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MS-831: Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation Records, 1980–2008.

Series B: Commission on Jewish Education in North America (CJENA). 1980–1993.

Subseries 2: Commissioner and Consultant Biographical Files, 1987–1993.

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Ratner, Charles, 1988-1989.

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Commissioner Contact Sheet

Name Charles Ratner Assigned to SF
 Mailing Address _____ Off. phone _____
 _____ Home phone _____
 Fax _____ Telex _____

Comments Influential, Potential Funder, interested in
Supplementary school and personnel development

Date	Nature of Contact/Status	Next Steps/Action Needed
7/6/88	SF Visit - Re 8/1 interview	
10/17/88	SF Visit - Re 12/13 interview	
12/1/88	SF Visit - 12/12	
2/?/89	SF Visit - Mid-term	SF will see 4/89 SF will call 4/89

COMMISSIONER CONTACT SHEET

Name Charles Ratner Assigned to SF
Mailing Forest City Enterprises, Inc.
Address 10800 Brookpark Road Off. phone 216-267-1200
Cleveland, OH 44130 Home phone _____
Fax _____ Telex _____
Comments Influential, potential funder, interested in supplementary school and personnel development.

Date	Nature of Contact/Status	Next Steps/Action Needed
7/6/88	SF Visit - Pre 8/1 interview	
10/17/88	SF Visit - Pre 12/13 interview	
12/ /88	SF Visit (Jerusalem) - Pre 12/12 interview	
2/ /89	SF Visit - Mid-term	SF will call 4/89

MEETING WITH
CHARLES RATNER

SEYMOUR FOX
JULY 6, 1988

He clearly states that personnel is the crucial area. He formulated it as 80% of the problem being the people in the profession, the people in the field, the personnel and all the others issues representing 20%. He claims that this is not only his opinion but, in his work here in Cleveland and in other contacts, every single person he has spoken to, both professional and community leader, have agreed that this is the key issue. There are problems like family education which is certainly a very serious problem, but he sees no serious suggestions that could make a difference in that area. However, even there personnel would be the important issue.

The key question then is how to get enough of the right people into the field. He sees money as the necessary condition, but not the sufficient condition. The issue is one of profession building and the status. He pointed to the distinction between Jewish education and people working in federations and indicated that we would have to do something like what was done in building the professional staffs for federations with a high status profession and very good people going into it, that lay people feel the same way. He reminded us that the synagogues have been left out of the Commission, and that the rabbis are a very important factor and that

if they are not coopted into our work at the beginning this could be a problem. He demonstrated his point about that as he described the extraordinary work that had been done by David Ariel here at the College in Cleveland and indicated that the ingredients there were a new mission or vision and exciting lay people about that and that was the combination that would make the difference.

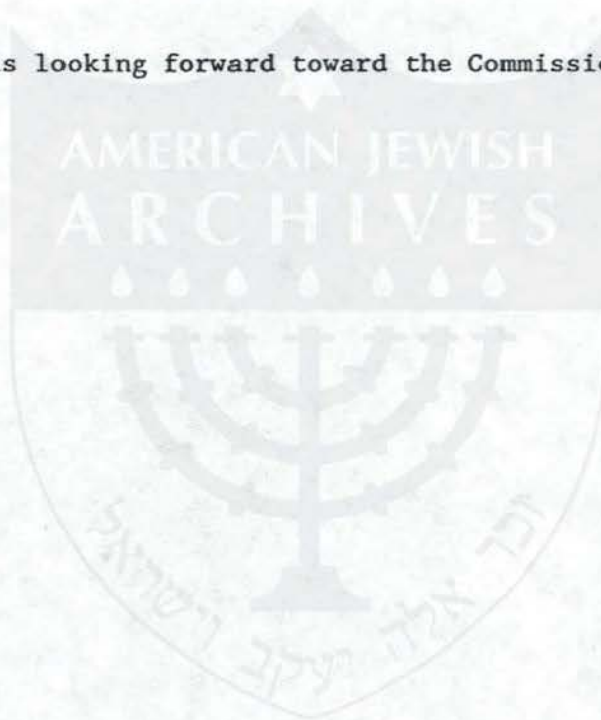
We discussed the question of whether there were younger people around who were sufficiently idealistic to go into the field and he said that he certainly felt there were enough of those people around.

We discussed informal education and his concern for building bridges to the congregation between the JWB, the center movement and the congregation. This is a very touchy issue and has many political implications.

A good part of the discussion was about the supplementary school which he considers a top priority, being that 80% of our children are in that school. Even if some full-time positions are created, this still would not meet the problem he felt, and a good deal of thinking and energy has to be devoted to this issue.

Very encouraged about the idea of the Cleveland Fellows but also did not see this as essentially meeting the problem of what to do about the afternoon school. He sees it as a problem essentially of personnel, but also of curriculum structure and the fact that young people are coming to the school tired after a full day in the public school or private schools.

He very excitingly is looking forward toward the Commission and has great hopes for it.



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THE COMMISSION ON JEWISH EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA
TOWARDS THE SECOND MEETING OF THE COMMISSION
INTERVIEW OF COMMISSIONERS

1. COMMISSIONER: CHARLES RATNER
2. INTERVIEWER: SEYMOUR FOX
3. DATE: OCTOBER 17, 1988
4. SPIRIT: SUPPORTIVE, COMMITTED AND HOPEFUL
5. SETTING: MEETING IN JERUSALEM
6. DURATION: 1 1/2 HOURS
7. COMMISSIONER'S CURRENT STAND:

PERSONNEL AND THE COMMUNITY MUST BE THE TOPICS UNDERTAKEN BY THE COMMISSION.

8. SUMMARY:

WE REVIEWED THE ENTIRE METHODOLOGY, WHICH HE FOLLOWED VERY CAREFULLY AND WAS SIMPLY THRILLED WITH. HE MADE THE POINT EARLY IN THE DISCUSSION THAT SOME OF THESE OPTIONS WERE MORE IMPORTANT THAN OTHERS. WHEN WE OFFERED HIM THE DISTINCTION OF "NECESSARY," OR "PRE-CONDITIONS," AND "PROGRAMMATIC OPTIONS" -- HE THOUGHT THAT THIS WAS AN EXCELLENT IDEA.

HE FELT THAT THOUGH THE SUPPLEMENTARY SCHOOL IS A VERY IMPORTANT AREA, THIS COMMISSION SHOULD PROBABLY NOT UNDERTAKE ANY PROGRAMMATIC OPTION, BUT THAT IT SHOULD CONCENTRATE ITS EFFORTS ON THE NECESSARY CONDITIONS.

HE THOUGHT THAT PERSONNEL AND THE COMMUNITY WERE THE KEY ONES. HE SAID THAT IN CLEVELAND THEY HAVE NOT MADE SUFFICIENT PROGRESS IN RECRUITING ENOUGH TOP COMMUNITY LEADERS TO TAKE LEADERSHIP IN THE WORK OF THE CLEVELAND COMMISSION. HE SAW THE CLEVELAND COMMISSION AS MAKING A CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORK OF OUR COMMISSION AND BENEFITTING FROM ITS WORK AS WELL. WHEN WE CONNECT THIS TO THE LATER INTERVIEW WITH LAINER, WE SEE A RECOMMENDATION EMERGING TO NETWORK WITH LOCAL COMMISSIONS.

HE THOUGHT THAT MOST COMMISSION MEMBERS WOULD AGREE WITH PERSONNEL AND THE COMMUNITY, AND LOOKS FORWARD VERY MUCH TO THE MEETING ON THE 13TH, WHERE HE HOPES TO BE ABLE TO SEE US MOVE TO CLOSURE. HE THINKS THE IDEA OF TASK-FORCES IS A GOOD IDEA. HE THINKS ALL THE MATERIAL SHOULD BE SENT TO THE COMMISSIONERS. (LAINER THINKS SO TOO.)

AT THE MEETING, WE BENEFITTED FROM THE PARTICIPATION OF A
RELATIVE OF CHARLES RATNER, DR. BARRY HOLTZ, WHO IS THE DIRECTOR
OF THE MELTON RESEARCH CENTER AT THE JEWISH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
IN NEW YORK.



file J CF

TO: Henry L. Zucker
Arthur J. Naparstek
Virginia F. Levi ✓

NAME

DEPARTMENT/PLANT LOCATION

FROM: Morton L. Mandel

NAME

DEPARTMENT/PLANT LOCATION

DATE: 1/17/89

REPLYING TO

YOUR MEMO OF:

SUBJECT:

We might want to discuss the attached report by Charles Ratner, on the Commission on Jewish Continuity. We certainly need to be clear as to next steps in Cleveland.

Attachment



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TO: Morton L. Mandel
NAME
DEPARTMENT/PLANT LOCATION

FROM: Arthur J. Naparstek
NAME
DEPARTMENT/PLANT LOCATION

DATE: 1/19/89
REPLYING TO
YOUR MEMO OF: _____

SUBJECT: Charles Ratner report

In response to your memo of January 17 on the Charles Ratner report on Jewish continuity in Cleveland, why don't we use the time we have scheduled for our group lunch on February 7 - Philanthropic day 2 - for a discussion of the Ratner report and our part in its implementation, as well as the relationship to our Commission? Hank Zucker, Ginny Levi and I are available at that time.



INTERNET
OFFICE
CORRESPONDENCE

COMMISSION
ON JEWISH EDUCATION
IN NORTH AMERICA

4500 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44103
216/391-8300

Commissioners

Morton L. Mandel
Chairman
Mona Riklis Ackerman
Ronald Appleby
David Arnow
Mandell L. Berman
Jack Bieler
Charles R. Bronfman
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Lester Crown
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Joshua Elkin
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Henry L. Zucker

Director

Arthur J. Naparstek

Staff

Virginia F. Levi
Joseph Reimer

May 5, 1989

Mr. Charles Ratner
Forest City Enterprises, Inc.
10800 Brookpark Road
Cleveland, Ohio 44131

Dear Charles:

This is to bring you up to date on activities which are taking place regarding Commission communications. We are working on a strategy for contact with the news media and a General Brochure describing the background and goals of the Commission. I will send these to you when they are complete.

We believe that, thanks to your help, we have the beginnings of a good communications/public relations approach. Until we put this approach in place, it seems unnecessary for the Commission Communications Committee to meet. Therefore, I am writing to cancel the meeting scheduled for Wednesday, May 10. We will be in touch about a meeting in the future, should the need arise.

Again, thank you very much for your help in getting this process under way.

Sincerely,

Art

Arthur J. Naparstek
Director

INTERVIEW WITH
CHARLES RATNER

ARTHUR J. NAPARSTEK
MAY 31, 1989

The focus of this interview was somewhat different than the others in that the background information for commissioners had been written. Thus, meeting with Ratner was not as much to get input into the document, but instead to bring him up to date on the developments since the second meeting and his opinion on anticipated directions.

Charles Ratner brings a unique set of experiences to the Commission as he's been involved, on the local level, in a set of processes that were both successful and unsuccessful in developing Jewish education initiatives. Chuck spoke of an initiative in 1976 in Cleveland which he felt was unable to live up to its promise. He felt that a key issue in 1976 was that they did not develop a communitywide coalition by building a partnership between congregations, the bureau, the college, and the federations.

The Commission on Jewish Continuity, which he co-chaired, has been successful in that a "wall to wall" coalition had been developed. Thus, in dealing with the question of criteria for community action sites, Chuck feels that it is very important to pick communities in which such coalitions are possible. Otherwise he fears that we will get involved in very narrow turf battles with an institution within the community "derailing" the initiative.

Chuck is also sensitive in terms of looking at how community action sites might focus their activity in terms of how you build leadership. Chuck feels that even though the initiative appears to be working in Cleveland, he has a sense that we still have a challenge to build a core of new leadership for Jewish education in the community. Chuck feels the base of leadership is still the same.

Chuck feels an implementation strategy will be very difficult and must be put within the context of a strong final report. He said that in business at Forest City there was always a need to refer to a base document that serves as a blueprint for action.

He went on to say that a second reason for a strong competently written report is that if the Commission just puts forward an implementation strategy without a report, it would appear that this came out of the minds of Commission staff.

Chuck is very optimistic about the Commission and believes that an implementation mechanism makes a great deal of sense but it must be developed in the context of a strong report that has agreement from all the key stakeholders and particularly with a broad consensus from the commissioners.

rat/2FOX-W

THE COMMISSION ON JEWISH EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA
TOWARDS THE THIRD MEETING OF THE COMMISSION

INTERVIEW OF COMMISSIONER

1. COMMISSIONER: MR. CHARLES RATNER
2. INTERVIEWER: PROF. S. FOX
3. DATE: AUGUST 24, 1989
4. SETTING: CLEVELAND, OHIO
5. SUMMARY:

Charles is deeply committed to the work of the Commission and very much aware of the kind of problems that the Commission will face as it goes into Community Action Sites. His own experience in Cleveland has helped him understand the complexity.

He reminded me of the importance of bringing the denominations into the picture as early as possible, as they are responsible for so much of what actually takes place in education.

He sees personnel as the key problem and is concerned that we may not be able to alleviate the problem in the foreseeable future. He is not as optimistic as some of us are about the possibility of recruiting outstanding community leaders to work for Jewish education. Chuck wants to play a role in the future work of the Commission and in any successor mechanism. I believe he could play an important role in interpreting the work of the Commission as we begin to reach out to the community.

Chuck was particularly interested in the question of the training institutions and the role that they would play. He described what has taken place in Cleveland, where the college which was moribund, was turned around and is now playing a leading role in Jewish education. He projected from this experience the important role that the institutions like the J.T.S.A., Hebrew Union College and Yeshiva University could play if they would be given the opportunity to build their education facilities to serve as large a population as possible.

When I spoke to him, he said he was planning to attend the next meeting. I think another check ought to be made.