

AJC WANTS INTERMARRIED COUPLES ACCEPTED

NEW YORK (WNS) -- The American Jewish community and its institutions should reach out to the growing number of intermarried couples in an effort to get them more involved in the community, an American Jewish Committee study urges.

Yehuda Rosenman, director of the AJCommittee's Department of Jewish Communal Affairs, told a press conference that the Jewish community must change its attitude "not by accepting intermarriage as a norm but accepting in the community the intermarried couples."

Rosenman and Dr. Egon Mayer, an asso-

ciate professor of sociology at Brooklyn College who was research director for the study, also called for more positive attitude toward converting the non-Jewish partner, although it was noted that conversions will not occur in most of these marriages. The study, called "intermarriage and the Jewish Future," is based on responses from 416 intermarried couples, ranging in age from 20 - 70 in Cleveland, Dallas, Long Island, Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco and Westchester County. About 21 percent of the non-Jewish spouses had con-

verted to Judaism and 313 percent of the Jews had converted to their spouses' religion. Two-thirds of the couples were made up of Jewish men married to non-Jews, although Rosenman pointed out among younger women the cases of marrying non-Jews were more equal to that of Jewish men.

The report found that among couples where the spouse converted to Judaism the percentage of those involved in the Jewish community or who observed Jewish religious practices were about equal to the general Jewish population, Mayer said. He said it was also found that more Jewish knowledge and identification someone had when marrying a Jew the more likely it was he or she would remain identified with the Jewish community after the marriage.

Rosenman said as a result the AJCommittee plans to contribute more to Jewish education. The study said that the most "important focus" in the Jewish community's outreach to the intermarried "must be education, directed not solely to the Jewish spouse, but to the couple and their children."

Mayer said that there are about 300,000 Jews married to non-Jews in the U.S. with about 500,000 children.

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JOE

Prominent businessman Joe Swessel has been appointed Chairman of two powerful city boards, the Board of Zoning and Adjustment, and the Las Vegas Planning Commission.

A 22-year resident of Las Vegas, Swessel has served on the Planning Commission two years, and on the Board of Zoning and Adjustment one year.

He said he was pleased at the confidence shown him by city officials, and pledged to work to alleviate many of the zoning differences between the City and County, through the adoption of uniform zoning codes.

Swessel, owner of Claire's Flowers, is

president of the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce Prospectors, and the Westland Mall Merchants Association.

He and his wife, Joyce, have been married 30 years and have three daughters, Linda, Cindy and Kris.



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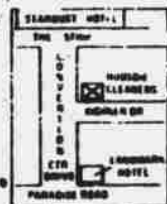
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