



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES
A DIVISION OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE – JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION

MS-831: Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel Foundation Records, 1980-2011.

Series F: CIJE Accrual, 1981-2011, undated.
Subseries 2: Dan Pekarsky, 1981-2011, undated.

Box
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Goals Project. Providence agenda, 1997.

For more information on this collection, please see the finding aid on the
[American Jewish Archives](http://AmericanJewishArchives.org) website.

①

Providence Mtng 7/28/97 - Introduction

GP - An approach to Ed. practice/change

① Informed by powerful guiding Ideas ② Jewish Encoun-
ter

Critical Needs:

↳ Knowledge-base/Lore/Materials \approx Capacity

~ Last summer's Goals Seminar

⇒ Two tracks: New institutions + Inst. Change

Gordis - - Lehmann - - Steinmetz

Devel. of an on-going group: Support/Deepen
Resource

~ This group

3 Agenda Items

Study - Not Proforma - Informing/Rewarding

Alvan's Case - - Lore - Support - - Shared Culture

Design of Our Group: Need -

Challenge:

(B) Session On "Moses" [why can't enter]
Moses As Leader [also doesn't give in to despair]

Not Statesman, Military, Law-Giver

Prophet

Man of Truth ^{vs words} → Sees - - - Tells

Extremist: Animating Vision - - Uncompromising

⇒ Need for Priest = Words/Compromise
→ From Cognac to Grape juice!!

Stages in M's Consciousness

① Power of Signs/Wonders/Flashing Insights

But If too damaged, only temporary change

→ Work w/ Elite minority (or) New Strategy

New Strategy: Train/Educate - 'til Spies

Too damaged for transformational change

→ 40 years strategy (Neither Elite nor Whole)

©

Introducing Case + Consensus/Connector Issues

Led by Alvan

Afternoon Session: Place of Ideas in Process

CIJE Position Re: Importance of Ideas

- ① Judaism as Powerful Content vs Typical Ed.
- ② ↑ Ed \wedge ↑ Powerful Guiding Ideas
- ③ Deep thinking on road to #2
→ a) Careful introspection b) Conversation
and c) External intellectual Inputs

↪ General and especially Jewish

The Problem, at least on surface:

- ① Little time
- ② Impatience/Distraction

Challenge

↳ Is there a non-artificial fruitful way to introduce external inputs?

Begin away from case, then return to
Case:

- A) Read Brinker
- B) What "Community Vision" for Jewish educ. would flow from Brinker's Perspective (Share)
- C) Do we accept Brinker's position?
- D) How would this view relate to the Rhode Island Vision?

Other

How encounter Brinker?

Compare B's Vision to R.I.'s V.

A) Stronger Emphasis on Pluralism:

A) Understand B) Encourage

B) Less Substantive Sharing

C) Less Explicitly Religious dimensions Universalized.

How -- if at all -- would encounter w/ Brinker have affected R.I. Process?

Critical Issues

Fruitful, non-artificial ways of encountering powerful ideas

How/where/when did Alvan introduce intellectual inputs?

A) Explicit opps. to encounter summaries of powerful positions?
Greenberg/Rosenak.

B) The questions he asked grow out of awareness of issues & alternatives
e.g. images of "Community" which texts

Brinker-Vision for Jewish Education

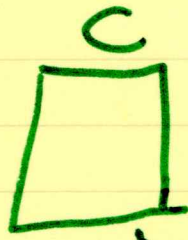
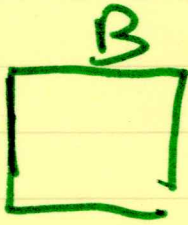
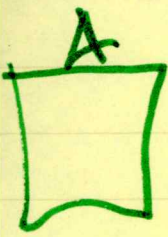
- A) Diverse Comm. w/passionate Ideol. Streams
- B) Each stream understands plus accepts the right to exist of the others
- C) Sense of Belonging + the others belong
- D) Awareness of Disagreement as Jewish norm.
- E) Education
 - ① Diverse Streams, But
 - a) Ahavat Yisrael
 - b) Knowledge of Pluralism
 - ② Liberal schools strongly represented
 - a) Sense of Belonging
 - b) Awareness of Pluralism

Alternatives/ Missed Opps

① Deeper the clarifying Q's
w/ sketches of content-alterna-
tives

② Coming together around
shared Jewish Values --
was this exploited?

Israel Curriculum



Conceptions of
place of Israel
in life of
Jewish People

Conception of
Jewish People;
their role in
history; Israel
and Diaspora.

Successful
attempts

Curricula in
Art, History,
Tfillah that exhibit
the conception

DP - Intro to day

1) Contextualize the grp in life of CIJE.

2) Agenda for today:

Study -- the Case - Grp design

3) Ahaad Ha-Am -

Person of Vision writing on vision

Characteristics of Prophet

Truth - Seeing/speak

Seeing x 2

Priest/Prophet: a) Diff. needs at diff. moments

↳ b) Elements of the self

c) Two dangers

d) Challenging the hierarchy

→ Priest do also a genius

Heifetz on leadership

↳ Implementable

→ Cognac - grape juice

↳ "Walking down"

Other dimensions of A/H: The People and Readiness
N between "Moses" and Alvan's Case

Where does V. come from?

↳ Consensus/inclusivity -- Discovery

↳ vs Moses -- Vision w/ Punch (passion)

Connector-Issue: From vision → Reality

Alvan's Sub-Issues

① Inclusiveness -- Chace/Pluralism

② Is the V. too broad? vs Schrage

③ The Consensus/Moses issue

Reactions

Praise for Case-Writing, Exercises, Big Issues → "teach it!"

How far does vision have to go? atom → Inst. → Infra-structure

Time it takes - Maintain Energy-level → Need it
~ Parallel/Dialectical process (be linear?)

How bring in outside products, perspectives? → "Lofty Ideas/New Exper!"

Desirability of expanding Circle

← Process > Product -- Danger of Cross-purposes

Federation's "yes" -- What's the meaning?

Purposes of Vision are varied → Character.

- ① Resource allocation
- ② Program design/evaluation
- ③ "Big tent" under which all gather;
- ④ "Sayings who are
are: Symbolic
action"
- ⑤ Strategic Planning

Tacit dimension:

- a) Priorities/compromises are embedded -- *Arche*
- b) Its examination -- a powerful tool
e.g. Schedule - Blameless Critique
Test Vision

Discovery

N between Vision/Practice

Danger of self deception → Need evidence

Doctor-imagery — Truth, well-framed
→ Moses informed by Aaron!

Role of disequilibrium in the process

How much responsibility should
guide have for sustaining process?

The Present Moment — Coherence — or Buy-in

"Choice" — Pluralism — American ID.

Connector-issue — Missing steps
Re: Strategy/theory of practice

GUIDES Discussion

Enthusiasm

Relationship to CITE

re: change process

3 CAs a) Roles: Inst. Leaders, Change agents, Consultants, Resource People

~~a)~~ b) Institutions/Community/Infra-structure

c) Different phases of change-process

Levels of Involvement

Annual Conference → Study Group → Resources

re b.

re this group feeds annual conference

This group is AD for EFW

Hot/house → Gard

CFWW — CORE

Issues for the group to consider:

Leadership/grassroots - when? why? Jewish Thought
Ahavat Yisrael -- Reproaching Jews who go wrong
Americanism - Judaism

Purposes of the Group - Diff from others?

- ↳ 1) Support/Help 2) Develop love 3) Personal ^{meaning}
- 4) Centrality of Ideas/practice.

Ideas - CIJE's work -- why important

a) DP's 3 Pts

b) ↑ Level of discourse + Irresponsible
Qs/Solutions

Membership - (+) (-)

Gordis/Stemmetz - Bring "Cases" to group

Purpel/Miller/Holzer

DESIGNING "GUIDES" -- SOME ISSUES

1. Criteria for membership in GUIDES
 - a. the kinds of individuals we want to include,
 - b. the kinds of work we imagine their being involved with,
 - c. expectations attached to membership.

2. How, as a group and as individuals, GUIDES relates and contributes to other CIJE initiatives and domains.

3. Designing GUIDES so that it contributes to participants' personal and professional growth and is maximally beneficial to CIJE and to the field of Jewish education.

4. Other

Ahad Ha'Am's "Moses", Leon Simon Trans.

The Prophet has two fundamental qualities, which distinguish him from the rest of mankind. First he is a man of *truth*. He sees life as it is, with a view unwarped by subjective feelings; and he tells you what he sees just as he sees it, unaffected by irrelevant considerations. He tells the truth not because he wants to tell the truth, not because he has convinced himself, after inquiry, that such is his duty, but because he must, because truth-telling is a special characteristic of his genius--a characteristic of which he cannot rid himself, even if he wanted...

Secondly, the Prophet is an *extremist*. He concentrates his whole heart and mind on his ideal, in which he finds the goal of life, and to which he is determined to make the whole world do service, without the smallest exception. There is in his soul, a complete ideal world; and on that pattern he labors to reform the external world of reality. He has a clear conviction that so things *must* be, and no more is needed to make him demand that so they *shall* be. He can accept no excuse, can consent to no compromise, can never cease thundering his passionate denunciations, even if the whole universe is against him...

But just as the Prophet will not bow to the world, the world will not bow to him, will not accept his influence immediately and directly. This influence must first pass through certain channels in which it becomes adapted to the conditions of life. Then only can it affect mankind. These channels are human channels. They are men who cannot rise to the Prophet's elevation, and have no sympathy with his extremism, but are none the less nearer to him in spirit than the mass of men, and are capable of being influenced by him up to a certain point. These men are the Priests of the prophetic ideal. They stand between the Prophet and the world, and transmit his influence by devious ways, adapting their methods to the needs of each particular time, and not insisting that the message shall descend on the workaday world in all its pristine purity.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

So the Prophet remains in the wilderness, buries his own generation, and trains up a new one. Year after year passes, and he never grows weary of repeating to this growing generation the laws of righteousness that must guide its life in the land of its future; never tires of recalling the glorious past in which these laws were fashioned. The past and the future are the Prophet's whole life, each completing the other. In the present he sees nothing but a wilderness, a life far removed from his ideal; and therefore he looks before and after. He lives in the future world of his vision and seeks strength in the past out of which that vision-world is quarried...

Why does the prophet die? Tradition, as we know, gives no sufficient reason. But tradition recognized, with unerring instinct, that so it needs to be. When the time comes for the ideal to be embodied in practice, the Prophet can no longer stand at the head; he must give place to another. The reason is that from that moment there begins a new period, a period in which prophecy is mute, a period of those half-measures and compromises which are essential to the battle of life. In this period reality assumes gradually a form very different from the Prophet's vision; and so it is better for him to die than to witness this change. "He shall see the land before him, but he shall not go there." He has brought his people to the border, fitted them for the future, and given them a noble ideal to be their loadstar in time of trouble, their comfort and their salvation; the rest is for other men, who are more skilled to compromise with life. Let them do what they will do and achieve what they will achieve, be it much or little. In any case, they will not achieve all that the Prophet wished, and their way will not be his way.

Cognac
↓
grape juice

GUIDES¹ SEMINAR
Providence, 7/28/97

BACKGROUND

The CIJE/Mandel Institute Goals Seminar, organized in cooperation with CAPE in July of 1996, was designed to deepen the educational thinking of individuals embarking on the development of significant educating institutions in North America, as well as to create human capacity for critical work going on under the auspices of the Goals Project. Since and as a result of that seminar, there have been several significant developments: 1) Danny Gordis and Robert Wexler, the President of the University of Judaism, have turned to CIJE for continuing help in the design and articulation of their new Rabbinical School; 2) Danny Lehmann and Daniel Pekarsky have been engaged in an effort to launch an ongoing seminar devoted to the exploration of fundamental issues pertaining to the nature and aspirations of community high schools; 3) Devora Steinmetz has begun working with Daniel Pekarsky on a publication project aiming to articulate the development and character of Beit Rabban as a vision-driven institution; and 4) Alvan Kaunfer has served as a facilitator for the Rhode Island Jewish community in its efforts to formulate a vision for Jewish education that will inform its priority-setting activities. In addition to the developments, a sub-group of the larger group met in December of 1996 to discuss a case presented by Daniel Pekarsky which concerned a synagogue-change process going on in Milwaukee.

Alvan Kaunfer was unable to attend the December meeting in NY, and we agreed at that time that we would re-convene the group in 1997 around his Rhode Island case. In preparation for this second meeting, Alvan prepared an illuminating written account of the case which was sent out to participants along with a letter detailing some of the issues we hoped to take up prior to the scheduled July 28 meeting. In preparation for our study of the case and for the Jewish study with which the meeting was to begin, we also included Ahad Ha-Am's essay "Moses", Elliott Dorff's essay entitled "Pluralism", and Mike Rosenak's essay on communal goals for Jewish education. In addition to studying Alvan's case, on the agenda for this meeting was a serious discussion of this group's purposes and possible future.

Attending the meeting were Karen Barth, Amy Gerstein, Alvan Kaunfer, Daniel Pekarsky, Nessa Rapoport, and Linda Thall. Invited but unable to come was David Purpel, who had recently participated in CIJE's Professors Seminar. The meeting took

¹ "GUIDES" stands for "Guiding Ideas Study group". See the text and the accompanying GUIDES-proposal for an explanation of this name.

place in the Kaunfer home in Providence from 10 to 5 pm on 7/28/97.

INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

In introducing the day, Dan Pekarsky indicated its three major components: a) an opportunity to study a text together; b) an examination of Alvan's case; and c) a discussion of this group's character and future. In introducing the study-session, he emphasized that the activity of Jewish study should not be regarded as ritualistic or pro forma; rather, it has the potential to create a shared culture and sense of community that enriches our work together, as well as to deepen our discussion of critical educational issues through the introduction of rich concepts, insights, and questions. At Alvan's suggestion our study session focused on Ahad Ha'Am's essay, "Moses".

CONSIDERING AHAD HA'AM'S 'MOSES'

Led by Alvan, this discussion focused primarily on Ahad Ha'Am's characterization of "the Prophet" (in the person of Moses) as leader, a characterization that emphasized 1) the Prophet's identity as a person of truth, 2) his "extremism" on behalf of his vision: his wholehearted and uncompromising dedication to a vision, carried deep within his soul, of what ought to be and must be; and 3) the Prophet's need of a priestly figure -- an Aaron, a person of words -- to mediate between himself as bearer of the vision and the "the situation down on the ground". For the very same characteristics that render the Prophet Prophetic in the sense specified in 1) and 2) render him less adept at interpreting and adapting to the needs of the moment.

Our discussion of this article brought out on a number of themes, identified below.

'Truthfulness'. The Prophet is a person of truth in a double-sense. It's not just that he or she sees things as they are, unbiased by subjective feeling, but also that he/she cannot but speak the truth (as he/she sees it) to others (and even to God). It is this inability or unwillingness to tailor his/her presentation of the truth to the audience and the context that necessitates the partnership with the Priest, who is described as "a man of words."

But what does it mean for the Prophet to see things as they are? Two (not necessarily incompatible) views were articulated. On one interpretation to see things as they really are is to be brutally honest with oneself (and others) about what one sees, not letting one's fantasies, fears, hopes, or just lazy thinking contaminate one's assessment of the situation in which we find ourselves. In this context, reference was made to Senge's

insistence that efforts to bridge the distance between what is and the vision to which we aspire depend on a willingness to carefully and dispassionately study what he calls 'current reality' [To cite an example from out of our later discussion, in looking at the relationship between the vision a community articulates and existing social and educational arrangements, the Prophet type is the one who does not let us get away with facile efforts to see the vision as already embodied in the present, when in fact it is not; any such claim, this figure insists, needs to be grounded in strong evidence.]

On a second interpretation, "to see things as they are" is not only a matter of being dispassionate but of seeing things **as illuminated by the vision**, a vision which offers one insight into the present which is otherwise unattainable. Thus, the vision functions as a kind of lens through which the present situation and the challenges of the community are interpreted. This interpretation was accompanied by the suggestion that the first one seems to assume that it is possible to see current reality unencumbered by what the observer brings, and this led to some discussion of the following point: granted that the observer's understandings and commitments inevitably enter into what he/she sees, can't one nonetheless meaningfully distinguish (as interpretation #1 insists) between seeing things in a distorted and in an undistorted way?

Prophet and priest. There was considerable interest in the idea that the challenges of leadership require two different "types", both Prophet and Priest, and there was some discussion of how best to understand their relationship in the process a community's growth. Does a community need different types at different stages in its development? Do they represent two dimensions of leadership that are constantly in interaction? Should we understand Prophet and Priest as two different roles in the life of a community -- or, as one member of the group suggested, should we understand Prophet and Priest psychologically, as elements of the Self found within the leader?

In any event, there seemed to be agreement that both leadership elements were important to a community's growth -- that the visionary without the capacity to adapt the vision to the needs of the moment risked being too out of touch with the community to be able to guide its development, and that the Priestly type who is always attentive to the mood and desires of the people being addressed is in danger of losing a meaningful connection to the kind of larger vision that the Prophet represents.

Two kinds of genius? There was in this context a challenge to what some felt to be an explicit or implicit hierarchy in Ahad-Ha'am's outlook: the Prophet is the genius, the Priest is the (mere) implementer. It was suggested that **the priest is also**

a genius -- a genius of implementation. To this it was added that it is inaccurate to describe the work of the priest as a "watering down" of the vision (compromising it) in the face of a recalcitrant reality; rather, implementation can be understood as an imaginative interpretation of vision that takes into account not just the vision but the situation in which it is to be embedded. [It is, of course, possible to acknowledge both possibilities -- that is, that in the process of implementation, visions are sometimes but not always or inevitably interpreted in 'watered down' ways. How to draw this distinction may be worth exploring.]

The problem of 'readiness'. Although time-constraints precluded serious discussion, our conversation pointed to a second dimension of the Ahad Ha-Am essay that is relevant to efforts to encourage transformational change in an institution (or community, or individual) -- namely, the problem of readiness for change. Here we took note of Ahad Ha-Am's discussion of the traditional view that the Israelites that had come out of Egypt were not ready to wholeheartedly commit themselves to and embody the vision that was put before them: neither the experience of great miracles leaving Egypt, nor powerful moments at the foot of Mount Sinai, nor even efforts at "training and education" seemed capable of overcoming in an enduring way the outlook and the values acquired as slaves in Egypt. Hence the need for the forty years in the desert, for a generation that had not known slavery. There is a sense in which "Moses" offers a pessimistic view of the ability of a group of people to transcend the outlook or culture within which they have been raised; hence the need to cultivate a new generation -- or to turn one's back on pathological existing institutions and try to create new ones.

THE PROVIDENCE CASE

Relationship to the "Moses" article. Alvan pointed out some natural bridges between our discussion of the "Moses" essay and some of the central concerns growing out of his work with the Rhode Island Jewish community. Ahad Ha-Am's Moses exemplifies the kind of "vision with punch" described in his written case, a compelling vision that is typically the product of an individual who passionately represents it -- the kind of vision that may be sacrificed in the search for a consensus aimed at allowing everyone to feel included (Alvan's "consensus" issue). And Alvan's worries about connecting the vision as arrived at by his committee and ratified by the Federation with the one-going development of education in the community (his "connector" issue) are illuminated in significant ways by Ahad Ha-Am's discussion of the relationship and role of Prophet and Priest.

Alvan's formulation of some pertinent issues. Having identified the "consensus" and "connector" issues as the larger concerns that he hoped we would jointly illuminate on this

occasion, Alvan went on to identify other - what he called sub-issues - that he hoped we would address. For example:

choice and pluralism: in relation to the "consensus/inclusivity" issue, he called our attention to the committee's struggle with whether and how much to incorporate the language of **choice** and **pluralism** in its statement of vision.

the problem of breadth: Is the kind of vision produced by the Providence community too broad to elicit enthusiasm and to meaningfully guide priority-setting and other facets of practice (as compared, say, with the more focused vision emphasizing Study and Social Justice articulated by Barry Schrage in Boston)?

Discussion of Alvan's case. There was high praise for Alvan's work and for his write-up of the work in the form of a case. The writing, the exercises he used with the committees he worked with, his success in drawing attention to significant issues pertaining to change efforts informed by powerful ideas -- all of these and other virtues of his work will render this case a very useful teaching and learning tool as we proceed with our work. Below is a summary of some of the major ideas that surfaced in response to participants' reading of the case and to Alvan's presentation.

1. How far does the vision have to go? A point that is of conceptual and potentially of practical significance is concerned with how we understand the scope of vision. A vision could be understood as referring to 1) the ideal outcomes of a Jewish education -- the kind of person and community we hope to cultivate. It could also be understood to refer to 2) the kinds of institutions necessitated by #1. Finally, it could extend beyond 1) and 2) to the inclusion of 3) the kind of infrastructure needed to support and maintain the kinds of values and institutions identified in #s 1 and 2. [While #s 1 and 2 are discussed in DP's piece on vision in Jewish education, attention to #3 pushes that discussion to another level.] All three levels in their inter-relationship are important, and it is of interest to consider how attention to them should be woven into the overall process of envisioning and implementation. [Note that while #s 2 and 3 pertain to the implementation of the ideas envisioned in #1, they are not in themselves stages of implementation; they are closer to ideas about implementation (not unrelated to Seymour Fox's Level 3, or "theory of practice).]

2. The difficulty of maintaining a high energy level. Alvan's process was much more time-consuming than his group had realized it would be, and there may have been a problem of flagging energies along the way. It was suggested that perhaps a less

linear approach, one that allowed participants to regularly wrestle with questions of practice and implementation long before their vision had crystallized, might help sustain their energy; well-conceived, it might also help illuminate the developing vision.

3. How might external inputs² enrich the process of deliberation, and how can they be incorporated in ways that will have this effect and not seem like a distraction from the work of the group? Raised early in the day, we began - but, alas only began - to explore this question more systematically towards the end of the day when we spent some time considering how Menachem Brinker might have approached the questions addressed by the Providence community, and how an encounter with ideas like his might have enriched the deliberations of the group that Alvan worked with. Some of the pertinent issues in need of further discussion are articulated later in this document.

4. What are the purposes of vision and how might attention to these purposes inform the design of the process of deliberation aimed at articulating a guiding vision? It was suggested that it is problematic to assume that there is only kind of a purpose that a vision can legitimately serve; depending on circumstances, it may meet very different kinds of needs. vision serves only one kind of purpose; for it might, depending on the circumstances, satisfy very different needs. Among the purposes and needs that a vision might satisfy in the life of an educating community are the following:

- a) program/curriculum design and evaluation;
- b) resource allocation;
- c) strategic planning;
- d) creating "a big tent" under which the varied members of a community feel they all have a place;
- e) symbolic action: through the vision announcing to ourselves and/or others who we are and what we stand for.

² "External inputs" refers primarily to what we have been calling "intellectual inputs", to pertinent powerful ideas and perspectives drawn from Jewish and other sources. But as was noted in our discussion, an external input might also be experiential (as when a group of rabbis associated with the Synagogue 2000 project were led into a powerful Tfillah-experience which thereafter affected their understanding of their work.

Which of these is judged to be primary in a given situation may carry implications for the design of the process that leads to the vision.

5. How narrow or broad, small or large, should be the group that is involved in working towards the guiding vision? In the context of Alvan's case, a concern was raised about the narrowness of the group involved in crafting the vision that was to guide communal decision-making in education. It was suggested by one participant that **the process of working towards the vision is often more important than the final product**; and that for this reason it might have proved important to expand the circle of individuals involved in formulating the Rhode Island vision. It was suggested in this connection that it may not be too late to meaningfully engage significant additional constituencies in this process.

6. The tacit dimension: priorities and commitments embedded - and discoverable - in existing forms of practice and organization. It was suggested that as part of a community's efforts to discover or refine its guiding vision it may be of value to surface priorities, commitments, and compromises that are embedded in existing practice. It may, for example, be instructive to identify the value-commitments at work in an educating community's budget allocations or in a school's schedule. In the case of some such inquiries - for example, analysis of a schedule, the activity may be relatively unthreatening inasmuch as schedules tend to reflect long-standing practice rather than the ideology or idiosyncrasies of any particular individual or body. In any event, the tension between the commitments and priorities at work in existing practice, on the one hand, and those that a community affirms as central can catalyze significant progress at the levels of guiding vision and/or practice; it can facilitate testing an avowed vision (or a community's commitment to it) and can lead to thoughtful revision at the level of practice.

7. Avoiding self-deception or smugness: insisting on evidence and on the attitude of a trustworthy physician. It was suggested that in looking at the relationship between the avowed vision and existing practice, there may be a tendency in the direction of self-deception, a tendency "to see" the vision at work in practice even when the relationship between the two is at best tenuous. To counteract this tendency, it was urged that exercises aimed at discovering the commitments and values embedded in practice include an evidence criterion -- an insistence that claims about what is embedded in practice and about the relationship between vision and practice be accompanied by the evidence for these claims.

It was suggested that an educating community needs the kind of truth-telling that one would hope for in a physician: an

honest account of one's true situation, but one framed in a way that will contribute to the client's ability to respond healthily to the information. Once again, this discussion brought us back to the Ahad Ha'Am's discussion of the place of truth in the priest-prophet equation.

8. The role of disequilibrium in the process of deliberation. The role of the guide, or coach, as a gadfly is a subject that was discussed at some length about two years ago in a CIJE/Mandel Institute consultation with Professor Israel Scheffler. This subject entered into our discussions as well. By confronting participants with the gap between what they say they are committed to and the values embedded in practice, by raising irksome but important questions about what they claim to believe, etc., the guide tries to foster among the participants a more thoughtful understanding of what they are committed to and its implications.

9. How much responsibility should the guide take for sustaining the process of deliberation and change? In the context of our discussion of a period in the Providence-process where the participants seemed to be tiring out, it was observed that at various points in a change-process, energies flag and momentum seems to slow and may be altogether lost. What is the guide's role in this situation? More specifically, under what circumstances (if ever), should he/she take on a measure of responsibility for keeping the process going, and under what circumstances and for what reasons is it appropriate for the guide to allow the process to take its own natural course without heroic efforts on his/her part to sustain it?

10. The significance of "choice" and "pluralism" language. Early in our discussion it was suggested that the prominence of "choice" and "pluralism" language in the Providence deliberation process represents a way of purchasing a sense of inclusivity among a very diverse population of Jews. Later in our deliberation, a different hypothesis was proposed: namely, that choice and pluralism represent traditional American values to which American Jews, like many other Americans, are strongly committed. On this view, the prominence of these categories reflects much more than a strategy that allows everyone to feel included; it also testifies to strongly held American values that are affirmed by the deliberators.

11. From vision to practice: the need for intermediate steps. In Providence, the process has not yet gone to the level of seriously wrestling with the practical educational implications of the vision-statement the deliberation-team arrived at. But it was noted by one member of our group that it would be a mistake to think that programmatic implications and community policy could be derived directly from this kind of a vision. There is, it was suggested, a need for developing a comprehensive strategy

(a strategy that would itself rely on a host of empirical and other assumptions that go well beyond the content of the vision) that would mediate between the vision and practice. [Though not referred to in this context, this point calls to mind Seymour Fox's discussion of "the five levels", which highlights the complex and textured character of the relationship between vision and practice.

12. The leader's vision...or discovering the community's vision, or....

In our initial discussion, there was a tendency to contrast two different approaches to vision: **either** a charismatic leader (a Moses) brings a vision to the people **or** a skilled facilitator helps the community to identify its own shared vision. In the course of our conversation, some other ideas surfaced. It was suggested that one of the challenges and tasks of a community's guide is to find a language through which to articulate this community's heretofore inarticulable understandings and values. Since these understandings and values can probably be articulated in more than one way, the guide's responsibility (for choosing a language that will be fruitful) is an awesome one.

Beyond and after playing an active role in helping the community unearth and find a language for its guiding vision, it may be the role of the guide to help this community deepen the vision by challenging it (e.g., by raising questions concerning ambiguous phrases, by offering different interpretations of key phrases, or by introducing difficult counter-examples).

THE PLACE OF POWERFUL IDEAS, GROUNDED IN JEWISH SOURCES, IN THE PROCESS OF DELIBERATION AND CHANGE

As suggested above, early on a question was raised concerning how to infuse the community's deliberations concerning a guiding vision with powerful Jewish ideas. While some attention was paid to this issue late in the day, it requires much more sustained discussion. As a way of setting the stage for such a discussion (perhaps at our next meeting), you will find below a formulation of some of the issues in need of attention and a summary of a few points made in our discussion.

The challenges we face are a direct consequence of one of our most basic convictions. CIJE strongly affirms that the process of educational deliberation needs to include serious struggle with questions of basic purpose and aspiration; and that this struggle will be enriched through the encounter with insights and perspectives found in Jewish thought. One challenge that grows out of this conviction is to identify ideas that will enrich deliberation in this way; a second challenge (perhaps that of the Priest rather than the Prophet) is to formulate those

ideas in forms that will engage potential audiences for these ideas; a third challenge is to find ways of introducing these intellectual inputs into an individual's or a group's process of deliberation. Serious work needs to be done in all of these areas.

In relation to Alvan's case, the following questions come to mind:

- 1) what external intellectual inputs did Alvan try to introduce into the process he led, and for what reasons?
- 2) how and when did he try to introduce these inputs, and with what effects?
- 3) might there have been other fruitful ways through which to infuse the process with pertinent external inputs?

These matters require further discussion, both in general and in relation to Alvan's case. It has been suggested by one member of the group that we revisit this cluster of issues when we next gather, and this remains a possibility to consider. In the meantime, the following point from our discussion are worth remembering.

While there is a tendency, even among ourselves, to think of the introduction of external intellectual inputs as taking place through an explicit encounter with Jewish texts or a précis of such texts, this is not the only, or necessarily the best, way to think about how Jewish ideas might be encountered. Consider in this connection the case of psychoanalytic therapy, in which the patient may learn all about projection, the super-ego, sublimation, and the unconscious without ever having read Freud. How does this happen? Through the therapist's questions, interpretations, and, on occasion, elucidation of concepts and insights that are at the heart of psychoanalytic theory. Offered succinctly at the right time and in the right way, such inputs can powerfully influence the patient's thinking and self-understanding.

Analogous considerations apply to guides helping clients (communities or educating institutions) strive for vision-sensitive educational practice. The guide's questions, formulations, metaphors, analogies, and interpretations at critical points in the process can introduce important new ideas and concepts in ways that powerfully affect the deliberation of participants. If, for example, the client is wrestling with the aims of Jewish education, instead of urging the participants to read certain seminal articles, it might be more fruitful for the guide to offer short but graphic summaries of the ideas found in

these essays (with careful attention to the needs of the moment).

If the guide is to play this kind of role, it is essential that he/she be steeped in the appropriate forms of knowledge **and** that he/she have the ability to access and use this knowledge at the right time and in the right (not heavy-handed) way to enrich the participants' deliberations.

DISCUSSION OF 'GUIDES'

This discussion focused on the possible wisdom of developing a serious and on-going group whose members would 1) serve as guides to communities, agencies, and institutions (and to CIJE itself) in their efforts to develop informing visions through a process that takes ideas (not limited to but especially ideas grounded in Jewish thought) seriously; and/or 2) develop materials of various kinds (e.g. theoretical pieces, portraits of vision-driven institutions, case-studies, cases, etc.) that would support and enrich the work described under #1. The proposal for **"GUIDES" (an acronym for "Guiding Ideas Study Group")** was handed out to participants at our meeting and served as the springboard to our discussion; this proposal explains why "guiding ideas" replaces the term "goals" in this document and tries to specify how GUIDES will function. No attempt is made to summarize that document, only to identify issues surfaced in the course of our conversation. As a prelude to this, it is important to note that members of the group that met in Providence reacted with enthusiasm to the possibility that we would constitute ourselves as an on-going group.

Purpose and character of the proposed group. In an effort to clarify how this group fits into CIJE and how, if at all, it differs from the Consulting Firm Without Walls, questions were raised concerning the basic purposes and character of GUIDES. The following points were offered in response:

- a. GUIDES offers its members support and advice in their efforts to help Jewish educating institutions and the infrastructure that supports them to develop vision-guided practice through a process that takes ideas seriously.
- b. The existence of GUIDES offers an opportunity to develop and expand a body of lore concerning how best to think about and to organize, in different settings and contexts, processes of deliberation and change that give a central role to informed and sustained reflection concerning basic purposes and aspirations. This lore will include a developing body of concepts, insights, powerful examples, cases, case-studies, and theoretical formulations. These materials will provide us with springboards to our own continuing learning;

they can also be used as tools in our teaching, in efforts at "seeding the culture", and in work with educating institutions that are struggling with their visional commitments..

c. GUIDES will offer its members an opportunity for growth that is simultaneously professional, personal, and Jewish. Jewish study figures prominently in the life of this group. Its centrality is predicated on the assumption that the insights, ways of thinking, and questions that emerge from the encounter with well-chosen Jewish sources will inform our thinking about the work that brings us together in powerful ways; and also on the assumption that the activity of learning together will contribute to the emergence of a kind of community and culture that will make our work richer and more personally meaningful.

d. While CIJE expects that members in the Consulting Firm Without Walls will be on-board with CIJE's beliefs concerning the centrality of ideas in the process of developing profound forms of Jewish educational practice, what will distinguish GUIDES is that the relationship between ideas and practice is at the heart of its members' professional and learning agenda.

The place of ideas in Jewish educational reform: three dimensions. Ideas being central to the work of CIJE and to GUIDES, it is important to note that our oft-repeated claim that ideas are central to the work of Jewish education is actually a summary of, or a generalization from, a number of distinct beliefs about the importance of ideas, including the following:

a. Judaism is rich with powerful ideas about human existence in its various dimensions, ideas with the capacity to engage mind and heart and to transform the way we understand ourselves and the world. Unfortunately, such ideas rarely enter into Jewish education as we know it. **It is essential that Jewish education be transformed in such a way that its clients will regularly encounter powerful Jewish ideas in honest and powerful ways.**

b. Too often educating institutions and the infrastructure that supports them operate without clear basic purposes that are capable of eliciting the support and enthusiasm of their constituencies; and even when lip-service (or more) is paid to a particular vision or guiding idea, it rarely suffuses the life of the educating institution or agency in a more than superficial way. **It is essential that Jewish educating institutions come to be informed by guiding ideas, or**

visions, that identify their central purposes and that suffuse day-to-day practice across contexts.

c. The process of clarifying or discovering an institution's, or our own, guiding vision is enriched through the encounter with powerful Jewish ideas that are pertinent to the questions under consideration. As examples, the attempt to develop a community-vision will be enriched through the encounter with variant Jewish conceptions of what it means to be a community; the attempt to clarify our vision of an educated Jewish human being will benefit from the encounter with philosophically different Jewish views of Jewish existence; and the attempt to develop an Evaluation Institute that will assess the work of Jewish educating institutions will do well to struggle with ethical and other issues pertaining to evaluation, confidentiality, etc. that are discoverable in Jewish sources.

While our work has sometimes suffered from a failure to distinguish between these related but different ways in which ideas figure prominently in our work, the GUIDES proposal, like the Goals Project that has given rise to it, assumes that GUIDES will be concerned with all three of them.

This formulation of the place of ideas in the work of GUIDES and CIJE brought forth a revised formulation. In contrast to the suggestion that Jewish thought has the capacity to elevate the level of discourse that informs deliberation concerning basic purposes, **it was urged that we make the stronger statement that attention to Jewish ideas and perspective is indispensable in that it offers unique, otherwise unattainable, questions, insights, understandings, and solutions.**

Place of GUIDES in CIJE's work. As suggested above, there was considerable discussion concerning the place of GUIDES in CIJE'S work, discussion triggered by Karen's concern that, as described in the proposal, it seems very similar to the Consulting Firm Without Walls. A number of different ways of thinking about the place of GUIDES in CIJE were entertained:

a) An area of specialization within the change-process?

If the Consulting Firm Without Walls is broken into sub-groups interested in different phases of the change-process, GUIDES would come to represent one such sub-group -- namely, a sub-group concerned with the place of ideas and vision in the change-process.

b) Levels of involvement. One could imagine the Consulting Firm Without Walls as made up of individuals with different levels of involvement. Least involved would be a group of human resources who would consult

to different projects; more involved is a group that, in addition to its consulting work, attends a serious annual conference; most involved is GUIDES, a small group which meets a number of times during the year and which plays a central role in defining the agenda and content for the annual conference. It is, in one person's words, the R&D for the Consulting Firm Without Walls; it is to the Consulting Firm Without Walls what a hothouse is to a garden.

c) Where should GUIDES BE LOCATED -- CFWW OR "CORE"?

Much of our discussion seemed to assume that GUIDES would be located in the Consulting Firm Without Walls. As we proceeded, the suggestion was made that GUIDES be located in CORE, an altogether different domain, and that CIJE's regular staff actively participate in its periodic Study Group sessions that focus on the relationship between ideas and practice in Jewish education.

There seemed to be considerable support developing for the idea that GUIDES should be located in CORE.

Membership in GUIDES. Who, over and above, the small group that gathered in Providence should be invited to participate in GUIDES? The sense of the group was that the group should be kept small enough to allow for the kind of intense discussion, free of posturing, that has been a hallmark of our work.

This said, some felt that we would be enriched by including in the group some of the institution-based people (like Gordis, Steinmetz, and Lehmann) who had participated in the Jerusalem Goals Seminar in the summer of 1996. As an alternative, it was suggested that such individuals could be invited on one or more occasions to bring a case to the group which would serve as the focus of our discussion on a particular occasion; if the case is well-chosen, both the group and the individual bringing it would profit from such an opportunity.

Some attention focused on particular individuals who might contribute to the group. It was noted that in the aftermath of the recent Professors Seminar David Purpel was invited to participate in the Providence Seminar; and DP suggested that someone like Phil Miller (the Judaica Director of the St. Louis JCC), who brings an interest in informal education along with an open but very traditional outlook) might be a welcome addition to the group. Since most of those present didn't know these individuals, it was hard for them to react, but no concerns were expressed about incorporating either of them.

Issues for the group to consider. In the course of our discussion of GUIDES, suggestions were made concerning some

themes that the group might focus on in subsequent meetings. For example:

Leadership vs. grassroots: when - and why - should the one be emphasized over the other in the development of a community's life? And what does Jewish thought have to say about this problem?

Ahavat Yisrael [the love owed to all Jews] vs. Reproaching Jews who 'go wrong'

Americanism and Judaism: the relationship between our identity as Americans and our identity as Jews.

END OF MEETING

It was agreed at the end of our discussion that we should wait until after CIJE's upcoming staff and steering committee meetings before determining out next gathering date. The sense of the group was that we had made a lot of progress, and we concluded by expressing our gratitude to Alvan and Marcia Kaunfer for their hospitality.

From: Alvan Kaunfer <Kaunfer@compuserve.com>
To: Pekarsky <danpek@mac.wisc.edu>
Date: 5/6/97 9:02pm
Subject: July meeting

Dan

I do plan to be here in early July--prob at least till the 11th--so that seems ok. We're probably going on vacation mid to end of July or early Aug.

On another matter: I saw Alice & Sheila @ the Federation Annl. Meeting tonite and asked what's happening. They are meeting w/ the Fed. Exec Dir & Elisa tomorrow a.m. to see who is going to carry this forward (I think Fed. wants Alice & Sheila to stay) & what the next step is--Take the Vision Statement on the road around the state?? Sheila suggested when they do that, rather than ask people to react to the statement itself--ask them where they see their Org. fitting into it and working on an aspect of it. That seems to push towards more of a practical outcome. Any thoughts? Although they invited me to join them tomorrow--I think I'd like to see how they play it out on their own.

Also--what was the name of that book on Democracy you mentioned when we met in Cambridge about "community"? I'd like to include it in a footnote in the Case study re: the pluralism issue.

alvan

CC: "Gerstein,Amy" <agerste@wested.org>

From: Alvan Kaunfer
To: Alexander, Alice Goldstein, Pekarsky, Elisa Silverste...
Date: 3/20/97 3:42pm
Subject: Executive Visioning Exercise

Elisa, Alice, Sheila + Dan

This is my proposal for the now 20 min. mini-mini visioning exercise with the JFRI Exec on the 31st. I'd be interested in your comments/suggestions.

I think the large questions we are dealing with is how you begin to get a community to "buy into" a vision once it is fairly well articulated, without re-inventing the wheel at each widening of the circle. The process should be interesting and instructive re: our next steps.

Visioning Exercise March 31 JFRI Exec.

INTRO (Sheila?)

-Not create a new vision statement--but understand process by which this one developed.

-Clarify and refine statements

VISION (AHK)

- CIJE premise: To change education, & Jewish life--need powerful visions grounded in Jewish ideas. Have our future decisions driven by these powerful visions + guiding principles

- Need to imagine what Jewish life could be for the individual and the community

-Existential vision: The kind of community or human being we would want: ideal Jewish community and individual rooted in compelling Jewish ideas

-Opposed to Institutional vision--not talk about types of programs (family ed, day schools, adult ed)--Not how we want the Bureau or Federation or the school to be--but how we want Jewish life to be.

-Careful of mission statement slogans "love of Israel" whose Israel? Netanyahu's, Rabin's, Herzl's, Ahad Haam's? "vibrant J. Community" What does it mean?

buzz words --"Pluralism"

- Need for consensus in vision--some give + take and compromise without losing power of vision

EXERCISE

- We want you to have a mini experience of getting into the process we went through as a committee. To struggle with the issues we confronted. Opportunity to search your ideas/vision of what Jewish life could be like in your ideal

- Split into 2 groups:

Group # 1. What are the key (5) Jewish elements that mark us as a Jewish Community?

* What would be an apt metaphor to describe the Jewish community?

(eg. a body, a family, partners...)

Group # 2 What would be the essential elements/ characteristics in a ideal, modern educated Jew?

"An ideal, modern educated Jew would be a person who..."

* Give two non-essential characteristics of a modern Jew--"One who does not have to.."

TABULATION

* Put results on a pad and as we do, raise some clarification, "gadfly" questions. Indicate that the real process is a long one

TRANSITION--

* Hand over to Alice for reviewing vision statements and recommended next steps

3/3/97

Dan,

Our emails and the upcoming Federation meeting on the "vision" gave me the impetus to pull together the draft I had started in Dec. I finished at least a 1st draft. It's still unpolished, but I'd like you to read it to see if it's helpful and heading in the right direction. After the Federation meeting(s) on the vision statement the committee drafted, I would add any additional comments and insights from that experience.

I have been looking at your case study. It was quite a different approach to the visioning process. I think that these wide range of approaches will eventually help us in developing directions for this enterprise.

Looking forward to talking on-line.

Alvan



TEMPLE
EMANU-EL

ALVAN H. KAUNFER
Rabbi

Dan -

2/23

I'd like to revive our dialog. I am enclosing a copy of the report of the Subcomm. to Federation. I bracketed the key q/s - As you will see they really tried to emphasize the vision 1st idea. I'm interested in your reactions. Also, as I emailed, they want the presentation to Federation to include a mini-visioning exercise led by me to get the Fed. Bd. people "into" the process we went through as a committee. I think I may only have a really short time (15-20 min) - and I think I will jump right into letting them come up with key topics for the "Educated Jew" + "Jewish Commun." Your thoughts?

I also looked at what I began to write up on the case in Dec. After reading the minutes of your Dec. meeting + your case + Amy's paper - I want to talk with you about how

to go about writing up the case-study. I think we tend to give too much narrative background + detail for an "outsider" to need. How much should we concentrate on the unfolding + ins + outs of the process, + how much should we delineate key Q's + issues and really focus on them rather than on details of the case?

Hope you are well. We'll continue on email + phone. Let's pick a date to get together as well,

Ala

Jewish Federation of Rhode Island
Report of the Planning Subcommittee on Jewish Education
February 18, 1997

INTRODUCTION

Jewish education has been identified by the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island (JFRI) as one of three priority areas for the Jewish community of RI. The Subcommittee on Jewish Education was established with the goals of understanding trends in education planning, of identifying communal needs in the field of Jewish education in this State, and of providing direction for major decision-making as we enter the next century.

Jewish education is the key element in ensuring the vibrancy of our community and the strong Jewish identity of our population. While the American Jewish community is grappling with issues of continuity, many individuals find it difficult to frame a convincing answer as to how and why being Jewish impacts their daily lives. Previously successful motivating factors for Jewish identification such as the Holocaust, anti-Semitism, and Israel do not appear to be sufficient to create a positive identity. The demographics and social context of our community have changed and we must focus our energy to foster a community that is inclusive, welcoming and attractive. Spiritual survival more than physical and economic survival now challenges the American Jewish community. We must offer multiple access points, assuring that we engage the unconnected, and ensuring that involved Jews have the richest possible Jewish experience in our core institutions. We must foster more vibrant and more enticing opportunities for connecting to Jewish life. Only a positive vision of why and how being Jewish makes a difference for the individual Jew and for the world - and the knowledge and skills to translate this vision into regular patterns of behavior - are likely to motivate a genuine passion for Jewish living. These goals will be achieved only through Jewish education.

JFRI has already demonstrated its commitment to Jewish education in the community in many ways. From its financial support of the Bureau of Jewish Education of Rhode Island (BJERI) and the day schools, to the Continuity Commission grants, to camperships for New Americans, and the Gift of Israel program, the JFRI has contributed to enhancing Jewish educational activity in Rhode Island. We are especially aware of the important role the BJERI plays and the high degree to which that agency has strengthened Jewish education in the state. Within its mandate, the BJERI provides a broad range of educational services and programs to the community and works with and provides support to other institutions and agencies involved in the Jewish educational enterprise. With the BJERI at the core, planning for Jewish education must extend to the broader community. Overall planning for and coordination of educational services are essential to meet the changing environment within which Rhode Island Jewry finds itself as we approach the 21st century.

WORK OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE

The initial goal of this Planning Subcommittee on Jewish Education was to develop priorities for programming for Jewish education in Rhode Island. In the course of our deliberations, however, we realized that priorities could be set only if an overall vision of our community were available to provide direction and guidance. A vision statement thus became an integral part of the subcommittee's work.

The work of this subcommittee was informed by the activities of other committees of the JFRI, including the previous Planning Subcommittee on Jewish education and the Continuity Commission. Like these groups, we have defined Jewish education in its broadest sense, encompassing formal and informal activities and reaching all age segments of the population.

Three primary steps emerged in the planning process:

I. Review of the Jewish educational environment The subcommittee heard testimony in the following areas:

- a) A general overview of the relation of Jewish education to Jewish identity and commitment. The analysis was based on national data and pointed to Rhode Island's position within the national picture. Research has indicated that Jewish education beyond the Bar/Bat Mitzvah years in a day or supplementary school is clearly related to strong Jewish identity and commitment. The effect extends beyond the individual to the next generation: Parents with intensive Jewish education are most likely to provide their children with similar Jewish schooling. This analysis was presented by Alice Goldstein, senior researcher at Brown University and co-chair of this subcommittee.
- b) An overview of the role of the BJERI, in its unique position working collaboratively with schools, synagogues and other communal agencies to provide high quality Jewish education for our community. This was presented by Minna Ellison, BJERI Executive Director.
- c) Presentations by a panel of Jewish educators in RI addressing some of the perceived needs of the community. Among the issues addressed were the importance of training Jewish educators, meeting the Jewish needs of young adults, the importance of lifelong Jewish learning, and the need for networking among Jewish professionals. Panelists included Guy Bermel, URI Hillel and the *Perspectives* program, Pam Kaitin-Miller, Yad B'Yad program at Temple Emanuel, Rabbi Vicki Lieberman from Congregation B'nai Israel, and Vivian Weisman, Executive Director of the JCCRI.
- d) Dr. Leora Isaacs, Director of the Berman Heritage Center for Research and Evaluation in Jewish Education at JESNA, presented the need for strategic planning in Jewish education and institutional change, stressing the importance of program evaluation and teacher training. Dr. Isaacs noted that despite the difficulty in prioritizing equally important educational issues; any single intervention will cause a "domino effect" throughout a community or system,

changing the context for future programming. Dr. Isaacs also described some model educational programs being implemented around the country.

II. Vision statement development: Sessions were also devoted to developing a vision statement for the goals of Jewish education, for both individual Jews and the Jewish community in Rhode Island. The vision statement is designed in the long term to provide an ideal towards which Jewish education can strive, and, more immediately, to guide the community's decisions in setting priorities to be implemented soon. In doing so, we acknowledge that the ideal presented in the vision statement seeks to effect a transformation in our community; but we also recognize that such a change must be achieved one step at a time. Realizing the vision may require reordering of existing priorities and funding. Our formulation of the vision statement was facilitated by Rabbi Alvan Kaunfer, using a methodology he studied with the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education (CIJE).

III. Priority setting: In direct response to the vision statement, and within the time constraints under which it was operating, the subcommittee began to identify several major areas for attention. In doing so, we understand that many initiatives may require new approaches and new paradigms in the organization and funding of Jewish education. Particularly important is enhancing the linkages between the JFRI and the congregations in the State. We also recognize that the discussion of priorities must be a continuing process that addresses not only short-term needs but also long-term changes. Recommendations for Jewish education initiatives in Rhode Island should therefore be reviewed on a regular basis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I. The Vision Statement

We strongly recommend that the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island fully endorse the vision for Jewish education in the state. JFRI alone is uniquely positioned in the community to ensure its wide acceptance and to ensure its implementation. This vision statement should provide guidelines for future decision making.

Within the vision statement a number of key values emerge. As additional information is gathered throughout the next phase of the planning process, these values may be expanded. In addition, the vision statement does not preclude the development of additional value statements.

Specific programmatic initiatives are not appended to this report for three reasons:

- 1) Adoption of the vision statement transforms the way we as a community address Jewish education:
 - a. in relation to the individual;
 - b. to its role in leadership development; and
 - c. in relation to the community.
- 2) Initial adoption of the vision statement is crucial to program development since programs will need strong interagency and community support.
- 3) Proper development of programs to be submitted for funding consideration will take more time than is available for submission of this interim report.

PROPOSED VISION STATEMENT FOR JEWISH EDUCATION

Jewish Education in the RI Jewish community will enable individuals and the community to engage life using Jewish perspectives and values in the following ways:

For the Individual, skills and motivation to:

- * Turn to Torah and the teachings of Judaism as a guide to interpersonal morality and action
- * Become Jewishly literate through the study of sacred Jewish texts, Hebrew language, literature, arts, and thought which express Jewish culture and spirit
- * Observe some group of core practices, rituals, *mitzvot* (e.g. *Shabbat*, holidays, *kashrut*)
- * Meaningfully address one's relationship to God
- * Freely and proudly identify as Jewish and as a participating member of the Jewish community
- * Identify with and recognize an obligation toward the entire Jewish people (*Am Yisrael*)
- * Adopt the goals of the Jewish community as outlined below

For the Jewish Community, opportunities and venues that foster and enhance the community's shared values and/or experiences by:

- * Establishing lifelong Jewish learning and universal Jewish literacy as a communal ideal
- * Providing multiple points of access into the community
- * Caring for all individuals within the community, based on *mitzvot* and the principle of *gemilut hesed* (deeds of loving kindness)
- * Valuing all members of the community in their varying ideologies and explorations of Judaism
- * Coming together around shared Jewish values
- * Sharing "Jewish Time" -- the rhythm of the Jewish calendar and cycle of Jewish life
- * Expanding opportunities to put Jewish ideals such as *tikkun olam* and *tzedakah* into practice
- * Enabling a connection to:
 - Israel both historically and as a modern state struggling with Jewish issues and democratic principles
 - The entire Jewish People (*Am Yisrael*) locally, nationally, and world-wide
- * Facilitating the growth of individuals as outlined above

II. Next Steps

We recommend a successor committee to this subcommittee to further define the Jewish education priorities of the community and to develop specific recommendations for their implementation. Once the vision statement is adopted by the JFRI, the priorities imbedded in it will direct the next phase in the planning process. While the vision statement has inherent value as a long-range guiding force for this community, additional work is necessary to fully meet the charge of the subcommittee and to reach the full potential of the concepts outlined in the vision statement.

After the JFRI Board adoption of this vision statement for Jewish education, next steps should include:

- ⇒ Establishment of an on-going planning committee with representation of the congregations;
- ⇒ Adoption of the vision statement by the entire Jewish community, reinforcing linkages between the JFRI and the agencies and congregations;
- ⇒ Undertaking a thorough environmental scan of Jewish educational services throughout the state;
- ⇒ Continuing consideration of the vision and modifying it as necessary;
- ⇒ Setting goals based on that vision;
- ⇒ Specifying programs that will further the realization of the vision; and
- ⇒ Evaluating programs terms of their quality and effectiveness in moving us toward the vision.

CONCLUSION

The Rhode Island Jewish community, like American Jewry throughout the country, stands at a critical point of transition. Demographic changes and the economic and social context of the United States in the 1990's have greatly altered the general environment in which our Jewish community operates. The leadership of the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island has had the foresight to recognize the new situation and the urgent need to take it into account if our community is to remain vibrant and cohesive, dedicated to Jewish values on the individual and communal levels. The creation of the Planning Subcommittee on Jewish Education has been one of the Federation's responses. **In turn, the subcommittee has responded, as detailed in this report, by developing a vision of a transformed Jewish community in which the values, learning, literature and culture of the Jewish people are part of the daily life of its members and are reflected in individual and communal behavior.**

The challenge now is how to bring about such a vision. One essential component of the realization of such a powerful Jewish environment is the role of the Federation. JFRI must use its planning and leadership skills to convince all participants to transcend and merge individual and institutional goals for the sake of communally developed plans. Many of our recommendations require inter-institutional cooperation and new ways of doing business. The process of achieving the subcommittee's vision is thus as important as the programs that will be developed. We may need to reorder priorities and consider new approaches to multi-year funding. The process is complex and must be on-going, and initiated soon.

We believe that the Rhode Island Jewish community is in a strong position to move toward the vision because of its geographic size, the strength of its institutions and the high quality of its lay and professional leadership. JFRI has taken the first steps in establishing this subcommittee, steps which must be carried on by the JFRI and the community. Because congregations are central providers of Jewish education for both children and adults, they must necessarily play a key role in acceptance of the vision, development of appropriate programs, and their implementation. A major challenge for

Federation will be obtaining consensus from a large segment of the community on the vision we have outlined and on what this implies for Jewish education at all levels and in all venues.

The experience of other communities has demonstrated that once specific programs of Jewish education are instituted, they can have a ripple effect in many areas. Of importance is to choose a program which fits the needs of the community, and to ensure that it is enthusiastically and widely endorsed and activated. Education holds a unique and central place in Judaism. We look forward to seeing it placed in a prominent position on the community agenda and to experiencing its transformational role in our community.

Submitted by:

Sheila Alexander, co-chair

Alice Goldstein, co-chair

Alan Gaines

Minna Ellison, ex-officio

Cynthia Kaplan

Rabbi Alvan Kaunfer

Arlene Rogol

Carolyn Roseman

Judith Rosenstein

Mathew Shuster

Rebecca Starr

Lauren Zurier

Elisa Silverstein, JFRI staff

Jewish Federation of Rhode Island

Fax

To: Daniel Pekarsky
From: Elisa Silverstein, Director of Planning & Allocations (FAX: 401-331-7961)
Fax: (212) 532-2646
Pages: 3 (incl. cover memo)
Date: August 26, 1996
Re: Possibility of Meeting with the JFRI Planning Subcommittee on Jewish Education
Monday, September 30, 1996
CC: Alice Goldstein, Sheila Alexander

We are thrilled that you are interested in meeting with our planning group. We are in the infancy stage of planing in this area as our committee's first meeting is scheduled for September 10.

As Alvan Kaunfer may or may not have mentioned, we have invited you to our second meeting (September 30) to discuss generally the issue of creating a vision for Jewish education . I've heard that you believe we must develop a vision before we can adequately plan, and we tend to agree with you.

The date is fairly flexible; given the various community events, this date satisfied a number of the participants. However, if September 30 proves impossible for you, please let us know which dates around it might be better.

I am sending you the letter which is about out go out to our committee, as well as a draft Goals Statement paper, to be discussed at our first meeting.

If you have any questions, please call me at (401) 421-4111. I look forward to hearing from you.

- DRAFT -

Jewish Federation of Rhode Island Planning Subcommittee on Jewish Education

- Goals Statement -

The goal of the Planning Subcommittee on Jewish Education is to develop priorities for Jewish education in Rhode Island. We define Jewish education in its broadest sense, encompassing formal and informal activities and reaching all age segments of the population.

We seek to identify and review:

- Target populations in terms of age, geographic location and other characteristics
- Programs that reach a wide spectrum of Rhode Island's Jewish community
- Programs that are effective in enhancing Jewish identity and commitment
- Programs that reinforce and promote Jewish values and ethics
- The need for new initiatives in Jewish education in our community

Dear :

Thank you for agreeing to serve on the Planning Subcommittee on Jewish Education. We are pleased that you will be working with us on this very exciting project; it holds the potential for influencing the way our community supports educational services and programs in the future.

As you know, our first meeting is scheduled for:

Tuesday, September 10
4:30 p.m.
in the JCC Conference Room (401 Elmgrove Ave., Providence)

We are enclosing a number of items for your review before our meeting. We hope that this will give you some food for thought and also expedite our discussions.

1. A listing of our subcommittee members. We believe that working together, we can create a vision for Jewish education in our community that will enhance Jewish life in Rhode Island.
2. A draft of our committee's goal statement. We will discuss this statement and how we can best proceed to meet our goal.
3. The Continuity Commission's definition of "Jewish Continuity." Much of the work of the Commission has direct relevance for our own discussions; we hope we will be able to take advantage of their work to inform our own agenda.
4. Two articles that consider several aspects of Jewish education and their relevance for the future of the Jewish community. Some of their insights should be useful in stimulating our own thinking about directions for the future.
5. An agenda for our meeting on September 10.

We look forward to seeing you on the 10th. If you have any questions before then, please call either of us or Elisa Silverstein at the Federation (421-4111).

B'shalom,

Sheila Alexander

Alice Goldstein

Co-Chairs

*We Have a Vision for Jewish Education in Rhode Island
Help Us Make It Happen!*

In order to perpetuate a vibrant Jewish community, we must be able to define the core values which identify us as Jews. Jewish education for all ages, in both its formal and informal aspects, provides a key to ensuring a strong Jewish identity. Our challenge is to create a community-wide effective Jewish educational environment which touches individuals, families, agencies and organizations.

The Jewish Federation's Planning Subcommittee on Jewish Education has worked this past year to understand the many complex issues surrounding Jewish education. The Sub-committee developed - and the Executive Committee has adopted the following Vision Statement as a guide for future action. We will be discussing this statement in detail with a diverse representation of community members during this summer.

We urge you to read this statement, respond and participate. Help us to ensure the vibrancy of our community by "filling in the picture." Please send your comments to us, c/o the Jewish Federation, 130 sessions Street, Providence, RI 02906, or by e-mail: shalom@jfri.org.

Your input is critical to our collective efforts.

The Planning Subcommittee on Jewish Education
Sheila Alexander Alice Goldstein
Co-chairpersons

The JFRI Executive Committee
Ed Feldstein, President
Steven Rakitt, Executive Director



Rebecca Page shows off her beautiful Kiddish cup made at the Havdalah table of the Natalie & Abraham Percelay Museum "Petting Zoo"

Proposed Vision Statement for Jewish Education

Jewish Education in the RI Jewish Community will enable individuals and the community to engage life using Jewish perspectives and values in the following ways:

For the individual, skills and motivation to:

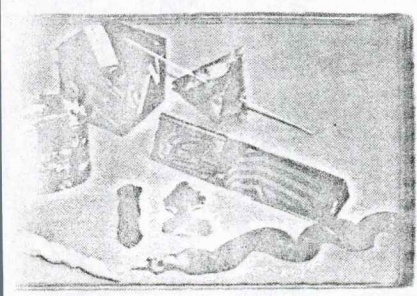
- ✧ Turn to Torah and the teachings of Judaism as a guide to interpersonal morality and action.
- ✧ Become Jewishly literate through the study of sacred Jewish texts, Hebrew language, literature, arts, and thought which expresses Jewish culture and spirit.
- ✧ Observe some group of core practices, rituals, *mitzvot* (e.g. *Shabbat*, holidays, *kashrut*).
- ✧ Meaningfully address one's relationship to God.
- ✧ Freely and proudly identify as a Jew and as a participating member of the Jewish community.
- ✧ Identify with and recognize an obligation toward the entire Jewish people (*Am Yisrael*).
- ✧ Adopt the goals of the Jewish community as outlined below:

For the Jewish Community, opportunities and venues that foster and enhance the community's shared values and/or experiences by:

- ✧ Establishing lifelong Jewish learning and universal Jewish literacy as a communal ideal.
- ✧ Providing multiple points of access into the community.
- ✧ Caring for all individuals within the community, based on *mitzvot* and the principle of *gemilut hesed* (deeds of loving kindness).
- ✧ Valuing all members of the community in their varying ideologies and explorations of Judaism.
- ✧ Coming together around shared Jewish values.
- ✧ Sharing "Jewish Time" — the rhythm of the Jewish calendar and cycle of Jewish life.
- ✧ Expanding opportunities to put Jewish ideals such as *tikkun olam* and *tzedakah* into practice.
- ✧ Enabling a connection to:
 - Israel both historically and as a modern state struggling with Jewish issues and democratic principles.
 - The entire Jewish People (*Am Yisrael*) locally, nationally, and world-wide.
- ✧ Facilitating the growth of individuals as outlined above.



Temple Emanu-El Prayer Weekend...
Mr. Adler showing Ben Freedman how to put on t'fillen, as his father, Carl Freedman, looks on.



Hand crafted art objects — Yad - whitewood by Yelena Bateman Prozdor - Dreidle on skewer by Ezra Flam - Tzedakah box (triangular) by Rachel Lieberman - Curly Yad by Max Dwares.

Some quotations from Menachem Brinker's "What an 'Educated Jew' Needs to Know"

"...an educated Jew must know everything any educated person anywhere in the world must know, plus many subjects related to his own people, its history and its culture...."

"The grand issue of Jewish and particularly Hebrew culture of the last two hundred years...has been the way in which the Jewish people has been integrated into the family of nations and Jewish culture into western civilization. This has entailed a close examination in our literature of the unique nature of the people of Israel, the future of this uniqueness and its limitations...The last thing which Jewish educators should do is to conceal from their students the extremely problematic nature of this great issue....In my opinion this very subject - the meeting between Jewish culture and western culture, and the entry of the Jew into the modern world, with all its possibilities and dangers - must be reflected [through the educational process]."

"I too believe that the primary goals of the Jewish curriculum must be the creation of a 'good Jew'. But in contrast to my colleagues, I do not envision a single portrait of the 'good Jew'."

"For our purposes, a 'good Jew' is one who is intellectually and emotionally involved in the 'here and now' of the Jewish people, aware of the problems, dangers and opportunities of Jewish life and willing to take an active part in it....The emphasis must be placed precisely upon the tremendous pluralism of Jewish culture and Jewish experience in general."

"The educator must develop within his student an empathy for different, even polaric positions both in ancient Jewish history and within the modern Jewish experience. It is incumbent upon the educator to help his student to identify with the zealots and with Josephus..., with the zionists as well as with the doubters...This ability to [empathize with all positions and groups] is the only explanation I can give for the well-known slogan 'love of Israel'. "I find absolutely nothing wrong in teaching the history, the culture, and the literature of this nation as an uninterrupted series of polemics and conflicts which do not lend themselves to a single harmonious resolution binding upon all Jews. The one and only condition which appears to me to be important is that this education provide the student with the feeling that there is still a future for the Jewish people and for Jewish culture, together with the arguments and differences of opinion in respect to basic issues. The modest task of education must be to prepare the student to take part in these same arguments and disagreements and to take an active part in the life of his people, through a deep sense of belonging as well as a high level of self-awareness.."

From: Alvan Kaunfer <Kaunfer@compuserve.com>
To: Pekarsky <danpek@maccc.wisc.edu>
Date: 7/9/97 7:16pm
Subject: Torah at our session

Dan

OK, here's a thought: I found the following in the "gleanings" section on Masey in the Plaut (Reform) Torah--in good Rabbinic fashion, it combines both your goals: parashat hashavua with vision theme: (it's from Ahad H'Am's "Moses", Leon Simon Trans., p. 325)

So the Prophet remains in the wilderness, buries his own generation, and trains up a new one. Year after year passes, and he never grows weary of repeating to this growing generation the laws of righteousness that must guide its life in the land of its future; never tires of recalling the glorious past in which these laws were fashioned. The past and the future are the Prophet's whole life, each completing the other. In the present he sees nothing but a wilderness, a life far removed from his ideal; and therefore he looks before and after. He lives in the future world of his vision and seeks strength in the past out of which that vision-world is quarried.

Forty years are gone, and the new generation is about to emerge from its vagabond life and take up the broken thread of the national task, when the Prophet dies, and another man assumes the leadership and brings the people to its land...

We could add a couple of significant paragraphs:
(from the subsequent part p.327-328:)

Israel has never lived in the present. The present, with its evil and wickedness, has always filled us with anguish, indignation, and bitterness...The Jew is both an optimist and a pessimist; but his pessimism has reference to the present, his optimism to the future. This was true of the Prophets, and it is true of the people of the Prophets.

(from the earlier part p.311-312:)

The Prophet has two fundamental qualities, which distinguish him from the rest of mankind. First he is a man of truth. He sees life as it is, with a view unwarped by subjective feelings; and he tells you what he sees just as he sees it, unaffected by irrelevant considerations...

Secondly, the Prophet is an extremist. He concentrates his whole heart and mind on his ideal, in which he finds the goal of life, and to which he is determined to make the whole world do service, without the smallest exception. There is in his soul, a complete ideal world; and on that pattern he labors to reform the external world of reality. He has a clear conviction that so things must be, and no more is needed to make him demand that so they shall be. He can accept no excuse, can consent to no compromise, can never cease thundering his passionate denunciations, even if the whole universe is against him.

Q's:

- * In what way is Moses (or Ahad Ha'am's Moses) a person with vision?
-and what can we learn from that?
- * What is the relationship between past, present and future in the visioning process?
- * Does a vision driven institution need an "extremist" as A H'Am describes him?

By the way --this was fun, so don't worry about vacation.

alvan