) certain characteristics that have persisted over time. Despite all the differences, the similarities and elements dating back to or deriving from our original conditions have an amazing persistence.

I

We must begin by understanding the Jewish community as a polity, as a commonwealth that transcends, as it were, space, in the same way that, as a people, we have transcended time. As a people organized, we partake of an exceptional kind of political life, which, if still unusual today, may well be the form to which the world in general is moving. If Marshall MacLuhan is correct, the world is undergoing a certain amount of re-tribalization. In many respects, the Jews are the modern tribe *par excellence*, the tribe that has kept pace with the movement of civilization without sacrificing its kinship structure while still managing to create a commonwealth, which transcends territorial limits.

Our commonwealth has certain very special characteristics. It is worldwide in scope, but only territorial in a limited sense. It is authoritative, but only for those who accept citizenship within it. It does not demand exclusive loyalty on the part of those attached to it, since many of its members share multiple loyalties. And, finally, it exists by virtue of a mystique, an orientation towards a future that looks to the redemption of mankind.

The Jewish polity emerges, as the title indicates, out of two sources: *kinship* — that Jews are born Jews and are members of that tribe — and *consent* — that we agree to be bound by our covenant. Individually, each of us in every age, has consented to be Jewish, that is to say, has voluntarily assumed the ties of *citizenship*, not simply the ties of kinship. The ties of kinship we could not choose; they were forced upon us. What we do with those ties is a matter of our choice. This combination of kinship and consent lies at the very basis of our polity.

II

Jewish communities have traditionally organized their populations into coherent bodies on a constitutional basis. In Jewish law, every Jewish community is a partnership of its members. Legally, communities do not exist apart from their members. There is no such thing as “the state” existing independently of

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the people in Halakhah or Jewish tradition. The ultimate constitutional basis of that partnership is the original covenant establishing the Jewish people, the covenant that our tradition records as having been made between God and the twelve tribes at Sinai. From that covenant came the Torah, the traditional constitution of Jewish people. When we talk about Torah, we are not talking about the Five Books of Moses alone; we are talking about the Torah as it has grown, with the Talmud added to it, with the interpretations and commentaries added to both, and with the historical experience of the Jewish people. Until modern times, nobody disputed the traditional constitution. Jews accepted the Torah. They may have argued over its interpretation, but they accepted it. And out of that acceptance the Jewish polity was given constitutional form.

A covenant, it should be understood, is a compact by another name, a very special kind of contract. A compact is an agreement that creates a partnership. A covenant links entities, whether polities, peoples or individuals, together to create partnerships to deal with those problems which must be dealt with on a united basis, but in such a way that the parties to the compact preserve their respective integrities. Out of the Sinai covenant have come all the partnerships that have raised the Jews from a biological group to an organized community or a federation (the word itself is derived from the Latin, *foedus*, which means covenant) of communities.

All this is well-documented in Jewish sources. Let us consider one text, which apparently was first published in the 11th century by Rabbi Judah HaBarceloni, a Spanish Jew, in his *Sefer HaShtarot* (The Book of Contracts). Students of American government know about such organizations as the National Municipal League, that put out model constitutions and model laws. For the last 80 years, the development of model legislation has been a common element on the American governmental scene. *Sefer HaShtarot*, compiled 900 years ago, is the first compendium of model laws that we know of in Jewish history. Perhaps it is the first in history, period. It is a book that includes within it model laws for every contingency. As we

know, Jews were always moving, either by choice or by necessity, and when they came to new places, they had to set up communities because Jews cannot live as Jews — cannot function Jewishly — without organized communities. It was to ease the process that model charters for setting up communities and communal institutions came into existence. They had a model charter for setting up a welfare society, for organizing a synagogue, for providing assistance to widows and orphans, for establishing schools, and many others.

Rabbi Yehuda HaBarceloni compiled these charters and other basic documents regarding civil and family law contracts as well into a book with appropriate introductions. In it, he includes a model charter for establishing a communal organization. The preamble states:

We, the elders and leaders of the community of -x-, due to our many sins we have declined and become fewer and weaker, and until only few have been left of many, like a single tree at the mountaintop, and the people of our community have been left with no head or *nasi*, or head justice or leader, so that they are like sheep without a shepherd and some of our community go about improperly clothed and some speak obscenely and some mix with the gentiles and eat their bread and become like them, so that only in the Jewish name, are they at all different. We have seen and discussed the matter and we agreed in assembly of the entire community, and we all, great and small alike, have gone on to establish this charter in this community.

The model charter continues to describe how the community, by this action, establishes its right to enact ordinances, establish institutions, levy and collect taxes; in short, carry on all the functions of a municipal government.

I think the principles of community enunciated in the foregoing document are clear. In order for the actions of a community to be legally binding in Jewish law, it had to be duly constituted by its potential members, preferably through a constituent assembly and a constitutional document. They must be able to say that “we have met together as the elders, that we have discussed the matter, that we have agreed in assembly of the entire community.” If these patterns were not followed the action would not be valid.

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The procedure codified by R. Yehuda Ha-Barceloni is a product of the Spanish milieu, a Diaspora that allowed Jews to make their own decisions, more or less. In the Babylonian Diaspora, it was more difficult, because the rulers of Babylonia established a Jewish dynasty to provide the official leadership of the community. The head of the community was known as the Exilarch or *Rosh Galuta*. The Jewish community in Babylonia had to work within the framework of a structure headed by the *Rosh Galuta* and had to accept his hereditary rule. This was in direct conflict with the partnership principle, the covenant idea. So what did the Jews do? Let me quote from the Chronicle of Rabbi Natan, a contemporary Babylonian Jewish source, describing how the exilarch is appointed.

When he is appointed, if the mind of the community has agreed to appoint him, the two heads of the Yeshivot met with their students and all the heads of the congregation and the elders appoint.

In other words, while kings may appoint, and we may in fact have to accept their appointments because they hold the power to compel us, we do not foreswear the forms whereby we bind our leaders to ourselves. We force them, as it were, to covenant with us, that they will protect and preserve our laws, insofar as it is possible, considering that they have to follow the king's laws.

The Babylonian and Persian rulers did not allow the exilarch a great deal of freedom to decentralize. For example, he had to appoint judges himself, so that they would be accountable to his central authority. This went against the grain of Jewish political life which emphasized the authority of local leaders. According to the Talmud, the Jewish community solved this problem through the following ordinance:

When, he, (the exilarch-appointed judge) reaches his destination, (a particular community), he chooses two of the important men of the town to sit with him.

So, the Babylonian authorities have their exilarch-appointed judge, but the Jews also have two locally appointed men to sit

with him. The Talmudic ordinance continues:

Now, if that judge (the exilarch's appointee) is straight in his ways and clean in his judgment, the heads of the community will write to the exilarch and praise him. But, if there is something evil in him or if they find some imperfection, they write to the exilarch and to the heads of the *yeshivot*, how generous are the deeds of ("x") and how ugly are his habits, and they remove him and appoint someone else in his stead.

III

As a partnership, the Jewish community is clearly republican in its orientation; it is a partnership that is based on the principle that the community is a *res publica*, a public thing, not the private preserve of any man or group, those leaders are drawn from and are *penultimately* responsible to the people. *Penultimately*, not *ultimately*. Ultimately, we are all responsible to God; but penultimately, for matters of this world, our leaders are responsible to the people in some way.

The Jewish community is republican but it is republican in an aristocratic as much as in a democratic way. It must be carefully noted that, although the Jewish community has generally attempted to be democratic in its involvement of the people in covenants crucial to its formation and governance, it was not meant to be simply democratic, in the sense that we talk about any person acquiring leadership simply by virtue of some kind of public acclamation. It also seeks to embody the aristocratic ideal because leadership in the Jewish community was and is invariably invested in those able to claim legitimacy on the basis of some authoritative source that stands external to the members of the community, *per se*. Ideally, the source of authority for the communal leadership is God. According to tradition, it is He who determines what the earthly forms of legitimacy will be, through His covenant with the people and its expression in the Torah. After the days of the Judges, God, Himself, no longer directly annointed the leaders. Consequently, even when Jews were God-fearing they did not expect God to annoint their leaders, but they did recognize their ultimate responsibility to Him.

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This apparent rejection of simple democracy is an unpalatable idea in a democratic era. Nevertheless, Jews came to the conclusion that the survival of the special purpose of the Jewish people necessitated such a stance. While all power must be subject to checks by the people, ultimately the nature of the community is determined by something higher than the people; there is a vision that stands above the simple counting of heads.

IV

In practice, there has always been some authoritative source that stands above the simple voice of the people to embody, as it were, the aspirations of the people. In the past, legitimate authority has been derived from the Torah and manifested at various times through prophets like Moses, through kings like David, through priests, like Aaron or Mattathias, and through scholars like Hillel and Maimonides, as well as through elders or representatives of the people. Usually, it was manifested through more than one source simultaneously, and embodied in a kind of separation of powers arrangement.

Today, however, the Jewish people as a whole is no longer held together by traditional authority. For the last century or more, the Jewish community was without any widely accepted authoritative force. The one thing that united virtually all Jews in those years was their desire to become part of the open society. The touchstone of Jewish authority, to the extent that there was one, was a common commitment to modernism or liberalism. Leadership passed to Jews who had "made it," in the larger society precisely because they had.

The establishment of the State of Israel created a new source of authority for Jews. Certainly after 1967 Israel has become the primary authoritative factor, uniting virtually all Jews.

All this is not to say that Jews no longer are interested or accept the Torah, however they interpret it, or that the shift is necessarily a good one. But the fact of the matter is, that at this moment, those people who speak with the most authoritative voice in the community are those people who speak in some

way with the voice of Israel.

V

The authoritative role of Israel functions in two ways. First, Israel is itself authoritative; what Israel wants is interpreted to be what the Jewish community should want and even those who wish to dissent from any particular Israeli policy or demand must be very circumspect when they do so. Those Jews who reject Israel's claims upon them are more or less written off by the Jewish community. They are certainly excluded from any significant decision-making role in the community.

Furthermore, men who can claim to speak in the name of Israel or on behalf of Israel gain a degree of authority that places them in very advantageous positions when it comes to other areas of communal decision-making. This authoritative role has contributed as much to enhancing the Jewish federations and their leadership as the sheer act of raising money. Indeed, the two are closely inter-connected. Even the synagogues, which are expected to be bastions of support for the Torah as the primary source of authority in the community, have come increasingly to rely upon Israel and Israel-centered activities to legitimize their own positions. The shift of fund-raising on *Yom Kippur* from fund-raising for synagogue needs to the sale of Israel bonds is a specifically visible case in point.

In the last analysis, however, Israel is a human and secular source of authority, subject, as it were, to all the weaknesses of all human and secular sources. Israel is the fulfillment of a Messianic dream but it is not the coming of the Messiah, because nothing human that we so far have seen is. So, while for the moment, we have solved the problem of how to provide some measure of authoritative integration for the Jewish people, Israel does not solve our problem of restoring the kind of authority that will enable our community to become the community that it properly should be.

Given the thrust of Jewish political tradition, certain limits and opportunities in contemporary Jewish community organization should be apparent. We cannot expect to establish our

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community on the same basis as modern democracy. We are not going to be ruled as a community by the votes of the people, pure and simple. We may have voting and elections — indeed, we should have — but we will not, as a people, survive as a holy commonwealth, or even as a good commonwealth according to the standards which we have set to ourselves, if we simply follow the opinion of the majority of the Jews in a given period in regard to what the Jewish commonwealth should be.

Ideally, aristocratic republicanism leads to governance by what we might call a trusteeship, with a strong popular base as well as a higher legitimacy. The history of Jewish governance can be understood as a continuing effort to maintain that trusteeship on both its aristocratic and democratic bases. However, like every other form of government, aristocratic republicanism has its degenerative side. When aristocratic republics degenerate, they become oligarchies, or rule by a self-selected few for their private benefit. There have been cases of this happening in the Jewish past. In fact, at the present time we have less oligarchic rule in the American Jewish community than Jews in many Old World communities had for the previous four or five centuries. If we are far from the aristocratic ideal, we are also far from its degenerative side. Some communities are indeed ruled by a self-selected few, but not for their private benefit.

One of the factors that contributed most to the breakdown of the pre-modern Jewish community was that, in the previous 400 years, the aristocratic republican ideal was all too often corrupted. Jewish communities fell under the rule of oligarchies, that sought, one way or another, to protect their own privileges. Jews were not often in a position to feather their own nests, so it was not so much a question of getting rich, as avoiding the burdens which were imposed on the community as a whole.

In any age and time, there is a continuing tension between the aristocratic republican ideal and the lower manifestations of reality. It is the problem of every generation to confront that tension and to seek to move the community in the direction of the higher, rather than the lower.

TRADITION: *A Journal of Orthodox Thought*

One of the ways in which Jewish communities attempted to prevent corruption of their governing bodies was through the division of powers within the trusteeship. There are indications of that division in the selections quoted earlier. The legitimacy of the division is made explicit in many texts. For example, *Bereshit Rabbah*, the Midrashic commentary on the Book of Genesis, comments on the verse:

The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his legs.

According to the Midrash, "The scepter . . ." is interpreted as the exilarchs in Babylon, who rule the people, Israel, with the stick, while the "ruler's staff . . ." are the patriarchs of the family of Rav, who teach the Torah to the populace in the land of Israel.

Another explanation of the verse is offered:

The scepter is the Messiah, son of David, (*Mashiach ben David*) who will rule over the kingdom, that is to say, Rome, with a stick. And the ruler's staff are those who teach Halakhah to Israel.

Even after the Messiah comes there will have to be a separation of powers, for even the *Mashiach* is not to be trusted with all the powers alone. Even if he can rule over Rome, there still must be the great Sanhedrin to teach Halakhah to Israel.

VI

One of the major checks in the trusteeship is cultural. Jews approach community governance with a very moralistic outlook. We expect high standards of behavior, based on the principle that the community must pursue justice and that those who lead it must do so as a public trust. The term, in Talmudic times, for the elders of the city was *tuvei ha'ir*, the good men of the city. In reality, of course, they were not always good men, but what they were supposed to be was embodied in the concept. Any behavior that falls short of these standards has provoked sharp criticism from the days of the Prophets to our own. In-

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deed, one of the tasks of any Jew is to hold his leaders up to the measure of that criticism. In modern parlance, that is referred to as "a prophetic stance."

At the same time, Jews are very individualistic in their personal behavior and demands, accepting the discipline of the community as binding only when they consent to it. The Hebrew language has no word for *obey*. (It is true that a word has been created in modern Hebrew for military usage but it has not caught on, even in the Israeli Army, which is built, as much or more than any Israeli institution, upon Jewish principles.) There is a word for command: *tsavot*; *mitzvot* are commandments. But there is no word for obey. Instead, to convey the sense of responding to commandments, one has to use two words: *shmoa* (hear) and *asoh* (do). Implicit in our language then, is the idea that any human being can hear and any human being can do, but somewhere in between he makes a decision. He consents to do what he hears and, ultimately, there is no way anybody can force somebody to do what he hears. Ultimately, the individual makes the choice. Sometimes there is not very much of margin of choice. According to one Midrash, when God offered the Torah at Sinai, He held the mountain over the Jews and offered them the choice of accepting it or being buried. Even in that case there was a hearing and there was the doing; in short, a choice. Most of the time, we have better options than that.

Jewish political tradition speaks to this as well: For example, Rabbi Shlomo ben Aderet, the Rashba, one of the great leaders of the Spanish Jewish community in the 14th century, responding to questions put to him by the Jewish communities of Lerida and Saragossa, defined the problems of consent and obligation in ways that are applicable to our situation today as they were then. He was asked by the Jews of Lerida whether a community can unilaterally enforce its decisions against its members. His answer:

In all matters of the community, no one part of the community is permitted to do as they please, unless the entire community consents.

TRADITION: *A Journal of Orthodox Thought*

For the community are as partners in all communal responsibilities and in all communal appointments, such as tax collectors, unless there exist men who have been appointed to deal with communal affairs; those who are called by our sages the seven *tuvei ha'ir*. In most places, nowadays, the important men of the community direct the affairs of the community in consultation and agreement. In general, it is assumed that the individual avoids his own opinion, but if some of the community, even from among those who are not great in wisdom, object, their objection is an objection. So long as they do not expressly accept, their objection stands. This is certainly so, where the objection is made by some of the men who are normally those to be consulted.

In other words, even the objection of the average Jew in the community stands. The Rashba is talking about an aristocratic republican system, but the objection is an objection and it must stand. And Jews, for good or for ill, persist in that course until this day. In no community is there a way to say to people who object that the objection is not an objection, even if we think it is not, because the objection will stand. That makes it difficult to govern Jews. Anybody who is in Jewish communal life knows how difficult it is. Here we have testimony as to how difficult it was even in the Middle Ages, when the Jews were bound together as a group under their own laws which their governing bodies could enforce, and were not simply a voluntary society in the way of the modern world.

At the same time, the specific forms and procedures of communal governance can vary from place to place and time to time, as long as the principles are maintained, to wit the Rashba's answer to the Jews of Saragossa:

The customs of different locales differs in these matters, for there are places where all matters are handled by their elders and advisors, and there are places where even the council can do nothing without the consent of the entire congregation in which there is found the agreement of all, and there are places which appoint for themselves a group of men whose direction they will follow for a given period of time in all matters related to the group.

Jewish individualism, as we know, tends to be assertive, as well. The less restraint, the better. The more possibility for objections, the better. No more need be said about that; only

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consider what it means in connection with communal governance.

Balancing Jewish moralistic and individualistic tendencies is a strong sense of traditionalism, which serves as an anchor for both. Traditionalism tends to be the source of a certain conservatism in Jewish life. There is nobody as orthodox in his way as an old Jewish radical; whatever ideology Jews adopt is ultimately made into a tradition, forcing its adherents to live intensively according to customs rooted in its principles. Things must be done according to precedent and without rocking the boat, even though, with their moralistic tendencies, Jews tend to constantly look for improvements and reform and, with their individualistic ones, Jews tend to be liberal.

There is a tension, as it were, in all Jewish communities between tradition, moralism, and individualism. It is a tension that is not and cannot be definitively overcome. Rather, it is the kind of creative tension that helps define Jews as Jews. In every generation, Jews try to adjust to it as best they can.

Finally, Jews always have Messianic expectations, and approach political life with those expectations before them. Jews fight for Messianic goals, hence their intense commitment to ideologies and causes. A Messianic commitment can lead to fanaticism. There are no better fanatics than Jews. Why? Because to be Messianic, one has to have passion and has to believe passionately. If one believes passionately that something is right, one will go to almost any lengths to achieve it. Fortunately, Jews have been taught so strongly, by the Torah, to minimize violence, that even their worst fanatics tend to stop with the throwing of stones. But that comes right up to the edge.

Jews have Messianic expectations of their leaders and institutions, magnifying their normal human failings because Jewish institutions are supposed to live up to the highest forms of aristocratic republicanism (or whatever form of governance currently fashionable), to the highest manifestations of the teaching of the Torah. They are inevitably disappointed, because their leaders never do, because they are still human be-

ings. In modern times, when the pull of the common law and a common way of life has been weakened, this has exacerbated divisions within Jewish life, at times to the point of self-destructive disunity.

VII

Jews must expect internal divisions based on different understandings of Torah and the different sets of Messianic expectations that flow from them. They will not — perhaps should not even hope to — eliminate them, yet all Jews must seek to modify their impact. It is always the task of at least some and, hopefully, of most Jews to feel that the necessity to preserve the commonwealth, overrides the desire to preserve the divisions, even when the divisions have to do with differences in Messianic expectation. Inevitably, the outside world tends to force Jews to take that stance, whether they want to or not, but it is not sufficient to wait for the outside world to do so. The Jewish people, itself, must constantly be wary of what divisions can do. The Talmud comments that the second Temple was destroyed because of the gratuitous hatred of Jews for Jews. The divisions within the Jewish people at that time were carried to the extremes of civil war. While the examples which the Talmud gives usually have to do with personal animosities they stood for the kind of Messianic animosities which divided sect against sect in the community of ancient Judea.

Given the continuities of Jewish political life and culture what can we say about our own institutions? Where does all of that leave us? Even as we emphasize the changes brought in the modern (and, now, the post-modern) era, and in the New World, we must recognize the basic continuity not only of Jewish experience, but also of Jewish patterns of self-government. These continuities are based upon the first principles of the Jewish vision and represent our efforts to embody those principles in the hard realities of practice. They are our benchmarks, our measures of success or failure. However, they also impose limits upon us and we must understand those limits.

For example, if we expect to build a community by ignoring

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or eradicating the individualistic tendencies of Jews, we may as well cease the effort before we begin. Similarly, if we expect to build a community based on interest alone, one that is not committed to dealing with great moral questions of justice and mercy, we may as well desist from the start. If we expect to build a community that is not subject to a hardening of the patterns established at its founding — traditionalism in some form — we may as well stop now. We will build no communities, no matter how real are our needs and how realistic we intend to be in addressing ourselves to them, if we neglect the Messianic expectations of the Jewish people.

What, then, are reasonable expectations for maintaining and improving organized Jewish communal life? We begin with a crucial fact which has been true throughout much of Jewish history. The Jews as a group are not held together within clear-cut boundaries. There is no nice, neat, fence around the Jewish people.

Bound, as we are, by links of kinship and consent, we tend to be a community built in concentric circles around the common core of Covenant and Torah which act as magnets pulling those born Jews (or who have been naturalized) together insofar as they consent to be pulled. Immediately surrounding the central sources of Jewish life is a hard core of people, generally small, for whom being Jewish is part and parcel of their daily living — the most important thing in their lives. Spreading out from it are a number of other circles, in each of which Jewishness is progressively less important in proportion to its distance from the center. Sometimes the non-Jewish world erects its own strong fence around us so that all Jews are in the same boat whether they like it or not. Sometimes that fence is so weak that the people in the most peripheral circles drift away and disappear. Nobody knows how many millions of Jews have drifted away and disappeared throughout Jewish history, not only in our own time, although the situation in our times is unprecedentedly open.

Precisely because our community consists of a series of concentric circles we cannot expect to organize our institutions as

if we were bound together in a box, as if we could count on everybody within that box to respond because it would be in their interest to do so. For example, many of us are very much concerned about making the community representative. This is a concrete problem. Our community leaders are rarely representative in the sense of being elected democratically or chosen in proportion to the strengths of different groups in the community. At the same time, they may well be representative in the sense that, one way or another, they reflect the values and aspirations of most Jews, even though, in one way or another, they are probably more "Jewish" than the community as a whole.

VIII

Most of those who, from time to time, attack the community as being unrepresentative, are really arguing in the Jewish tradition of aristocratic republicanism, not "democracy." They are resting their claims on the implicit notion that the values they espouse as central to Jewish life are more correct than the values which the leadership seems to espouse, because their values are derived more correctly from the ultimate source of authority for Jews. So, in effect, the demand for representation, which is couched in democratic terms, really tends to be a very aristocratic demand indeed. We want our community to be responsive, but at the same time not only responsive to "out there," but responsive to "up there."

So, there is a contest between various elements in the community that cannot be resolved in any automatic way. Representation remains an issue because proper representation is the source of countervailing forces in a community and countervailing forces are the keys to both responsiveness and progress in communal affairs. Whatever our respective demands we do want to (and we must) allow an objection to be made as an objection and for people who make the objection to be brought into the community. Communal elections are useful and can be developed more than they are today in most communities even though, in those Jewish communities such as Australia

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which have formal elections, the turnout is very low. Low turnout is a reflection of the reality of the concentric circles. Perhaps most of the people in the first several circles vote and even many of them do not because their vision is different from that of the larger community, so they see no reason why they should vote at all.

One by-product of the problem of representation is the problem of checks and balances in communal affairs. For, no matter how good the trustees are, and our trustees have generally been very good, all humans entrusted with power need to be checked by some outside source. Is there any way to deal with the latter problem under present circumstances?

We must accept the fact that we are going to have a community that is ruled by a trusteeship. The only way to provide for checks and balances in a trusteeship is by having some people who accept the obligations of trustees but who seek to examine, understand, and make public the doings of the community and its institutions rather than seek power, influence, or control of the instruments of the community. With patience and persistence and very sharp noses, such people can serve as sources of countervailing forces and provide the needed checks and balances, as it were.