

F E D E R A T I O N  
OF JEWISH PHILANTHROPIES  
OF NEW YORK

June 13, 1950

Mr. Louis L. Bennett, Executive Director  
New York Association for New Americans  
15 Park Row  
New York 7, N. Y.

Dear Lou:

My first letter this morning goes to you to tell you that the report of our Distribution Committee was unanimously approved by our Board of Trustees. Reports of our Distribution Committee have traditionally been extremely full and detailed, in order to enable the Trustees to vote intelligently on the problems presented to them by the Distribution Committee. Accordingly, I enclose herewith two excerpts from that voluminous report. Excerpt #1 is taken from the report of the Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Benjamin Lazrus; excerpt #2 is taken from the report of the Chairman of the Subcommittee dealing with our children's agencies, Mrs. Richard J. Bernhard.

If you have any question about the situation, I shall be glad to hear from you.

Sincerely yours,

Maurice B. Hexter

Enc. 2

EXCERPT # 1 FROM FEDERATION DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE REPORT

NYANA

The Distribution Committee calls your attention to another matter which, while not materially effecting the instant budget, may have definite and significant implications for the future. We are referring specifically to the newly defined function of NYANA. When originally organized in 1949 the community and Federation were under the impression that NYANA would continue to assume responsibility, financial and otherwise, for new Americans who were in this country five years or less. This was based on the assumption, historically developed, that an immigrant agency should act in this protective capacity during the so called period of jeopardy. The campaigns of Federation and U.J.A. were based on these assumptions; Federation agencies geared their intake on the basis that there was an agency in New York City serving immigrants up to five years after arrival and allocations by Federation were made accordingly.

NYANA now states that its newly constituted Board has modified this historic policy as a result of two factors; (1) the realization that, with few exceptions, immigrants require only a brief period of time to make an adequate adjustment so as not to need further help and (2) the recent interpretation of the question of jeopardy as issued by the Displaced Persons Commission and the Immigration and Naturalization Service. These interpretations stated that immigrants, like others, are entitled to the use of public resources, including public assistance for needs which arise subsequent to the adjustment period.

NYANA now assumes that with few exceptions immigrants who have been here more than a year may, as other individuals, turn to the public agency in the community which provides basic maintenance relief and other supplementary services. Where special services are required NYANA proposes to pay no more than City rates. These policies were precipitated by insufficient funds and promulgated without prior consultation with Federation's agencies.

From the Federation standpoint the effect of this redefined function is to increase the request for service from its agencies. Federation agencies have served and are continuing to serve immigrants within their regularly defined function but this has been based on the understanding that these immigrants were the full financial responsibility of NYANA.

The attention of the Board is directed to two questions (1) what will be the impact on Federation agencies when called upon to serve immigrants who under the new interpretation are no longer NYANA charges and (2) what will be the impact on Federation agencies that have hitherto been receiving reimbursements for service on a cost basis in the light of NYANA's proposed policy to pay only City rates.

The Distribution Committee devoted one whole evening to a discussion of this problem with representatives of NYANA. Thereafter there was prolonged discussion on several occasions within the Committee. The present recommendation of the Distribution Committee, in the light of all of the aspects of this problem, is that the agencies involved in this problem be advised that the acceptance of requests

for services from refugees in this country more than one year is one which falls within the area of their own competence. It is primarily one of policy with which they themselves will be called upon to deal. They can decide to deal with such cases on the same basis and with the same criteria as with native born residents. The Distribution Committee, however, will make no special allowance for such additional service (if any) which the acceptance of such requests may occasion. Without intending to change any existing practice or procedure to the contrary, the Distribution Committee recommends that with respect to newcomers in New York City less than one year, and the "jeopardy" cases, the agencies request reimbursement from NYANA on a full cost basis, rather than on a rate paid by government.

EXCERPT # 2

During the past few months the Distribution Committee and the concerned affiliated agencies of Federation have been discussing the problems of immigrants with the New York Association for New Americans. This local organization, which has within the last year assumed the local responsibilities formerly carried by the United Service for New Americans, has adopted the policy that after one year's residence in the United States, except in extraordinary circumstances, those who have recently arrived from overseas should receive the same service as other Americans. At it has been the traditional pattern of our Federation agencies to ask for and receive, in most instances, full cost payment for services rendered to any immigrants who applied for assistance or service, and who had been in the United States less than five years, it was obvious that this new concept of the New York Association for New Americans would leave a potential four year gap in services to this group if they should voluntarily ask for help or be referred to our Federation network by other public or private agencies. The Distribution Committee is recommending that the member agencies of Federation decide whether or not to open their doors to those who have been in America more than one year on the same basis as other Americans, but that they ask for reimbursement, in most instances on a cost basis, from the New York Association for New Americans if asked to assume responsibility for those here less than one year. The Distribution Committee is not recommending any special allowance for additional services (if any) which that decision may entail. This has particular significance for the child care agencies. The Distribution Committee, however, feels sure that the child care agencies within the Federation framework can work out acceptable arrangements with the New York Association for New Americans, both for the children whose families have been here less than a year, and also for those youngsters who are already under care, and for whom previous arrangements had been made.