

**AGENDA ITEM 4 (22-036 CH)**

Chair Irvine, Commissioners, and Staff

My name is Dan Pressburg and I reside in North Long Beach and my information is on file.

First I would like to thank staff for their nutshell view of the ethnically charged Sub-urbanization Race Report. While trying to seek equity it should be noted that that one ethnic group that stretches across most districts was not referenced.

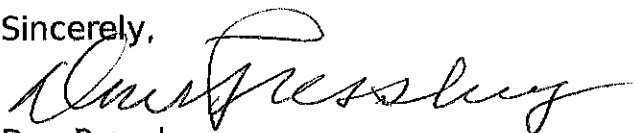
So, humbly today I am submitting an addendum to your Sub-urbanization and Race submission with a friendly attachment. The attachment is with regards to the few thousand Jews that reside across Long Beach. Many, one consider them mostly white and privileged, however that is not the case there are several Ethiopian Jews, French Creole Jews, and others across almost all nine districts. This has nothing to do with a Synagogue although many attend temple. It does have to do entirely with the redlining that occurred from Washington DC, to the California Coast at the turn of the Century and perpetuated itself in relation to the segregation of races in certain areas.

Jews wherever they have been have prospered. Redlining was a common fact that lumped them with African American, Chinese, as well as Hispanic until they too defined their specific landing in Long Beach and the South Bay.

Often they too were discriminated against in many of the same manner; by the color of their appearance, skin color and not their character or financial ability and qualification. WHY? BECAUSE!

So, please consider this attachment not only from the Long Beach Library but the Library of Congress as this practice that you have mentioned directly applies to all of us and should not exclude many of our families whom dealt with this issue of the past.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan Pressburg', written in a cursive style.

Dan Pressburg

Preservationist of The Year 2022

**SUB-URBANIZATION  
AND RACE REPORT  
Addendum  
Redlining and the Jews**

Submitted 8/28/2022  
by  
Dan Pressburg,  
Preservationist of the Year

#### **4. 22-036CH Recommendation to file Sub-urbanization and Race – August 17, 2022.**

**Suggested Action: Approve recommendation.**

Attachments: Staff Report Long Beach Sub-urbanization and Race Report

Dear Commissioners and Staff,

I am asking that you include this section of work for our “Jewish Community” as an attachment to the **Sub-urbanization and Race of August 17, 2022.**

I apologize for not finding this and following your work regarding redlining and its practice in Long Beach and beyond. I thought it might be understood better since its origins are mostly in Washington D.C.

I would like to commend you first at your attempt at a report with regards to race after reading it a couple of times I could not help but notice a glaring and forgotten race almost never mentioned. That would be the Jew. We come in all shapes sizes and colors and are often discriminated against suffer the blame of of man's human condition.

The First World War, the most appallingly savage international conflict in all preceding history, had a profound impact on world Jewry. This was due to the existence of a large concentration of Jews within one of the principal arenas, the enlistment of unprecedented numbers of Jews to the armies of the belligerent nations and the success of Jewish leaders in influencing the political policies of the major powers. Furthermore, increasing tensions during the war years deepened the hostile attitudes towards the Jews, particularly in Germany and in Eastern Europe.

#### **Displaced on the Eastern Front**

The war on the eastern front between Russia and the Central Powers (Germany and Austria) was conducted on territories that were home to almost four million Jews. In the autumn of 1914 and the winter of 1915, Russian forces occupied Austrian Galicia, and in the spring and summer of 1915, Germany and Austria conquered Congress Poland (the duchy annexed by Russia according to the treaties of 1815), Volhynia, Lithuania, and western Belorussian. Under Russian rule, the Jews were suspected of collaboration with the enemy, and 600,000 of them were banished from the front by the czarist army, a traumatic experience and an economic catastrophe that was still felt long after the war. To aid their displaced and impoverished brethren, Jews around the world established welfare organizations on a scale previously unknown.

Yet despite this massive enlistment, accusations of evasion and of profiteering were brought against the Jews in both countries, and official investigations were instigated. Although the conclusions of these inquiries were never published, the statistics indicate that the percentage of Jewish losses was in no way smaller than that of the non-Jewish population. Suspicions concerning their loyalty were even voiced in England and the United States, since the Jews did not hide their hostility toward the oppressive Russian autocracy, the ally of the two powers; and indeed, there were those among the recently arrived immigrants from Russia who refused to enlist. In both countries, Jews of German origin were required to sign humiliating public declarations of loyalty.

While the loyalty of Jewish individuals was torn between the opposing camps, Jewish international associations, including the World Zionist Organization, declared themselves neutral.

But in view of the nature of the czarist regime and the large proportion of Polish and Russian Jews, the sympathy of most Jewish leaders lay with Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

The German Foreign Office was aware of this, and during the first years of the war tried to exploit this to further German interests. German Jews all over the world founded the "Committee for the East" which disseminated pro-German propaganda among the Jews in Poland. Zionists in Germany conducted negotiations with the Foreign Office concerning cooperation over Palestine, and in 1915 the Jewish philosopher, Hermann Cohen, went to the United States to ask the Jews to try to persuade the American government to enter the war on Germany's side. These efforts undoubtedly spurred the British government to make advances to the pro-English minority within the Zionist Organization, which contributed to the publication of the Balfour Declaration in November 1917.

## **Consequences Throughout Europe**

Despite this first diplomatic victory for political Zionism, by the end of the war the majority of Jews found themselves confronting hatred and trouble. In Germany, the Jews were identified with the republican regime imposed on the country by the victors. Vanquished and humiliated, many Germans consoled themselves with the "stab in the back" myth, counting the Jews among the chief traitors. As the perennial scapegoat, the Jews were also blamed by many for the Bolshevik *coup d'état* of October 1917; approximately 100,000 Jews were killed in the anti-Bolshevik campaigns conducted by Ukrainians, Poles, and Russians.

The war's great upheavals changed the demographic map of the Jewish people. During the war, intercontinental migration dwindled, but there were large movements of refugees within Europe. Once the war was over, hundreds of thousands of Jews began leaving Europe again.

## **Carry-Over To The USA**

The 1920s and 1930s witnessed an intense effort on the part of "second generation" American Jews to acculturate. With the doors of immigration virtually shut by Congress in 1924, immigrant culture was no longer sustained by a steady influx of "greenhorns." Native-born Jews soon outnumbered first generation immigrants. The archetypal Jew became the "alrightnik," on his or her way to acculturation and middle class respectability while retaining a strong Jewish identity constructed primarily along ethnic lines.

## **Residential Patterns**

One way in which success was measured was geographically. To be sure, most second generation Jews continued to live in ethnically Jewish neighborhoods. But they were quick to venture out of first and even second areas of settlement to more middle class communities. In New York, this meant trading in addresses on the Lower East Side and even Brownsville and Williamsburg, for those in Flatbush, the Grand Concourse, and Manhattan's Upper West Side.

Although most Jews continued to be apartment dwellers, many of these newly Jewish neighborhoods had a suburban feeling. Rental advertisements typically touted the tree-lined streets and the proximity of parks.

Many Jews imagined that the move to middle class neighborhoods would result in greater social interaction with non-Jews. But they were often mistaken. As Jews moved in, white Protestants moved out. Nevertheless, as Jews increasingly joined the ranks of the middle class, they recreated Jewish culture to reflect their newly acquired American bourgeois values. Among the cardinal innovations was the consumerization of Judaism. Consider, for example, the evolution of the bar mitzvah from a simple synagogue ritual where a 13-year-old boy is called to the Torah for the first time, to an elaborate affair with catered food and orchestral music.

## **Americanized Synagogues**

American Jews increasingly found ways of synthesizing Jewish and American elements in their daily lives. Even the immigrant synagogue was Americanized. Alarmed by a decline in synagogue attendance and religious observance, rabbis and community leaders sought ways of making the synagogue more palatable to second generation American Jews, whom they feared would succumb to assimilation. Eastern European congregations with Yiddish speaking rabbis increasingly hired English speaking junior rabbis who could preach to the younger congregants.

Now comes the rub as the assimilation of the Jew was taking place it could also be noted that unless a Jew were soft spoken he would find himself in the typical situation as a Black or Asian.

Antisemitism was alive and well throughout the states and communities. Long Beach was no different. Just like they are glaringly dismissed from this document the practice of red-lining and other forms of racism was enacted on the Jew. Deed restrictions were also written in in several cases.

The mutual aid societies an *landsmanschaften* (hometown societies) that one historian has called "the backbone of the immigrant Jewish community," had a difficult time responding to the increasing needs of their members. Many were forced to discontinue their traditional services and benefits. Jewish Federations, which were funded by the more affluent, were better equipped to dispense aid through their various agencies.

The Depression also had a dire affect on communal institutions as funding sources dried up. The synagogue center building boom of the 1920s came to an abrupt halt, only to resume again after the Second World War. With mounting deficits and unpaid mortgage debts, there was recognition that the "building craze" of the 1920s was ill conceived. Economic woes, however, did not result in a major change in the direction of synagogue programming. Starved for dues-paying members, synagogues continued to play up their educational, social, and cultural programming.

## **Politics & the Holocaust**

The 1930s also witnessed the alignment of the Jewish community with the national Democratic Party. While significant numbers of Jews continued their involvement in radical politics, interwar Jews were increasingly embracing liberalism. In the 1920s, New York's local Democratic party, under the leadership of Al Smith and Robert F. Wagner Sr., succeeded in attracting many immigrant Jews and their children due to its championing of social welfare issues and economic reform.

But the Jewish allegiance to the Democratic Party was cemented through their love affair with Franklin D. Roosevelt.

If they supported his New Deal policies, they adored F.D.R. because he opened government service to Jews and counted an unprecedented number of Jewish advisors among his inner circle.

As conditions deteriorated in Europe, American Jews fervently believed that Roosevelt would act to save their brethren. Here, their confidence was misplaced. Facing stiff Congressional opposition, Roosevelt's government did nothing to ease strict immigration quotas in the late 1930s.

This indifference, or at the very least unwillingness to expend political capital, effectively consigned many European Jews to Hitler's Final Solution. Of course, in the late 1930s, Roosevelt had no way of divining the effects of his policies.

American Jews responded to Hitler's rise and America's immigration restrictions by embracing Zionism and increasing their support for building up the Jewish national home and the resettlement of refugees in Palestine. Membership in Zionist organizations and participation in Zionist youth groups grew rapidly in the mid-to-late 1930s. Zionist themes increasingly found their way into rabbinical sermons and religious school curricula. The blue and white charity boxes of the Jewish National Fund became a familiar fixture in Jewish homes. Even the Reform movement, which had been staunchly opposed to Zionism, officially reversed its position in 1937.

In retrospect, the Depression years turned out to be a minor setback. Economic instability and domestic anti-semitism largely disappeared after the Second World War. It was the 1920s, with its trends towards upward mobility and Americanization that set the tone for American Jewish community in the post-war era.

## **POST WAR (The 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment")**

Fast forward to the present and the Long Beach discussion I discover a prologue and guideline in Washington DC that was an apparent perspective in restrictions on properties. This did not just happen as a carryover and blaming of the Jews, but it laid the groundwork from Europe and the USA. Washington DC's restrictive covenants — language found in deeds that prevented property owners from selling to African Americans, Jews and almost other minorities. This is why it is an injustice to the Jewish Community in Long Beach to summarily excluded from any document restricts, divides or outlines restriction without highlighting what occurred in the Jewish Community, with Black Americans and all other minorities.

So this has not gone document from August 17, 2022, has not gone quite as planned.

"I didn't realize how much time this takes and discovering how they were "Mapping Segregation" in Washington, D.C." but the affect occurring with the development of the city of Long Beach and how and where this process was passed to Southern California.

"Redlining", research consists of going to the website of Washington's recorder of deeds and comparing them to those in California. Then as it is carried on in DC you have to go one by one through the records that stretch back to 1921.

For earlier deeds, she heads to the District of Columbia Archives and in Los Angeles you could visit the hall of records. Books, known as libers. Libers give us the design and establishment and it is a tedious process. Nobody is crazy enough to want to do this." Yet, here we are in Long Beach speaking about the disparity of racism yet excluding a large racial group because of the color of their skin or national origin.

"All, you have to do is open them up one by one and scan them to see if there's restrictive covenant language in there. After a while certain words jump out at you," Then that information is entered in a makeshift spreadsheet." Comparing that to Long Beach then becomes easier even though the practice was essentially all across the country. Long Beach was segregated by its founding father as lands were plotted into lots and the city grew into many "have-not" owners but only in certain areas. From the depression through to WWII the civil rights of many were endangered without the understanding the restriction on the sale of property.

It shows shaded squares in neighborhoods where the covenants existed.

Fortunately, on the left side of the page is a scrollable historical summary of legal cases leading up to the decision in the 1948 Supreme Court case *Hurd v. Hodge* that decided restrictions were unenforceable under the 14th Amendment.

So, this is where the rubber meets the road. You have removed from what I have read an entire ethnicity that suffered more recently than others the murdering of 6 million plus Jews yet have fail to even look at their additional plight by simply purchasing land in Long Beach. This document outlines but only list on the surface only certain without mentioning the plight of the Jewish Community.