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Senior Policy Advisors meeting. 30 July 1989. "Index of Key Papers", 1989.

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Index of Key Papers

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July 23, 1989

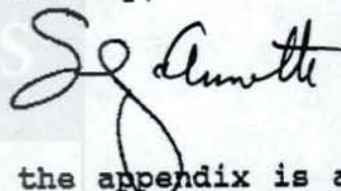
Dear Hank,

We are enclosing a rough draft of our preliminary thinking concerning the final report, as well as a research design. These papers are interconnected and this should be kept in mind as they are read.

We are suggesting that the report be written by one author who can faithfully represent the thinking of the Commission. We feel that this is the best way to ensure that the report will be inspiring and coherent. The background papers would appear in the appendix and be referred to throughout the report. The Carnegie report followed a similar format.

We look forward to an important and interesting meeting on July 30th.

Sincerely,



P.S. The list of background papers in the appendix is a provisional list and not a final one. I am sure that we will eliminate some of the suggested papers.

July 3, 1989

CAJE -- OPTION PAPERS

Upon reading Sarah Loo's wonderful report on the planning meeting with CAJE we would like

1. to endorse the proposed plan for the 15th of August
2. to suggest the following additional idea:

In order to further engage CAJE and give educators ownership in the work of the Commission we suggest asking their active involvement in the preparation of expanded options papers for the final report - as follows:

a. at the CAJE conference workshops should be set up by topic of option paper. Educators whose field of practice, interest or research is that of the option should be invited to participate in the workshop. Thus a workshop should be convened on the media, another on early childhood, yet another on supplementary schools, on college students, etc...

b. The existing option paper should be presented, critiqued and expanded upon. A CAJE member (staff or participant) should be appointed to draft an expanded version with the help of the workshop members.

c. A Commissioner, Senior Policy Advisor or staff member should staff each workshop to give information and guidance as needed. However the paper should be a product of CAJE - representing the collective wisdom of its members.

d. We will appoint a researcher (a person such as Barry Holtz) to be in charge of the project, co-ordinate it and insure its editorial policy and quality.

e. The new option papers will be appended to the Commission report and sent to all CAJE members as their contribution to the work of the Commission.

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June 22, 1989

Mr. Morton Mandel
Premier Industrial Foundations
4500 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44103

Dear Mort:

This letter is a report of my meeting with the representatives of CAJE held on Monday, June 19. It was an excellent meeting in which all of us worked diligently to develop the best possible structure for your participation in the forthcoming CAJE conference. The proposal which follows is for your consideration, and we hope you will find it both comfortable and challenging.

The evening of Tuesday, August 15 will be dedicated to a conversation between the Commission on Jewish Education in North America and the participants in the 14th annual CAJE conference in Seattle. We propose that the conversation take place in a three-part program over the course of the evening.

Part I - A presentation by you and two other Commission members to a plenum. You would make the major presentation, lasting about 30-40 minutes, covering the following topics:

- 1) A reflection on who you are, your involvement in the Jewish communal world, and your current interest in Jewish education.
- 2) Your rationale for convening this commission and your hopes for its achievements.
- 3) The issues and concerns that the Commission has identified to date, with particular emphasis on the concern with personnel.
- 4) Your hopes for what can be learned from the CAJE conference participants in terms of the personnel issue.

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After your presentation two other commissioners would reflect briefly (5-7 minutes) on their perspective on the personnel issue. Our ad hoc committee suggests that Joshua Elkin, a practitioner, be one of the panelists and that a woman be the other. Since so many Jewish educators are women, it is important to have a woman presenter. The committee offers two possibilities for your consideration. The first is to invite Esther Leah Ritz to present on this panel, and her presentation offers another lay perspective. The other suggestion, encouraged by Annette and Art in subsequent telephone conversations, is that I be the other panelist. If that is your wish I will arrange to be present at the conference for the program, since I do not depart for Europe until Friday, August 18.

Part II (1 hour) - The conference participants will be divided into discussion groups according to the roles they occupy in Jewish education (i.e. day school teacher, supplementary school principal, early childhood educator, etc.). In these groups they will fill out a brief questionnaire, to be prepared by the CAJE people, which will start them thinking about their motivations and issues as Jewish educators. Then the discussion will move to a consideration of the following questions:

- 1) What do you believe it would take to recruit people into roles in Jewish education?
- 2) What keeps you in the field, and what additional forces would reinforce your staying? What might lead you to leave the field of Jewish education? What could change that situation?
- 3) What do you need for your task as a Jewish educator, especially in the area of continuing education, professional growth, etc? What support would be necessary for you to take advantage of such opportunities?
- 4) What do you believe would be the most significant factor in making a difference in the personnel issue in Jewish education?

Part III (45 minutes) - The recorders of the discussion groups will meet with you and the other commissioners to discuss the results of the group discussion. In particular, it will be important to identify recurring themes in many of the groups and the responses to question four.

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This final step in the process will afford you and the commissioners an opportunity to analyze the suggestions put forth by Jewish education practitioners at the conference. We would conclude with an attempt at summary.

This is the program we are suggesting and I would like to endorse the proposal enthusiastically. In addition, the CAJE representatives hope that you will personally invite all the commissioners to attend the CAJE conference and this important evening. Not only will the discussions be rich and fruitful, but the format of the discussion groups will enable us to generate an important data base. If the proposal meets with your approval, I would suggest that you communicate your agreement to: Mr. Joel Grishaver, Torah Aurah Productions, 4423 Fruitland Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90058, who represents CAJE for this program. I would also appreciate your notifying him and me about your decision about the other two panelists.

It has been a pleasure representing you in these deliberations, and I am thrilled that this conversation between CAJE and the Commission will take place.

Cordially,

Sara S. Lee
Director
Rhea Hirsch School of Education

SSL/fj

cc: Arthur Naparstek

COMBINED JEWISH PHILANTHROPIES

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June 13, 1989

Mr. Morton L. Mandel
4500 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44103

As a community that has a major stake in college-age services, we will be taking a look at our student population in our Commission on Jewish Continuity. I'm hoping that this can emerge as a major priority and that we can develop some models that can be useful around the country.

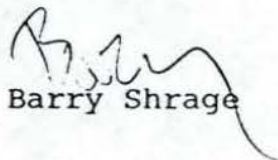
In my view, our work on the campus can and should focus on providing work experiences and training for students in Jewish education and Jewish communal service. This might provide both short and long-term benefits with regard to our personnel challenge.

Mort, I've recently met Richard Joel, the new international director of Hillel. I believe he would be a real asset to your national commission. In any event, some Hillel representation might be helpful in dealing with the continuing issues that affect students directly and in helping to make the best use of our student and campus resources in dealing with the personnel challenge.

Thanks so much for considering this thought.

Best regards to Barbara.

Sincerely,


Barry Shrage

BS:mm

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JUL 13 1989

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May 19, 1989

Morton L. Mandel, Chairman
Commission on Jewish Education
In North America
4500 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44103

Dear Mort:

Thank you for your letter of May 4, 1989 reporting on the work of the Commission. I think you are engaged (once again) in a very important task. I have been involved in Jewish education in a heavy way since the middle 60's when we in Federation first got into the day school business. Our school that started with seven children is now a community school for 1,000 students. There are also a number of feeder schools. Running from kindergarten through twelfth grade it is recognized as one of the very best in the country.

As you may know, we also created a community summer camp and retreat center within the last two years as a further means of outreach for a meaningful Jewish education.

Our local Foundation for Jewish Studies, of which I am a director, has initiated a scholar-in-residence program for the community which has had great and continuing support. Among our scholars have been Dean Steinsaltz and currently Nahom Savna.

I look forward to hearing more about the Commission as you progress. And, of course, I wish you all the best in your important effort.

My very best regards.

Sincerely,



Paul S. Berger

PSB/cpw

June 20, 1989

Mr. Morton L. Mandel
Commission on Jewish
Education/North America
4500 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44103

Dear Mort:

First I want to extend an apology and express my regrets for missing the meeting of the Commission on June 14th. The day had been cleared on my schedule because of the importance of the Commission. However, June 14th was my first day back in New York after two weeks of travel. When I arrived, I discovered that a major foundation submission deadline was that very day. Since we are beginning a major new project with the foundation and it is my special personal responsibility, I had to drop everything else to complete the work. Unfortunately, by the time the work was complete it was too late to participate meaningfully in the Commission meeting. This is my loss because the work is of such promise and such importance that I truly want to help in every way. In the future, I hope that I will have better luck making the meetings.

Please extend my apology to the staff as well.

The advance materials for the meeting were very promising. The focus on dealing with the shortage of qualified personnel in Jewish education and with the community leaders as major agents for change represents significant and important choices from the menu of great possibilities. While I remain concerned that the area of personnel is so broad that there is a danger of the Mandel Foundation's full impact being dissipated over the length and breadth of this area, the focus on community site programs and other concrete local options will do much to offset that danger.

May I make a few suggestions that I would have made had I been at the meeting:

1. The community action site program is particularly promising. If one can get an entire community (led by Federation as in Cleveland or Baltimore) to undertake a comprehensive program with special funding from the community and special seed money from the Mandel and other foundations, there could be a major impact in upgrading education in the total



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community. Part of the primitive and undeveloped nature of Jewish education is that even the good schools struggle alone. With broader gauge funding, there could be cooperation, some integration of experience and achievements and exchange of good experiments from one institution to another. The initial impact of a one community focus will be to cannibalize good personnel from other communities and institutions. In the long run, however, this program will lead to upgrading of standards and more good people coming into the field--so it is worth the risk. At the least, the day schools or the Hebrew schools or one community could be brought together with special grants and with special help as well as recruiting outstanding personnel to lead these 'newly experimental' schools.

2. One of the most difficult problems facing people in Jewish education is the absence of recognition and of widespread communication of outstanding achievement. It is my experience that it is very difficult to get objective and accurate information about excellent principals in whatever school or location they are. Not infrequently seniority or even availability (i.e., the ones just fired are more available than principals who are secure and doing a good job in their school) are the basis of being recommended for new jobs or for promotions. Perhaps one can create some form of rating service with easily disseminated conclusions so that people could know who are the top ten principals of the top ten schools and what each principal has contributed to them, etc. This would go far to give strength to the high achievers, access to communities and other schools that would like to recruit such people, and a sense of competition to hold the good people which can only redound to the benefit of the entire field.

When you want to find out who is the top art expert in a particular field or which is the best run museum or university graduate department of quantum physics, you can get such evaluations quickly. An equivalent development in the Jewish field would be an immense help to rewarding and reinforcing excellence. The good effect of this recognition in holding people in the field could be strengthened even more by the creation of some sort of network fairly early on, i.e., from graduate school on. While CAJE plays some of this role, CAJE is particularly weak in the area of recognition and professional advancement.

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3. The denominational schools and seminaries still are major forces in the development and training of Jewish educators. For the most part, they do not meet the standards of quality and excellence that are expected in the university. This means either that the Commission should frankly admit the truth and invest in university settings that are willing to take on the challenge of training of Jewish educators. Alternatively, this means some direct confrontation with the seminaries, offering rewards in the form of financial help but putting pressure to upgrade quality. This is a very difficult bullet to bite but it must be done if we are to move the field forward. (Since strengthening the seminaries will also run the risk of intensifying the denominational partisanship which is already racking Jewish community life, some extra effort must be made to offset the effect by creating more interdenominational and inter-group study experiences. This is what CLAL is seeking to do. The field needs a great deal of additional investment if we are to prevent the extremes of polarization from winning out.)

Finally, CLAL is deeply involved in leadership education. We have tried to build into our programs greater awareness of the urgency of Jewish education and the importance of lifting standards of financial support as well as of educational quality. The very fact of going through personal learning has turned many community leaders into partisans of Jewish education. CLAL would be happy to cooperate with the Commission and to use our access to leadership and our existing leadership education programs to strengthen this effort to upgrade commitment to Jewish education. (The staff report could have been a bit more sensitive to CLAL's work in this field but the important thing is not turf but cooperation and coordination to maximize our impact and to maximize the impact on the values of leadership.)

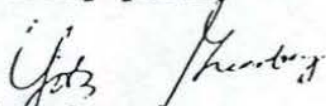
As you know, our program to create Beit Clal, a retreat center for upgrading Jewish life and living, is now entering high gear. Every community could use retreat centers as part of a coordinated plan to upgrade education for students for community leaders and for the professionals who work in the field. We would be glad to cooperate with any other communities in the creation of additional centers around the country. We also would be glad to lend Beit Clal for use in these kinds of experimental programs.

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June 20, 1989

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Many efforts are being made to upgrade Jewish life. All should be brought together in cooperation. The initiatives of the Commission are heartening and important new developments. I congratulate you on the effort and hope to participate individually and through CLAL in every way.

Sincerely yours,


Irving Greenberg

IG:blm



DRAFT - 7/27/89

TO: Those assigned to interview commissioners

FROM: Ginny Levi

RE: Next round of interviews with commissioners

Following the June 14 Commission meeting, assignments were made for the next round of interviews with commissioners. A list of commissioners assigned to you is attached. We ask that you arrange to complete your assigned interviews and submit your reports by September 15. Following is a summary of what we seek from the interviews and a suggested approach:

I. Purpose of interviews

- A. To debrief on the June 14 meeting.
- B. To begin a conversation on outcomes of the Commission's work.
- C. To prepare for the fourth Commission meeting.

II. Basis for discussion

A. Debrief

- 1. General reaction to the 6/14 meeting or, for those who did not attend, provide a summary and elicit reactions to this, the background materials, and the minutes.

2. Build on the sense of progress -- from fairly abstract thinking to practical recommendations. Emphasize that the Commission is moving towards recommendations for implementation.

B. Anticipated outcomes of the Commission's work

1. A report that will include:

- * broad directions for Jewish education for the next decade or two - including programmatic options.
- * concrete recommendations on personnel and community (e.g. strengthen training program; expanded role for the communal organizations; national recruitment effort; substantially increased financial support, etc...)

(See outline of final report and research design -- remember how tentative these are.)

2. Community action sites (introduce the notion of "who will do this," i.e. the need of a mechanism for implementation.) (See documents in background materials for June 14).

3. A successor mechanism: This is a commission that will end its work in June 1990 with more than a report. It intends to be proactive in following up on its recommendations. How should this be done?

C. Discuss potential interest in direct involvement with the final report or implementation. Is the commissioner interested in serving on a panel to critique papers which we commission?

D. Prepare for the fourth meeting of the Commission - Oct. 23 at the UJA/Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York, 130 East 59th Street, NYC. Review of and reactions to tentative plans for meeting (content to be discussed at Senior Policy Advisor meeting on July 30). Check attendance plans.