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

Series F: CIJE Accrual, 1981-2011, undated.
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Strategic Plan. Emerald City. Strategic planning, interviews, 1996.

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SELECTED INTERVIEW QUOTES FROM STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

ideas
needs and hopes?

How do these quotations cohere - or fail to cohere - with your own views? What resonates? What doesn't? What's missing?

Social action

"Progressive social action nurtured by Jewish tradition. In the envisioned community Jews will be actively involved in addressing cutting-edge issues informed by concerns and idioms that are grounded in Judaism. At a time when the future of the Creation is in doubt, ecological concerns will figure prominently in their efforts."

Learn

"The sense of learning as a holy activity will be revived (to be distinguished from the kind of Jewish Studies learning that goes on in universities). I imagine a future in which the Jewish public is well educated and receptive to serious study."

"Jews and Judaism have much to learn from other cultural and religious traditions, e.g., Eastern religious thought. The envisioned Jewish community will be seriously receptive to wisdom of other traditions, and will communicate its teachings to them."

"The vocabulary of Jewish life -- terms like "mitzvot" and "prayer" -- reflect a theory/theology that is no longer credible to contemporary Jews... There is a need to formulate a theoretical outlook that undergirds this vocabulary so that it does not seem foreign to our outlook. In the Jewish community I hope for, one of two things will be true: either this problem will have been overcome through the development of outlooks that render traditional concepts meaningful once again for different sub-groups; or, in the absence of that, there is an honest acknowledgment that the old theories don't work, and an ongoing search for new theories."

"In the modern world, the same message that would convince a non-Jew to become Jewish is the one that would convince contemporary Jews to identify as Jews, and this message will be a religious message. It is religion, rather than culture or ethnicity, that is the key to the Jewish future. If the religious dimension is diminished in order to achieve respectability, the result will be disastrous for Jewish life."

"We need new religious forms that respond to people's need for and that nurture spirituality. While traditional religious activities like davening would not disappear, I hope for a future in which there are new religious forms -- for example, meditation groups that gather regularly, silent retreats... I also imagine a reinvigoration of traditional practices like Shabbat, enriched by a new awareness of its spiritual power."

Spirituality

"Texts will continue to be central... but our understanding of texts need to be broadened to include the arts, e.g. painting, drama, movies, fiction. The arts have the potential to engage mind and heart, and they can be springboards to big Jewish ideas and to more traditional texts..."

"I am the voice of an element of the Jewish community that has been dismissed, the secular Jews. It is a disaster for those Jews..."

Secular

Learn

→ Broad-text

"We need new kinds of social/religious institutions, responding to the need for authentic community in a pluralistic context."

"Educating institutions that are internally pluralistic are to be welcomed, especially institutions that overcome the secular-religious divide. The pluralism is to be reflected in three ways: diversity of clientele, content representing a multitude of outlooks, a non-doctrinaire spirit of inquiry."

"Revitalize the synagogue, the synagogue as the center of Jewish life. Different synagogues should have different flavors, the way the Hasidic courts used to...some ecstatic, some contemplative. Now there's a loss of particularity."

Synagogues

"The mission statement of at least half of the congregations has to change. Instead of their current role as a place for occasional prayer and education for the young, synagogues need to become important centers of Jewish life...The themes of spirituality and social justice need to be the prominent features of these congregations. To talk about Jewish learning without talking about social justice is to marginalize it and make it irrelevant."

"While planning by central organizations can be very fruitful (as in the case of Ramah), grass-roots movements can also give rise to powerful forms of Jewish life (as with the Chavurah movement). Jewish communal life is organized in such a way that it tends to be dismissive of grass-roots voices and initiatives."

"There is a need to understand deeply the varied segments of our populations and to inquire carefully about how Jewish experiences could fit into the design of their lives [as compared with] changing people so that they fit into the institutions we've constructed."

"[In my preferred future, Jewish education and life are] profoundly enriched because many groups that are today neglected, dismissed, and/or marginalized are taken seriously as full-fledged members of the community and also as clients and resources for Jewish education. These groups include women, gays and lesbians, Russian immigrants, Converts, post-career adults, and mid-career adults."

"Synagogues are the most pathological of our institutions: I have no optimism about changing the situation. We need alternative institutions..."

"I have some anxiety concerning the ability of synagogue-like institutions to respond quickly enough to changes in need and sensibility in the community. I worry that they will always be twenty years behind the time. Hence, a need for more flexible, more responsive kinds of institutions."

~~"The relationship between the person and the institution needs to change. Membership in synagogues will have to feel very different. It will not just be writing a check."~~

INTERVIEW QUOTES ON SYNAGOGUES

“Revitalize the synagogue; the synagogue as the center of Jewish life. Different synagogues should have different flavors, the way the hasidic courts used to. Some ecstatic; some contemplative. Now there’s a loss of particularity. As in music, all orchestras are beginning to sound alike, as conductors grow international by traveling from city to city as guest conductors.”

“We need to focus on changing the synagogue.”

“Need to reinvent the synagogue as a center for life-long learning and for living Jewishly.”

“There should be a lot of options in synagogues. The Jewish Community should support the synagogues as a whole. A Jew in one synagogue should be responsible for all Jews in all synagogues.”

“”Synagogues are the most pathological of our institutions: I have no optimism about changing that situation. We need alternative institutions for thinking and planning, but I am not good at imagining institutions that don’t yet exist.”“

“I have some anxiety concerning the ability of synagogue-like institutions to respond quickly enough to changes in need and sensibility in the community. I worry that they will always be twenty years behind the time. Hence, a need for more flexible, more responsive kinds of institutions.”

“We must do something to improve the synagogue. “Until you have institutions that are vibrant and have meaning what is the point of outreach. We have to create congregations that touch young families.”“

“The mission statement of at least half of the congregations has to change. Instead of their current role as a place for occasional prayer and for education of the young, synagogues need to become important centers of Jewish life that transform the world view of the young families that pass through them. The themes of spirituality and social justice need to be the prominent features of these congregations. “To talk about Jewish learning without talking about social justice is to marginalize it and make it irrelevant.”

INTERVIEW QUOTES ON FUNDING

"Jewish preschool through high school should be available for all who want it regardless of their financial means."

\$ for universal ed. ~~B~~

"Federations should not be taking on the continuity agenda. Let them do social services, which they do well and want to do. The family foundations should take on Jewish identity and continuity issues."

"We need to shift resources from outmoded needs--i.e. health and human services--except for a few target areas. Do not do symbolic funding."

"The community should pick up half the cost of summer camp."

"Money - "This is the 2000 LB gorilla that no one is addressing. Do we really have the resources for a quality system? We need to raise teachers salaries if we want better quality education.""

"Federations should not be in the business of continuity, they should focus on social services. Federation personnel are not qualified to make decisions about continuity and education. The culture of the Federation is wrong. The people were hired years ago to make decisions on social services. Now the same people are being asked to allocate money in a field they know nothing about."

INTERVIEW QUOTES ON CONTENT

"I draw on the model of chasidism. There are huge social barriers between today's chasidism and most Jews in America, and so it's hard to get the teachings out. But in Jewish learning, many Jews are in the same impoverished state that the Baal Shem Tov saw. The great success of the Jewish renewal movement was to integrate the teachings of chasidism into a liberal Judaism."

"Social action committees should be formed in all communities. People need to feel empowered to want to make change. By using the context of social causes, Jewish people can join in helping each other while learning about being Jewish and feel connected to what it means to truly live a Jewish life."

Relevance
Engage
life
"There is too little philosophy taught. There is no moral rationale. "My teachers here have good Hebrew grammar but they can't tell you why we read the book of Jonah."

"We have ignored the emotional life. We have to relate Judaism to the emotional life. We have to teach spiritual intelligence."

secular
"I am the voice of an element of the Jewish community that has been dismissed, the secular Jews. It is a disaster for those Jews and for the secular community."

Ethics
- not ritual
"One of the reasons that Jewish education doesn't take is because the focus is on ritual performance, not on an ethical system."

"We need to use Jewish methods of learning, e.g. hevruta. Children need to experience love for learning."

"We need a much broader understanding of what is appropriate content for Jewish education. The arts, for example, need a much more prominent place."

changes
educ
"We need new religious forms that respond to people's need for and that nurture spirituality- While traditional religious activities like davening would not disappear, I hope for a future in which there are new religious forms -- for example, meditation groups that gather regularly, silent retreats, religious services in which meditation figures much more prominently than it does today. I also imagine a reinvigoration of traditional practices like Shabbat, enriched by a new awareness of its spiritual power."

"Jewish educating institutions do not need to offer students "answers." But they do need to be environments in which honest acknowledgment of what we're uncertain about, genuine questions and serious inquiry on the part of teachers and students are welcome."

"Texts will continue to be central to Jewish education, but our understanding of texts needs to be broadened to include the arts, e.g. painting, drama, movies, fiction. The arts have the potential to engage mind and heart, and they can be springboards to big Jewish ideas and to more traditional texts (knowledge of which is often critical to an understanding of artistic productions)."

“As against much narrowly academic learning, the emphasis is on learning that engages the intellect and the heart and that is relevant to the learner’s own concerns and circumstances.”

“The focus should be on **peoplehood**. Tradition, culture, people, history should be at the core. God, Israel, art are electives.”

“Education and practice cannot be divided. Every event, every community meeting should be predicated with some type of study in order to integrate learning into everything we do.”

“A system by which more and better curricular materials would be continuously developed.”

Customer-research
Sense of crisis
Existence-proof
Leads
Change agents/consultants
Shul/school
Holistic-no bullet

\$/People

INTERVIEW QUOTES ON CHANGE

"The first and more sure route to change is lay leadership -- an accepted, established, wealthy lay leader who is willing to work and give money. You can downgrade a little but below the B+ level, you don't get anything; The second route is a Federation executive who is on fire with the idea of Jewish Education and seeks to attract that kind of lay leader. An A+ Federation executive can do it with a B+ lay leader."

Lay leadership

"To fix the continuity crisis you have to deal with the primary institutions that touch Jewish lives: the synagogue and the school."

↑ Primary service inst.

"We have a holistic series of things to be addressed. When you fragment them you don't get anything."

Address everything

"The real problem is change agents. If I had to pick something that I think CIJE should do strategically, it would be to create a generation of change agents for the Jewish World."

change-agents

"There is a tendency to look for a magic bullet. There is no magic bullet. Education is a cumulative process over a lifetime."

No magic bullet

"The key to change is a charismatic rabbi or lay leader -- it's contagious. There is a vacuum of leadership in the 40-to-late 50's age group. There are no paths to create younger leaders."

"We need people who understand and can counsel people through change."

change agents

"The Community should provide studies -- customer research. This is currently seen as too expensive."

"Consultancy for educational institutions that want to change."

"To change the culture you need different people."

"You have to convince people that there is a crisis."

"We have to demonstrate excellence."

"We need strategies to enable each organization to see and accomplish its mission."

"You are either in or you are alienated. We need to find vehicles for the alienated people to come in."

"Money effects change; The right person effects change."

"To transform the North American Jewish community" is not a realistic goal. We will never involve the majority of Jews in substantive Jewish life. Perhaps we can engage a significant

Who 'Be realistic' - only a minority
grass roots

minority. In modernity, Jews will go where the action/opportunities lie. The Holocaust added to the Jewish psychic need to "make it" in the U.S.. For the majority of Jews, then, Jewish life will not be at the center of their concern."

"I believe in encouraging grass-roots developments - A variety of Jewish practices continue to emerge from the grassroots, e.g., the modern form of Chanukah, Tu B'shvat Seders, vegetarian Kashrut, Women's Rosh Chodesh groups. The envisioned Jewish community will be open and responsive to such movements from the grassroots."

"While planning by central organizations can be very fruitful (as in the case of Ramah), grass-roots movements can also give rise to powerful forms of Jewish life (as with the Chavurah movement). Jewish communal life is organized in such a way that it tends to be dismissive of grass-roots voices and initiatives. Greater attention to, as well as respect and support for, grass-roots initiatives that "bubble up" is highly desirable.

"Related to the above point, there is a tendency not "to listen to the customer" -- a tendency to be so focused on what we think people should want that we don't listen to or treat seriously what they in fact want."

"There is also insufficient attention to certain groups -- women (whose hurts and aspirations are ignored); gays and lesbians (a lively, but marginalized constituency, with much to offer); and non-Jews living with Jews (who, given the demographic trends, we ignore at our peril)."

"There is a need to understand deeply the varied segments of our populations and to inquire carefully about how Jewish experiences could fit into the design of their lives. This approach is to be contrasted with one that emphasizes changing people so that they fit into the institutions we've constructed."

"There are two groups of adult Jews who should be the focus of continuity efforts: the learned and the learning. We should focus on moving the people in the middle up to the higher levels and on supporting education for those who are already learned. We don't need large numbers."

"We need to invest in the basics. We have already discovered most of the techniques of Jewish life. There is so much catch-up to do, we don't need path-breaking work. We need better recruitment and training. We need more camps. We need better Israel trips. We know how to do these things, we just need to do them."

"Continuity is a local problem-- I do not see the point of national organizations."

"In the modern world, the same message that would convince a non-Jew to become Jewish is the one that would convince contemporary Jews to identify as Jews, and this message will be a religious message. It is religion, rather than culture of ethnicity, that is the key to the Jewish future. If the religious dimension is diminished in order to achieve respectability, the result will be disastrous for Jewish life."

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"Contemporary Judaism needs to develop the confidence that "we have it", i.e. that Judaism offers compelling answers to like's most serious challenges and questions; in this weak sense, a self-confident evangelistic Judaism is desirable."

"I oppose the Steven M. Cohen/Jack Wertheimer approach that views a clear split between inreach and outreach. This is too fixed a dichotomy. I strongly feel that there is a general hunger for meaning out there among the Jews and that people in the community are disappointed. We need to pay attention to the wide spectrum of people and to offer a wide spectrum of programs and ideas. Who knows what will touch people? There may be many ways into the community and those of us on the inside don't recognize and we may not appreciate the need for lots of different ways in."

"My approach to change is two-directional. I believe that we need to support transformational change in existing institutions, but we also need ideas from the outside, from the fringes, which can give new content to transformative efforts."

"We need: People who can carry ideas; ideas that carry meaning; and cultural change in institutions that support those ideas or allow them to happen."

"I am very taken with the idea that cultural change in the Jewish community will need a bigger version, something that leaps and soars. I believe that CIJE should be putting thinking out into the community that will inspire people and institutions."

"I am excited about developing a kind of trans-denominational institution that would bring both thinkers and practitioners together for a short term stay (like a summer), along with lay people to work on creating these big ideas. "An Aspen Institute, but producing products-- writing and projects." Thinkers would have a chance to do applied work based on their knowledge. One could explore ideas about Judaism and work or Jewish sources and community policy in a "time to think" atmosphere, but the outcome wouldn't be academic products, but inspirational ideas and projects."

"In my vision of the future, a fourth to a half of parents are learned or respectful of learning. They will transform education for their children."

"We now have a loose confederation of competing institutions. Wouldn't it be better to have a more organized, systemic approach?"

"I don't believe education is the first step. First you experience, then you learn. People go to BJ. First they experience the service, then they want to learn Hebrew." It is about creating structures that make people want to learn."

Idea
System

} Focus on adult learning

INTERVIEW QUOTES ON VISION

"There would be a lot of inspiring institutions. The Community would provide the resources to help them get that way. The result would be a community that lives Jewishly. We should measure success by how Jewish they are."

Post Deno
"The community I hope for will be trans- or post-denominational in its orientation, a community with a strong sense of Klal Yisrael."

Educator
"In my preferred future, serious education is going on with the elderly, with very young children, and with every age-group in between."

"The sense of learning as a holy activity will be revived (to be distinguished from the kind of Jewish Studies learning that goes on in universities). I imagine a future in which the Jewish public is well-educated and receptive to serious study."

"Jews and Judaism have much to learn from other cultural and religious traditions, e.g., Eastern religious thought. The envisioned Jewish community will be seriously receptive to the wisdom of other traditions, and will communicate its teachings to them."

Group Soc. Action
"Progressive social action nurtured by Jewish tradition. In the envisioned community Jews will be actively involved in addressing cutting-edge issues informed by concerns and idioms that are grounded in Judaism. At a time when the future of the Creation is in doubt, ecological concerns will figure prominently in their efforts."

New ideas structure
Doubt etc
"The vocabulary of Jewish life -- terms like "mitzvot" and "prayer" reflect a theory/theology that is no longer credible to contemporary Jews who have been reared in modernity. There is a need to reformulate the theoretical outlook that undergirds this vocabulary so that it does not seem foreign to our outlook. In the Jewish community I hope for, one of two things will be true: either this problem will have been overcome through the development of outlooks that render traditional concepts meaningful once again for different sub-groups; or, in the absence of that, there is an honest acknowledgment that the old theories don't work, and an ongoing search for new theories."

"The Jewish community will have many streams, some largely secular in orientation; but religious streams will continue to enjoy a special place in the life of the community."

Diff. but similar
"Though different from one another in varied ways, the sub-groups making up the Jewish community will recognize themselves as members of the same community by virtue of various characteristics, including a shared calendar, shared history and fate, a shared symbol-system, and ethical concern."

"Jewish education is profoundly enriched because many groups that today are neglected, dismissed, and/or invalidated and marginalized are taken seriously as full-fledged members of the community and also as clients and resources for Jewish education. These groups include

Inclusivity

women, gay and lesbians, Russian immigrants, Converts, post-career adults, and mid-career adults."

"Existing educational settings like day schools are significantly improved, and other educational forms, particularly those with a camp-like character, are very prominent. Common in this preferred future are after-school programs, the creative use of weekends, and educational journeys or pilgrimages for children (and sometimes also for their families) that begin early in the child's life."

New
kinds
of
educ.
forms

"A system that works together rather than competitively."

→ Coherence

vs old ones

INTERVIEW QUOTES ON INSTITUTIONS

"The relationship between the person and the institution needs to change. Membership in synagogues will have to feel very different. It will not just be writing a check."

"We ^{need} new institutions: Meditation centers and summer retreat centers for adults because the existing institutions do not meet these needs."

New kinds of institutions

"I guess 5-10% of institutions are vibrant centers of Jewish living. The question is: can we get to 20% with a combination of strategic planning, research & development and professional training?"

"We have a product problem -- the institution. What is the point of outreach if the institutions are broken?"

"The possibility of a quasi-virtual university In addition to adult study-groups (which have come into their own), there are educational opportunities that build on new electronic and interactive technologies: E-mail and videoconferencing, for example, offer new opportunities, particularly if combined with opportunities for meaningful face-to-face contact."

"We need new kinds of social/religious institutions, responding to the need for authentic community in a pluralistic context. In addition to Chavurah-like institutions, I envision a future in which a mix of differently-oriented religious groups would share a common building: davening separately and differently, they would come together for Kiddush, for social action, and for a variety of other activities. This mix of separateness and togetherness speaks to an ideal of pluralism and community."

"Educating institutions that are internally pluralistic are to be welcomed, especially institutions that overcome the secular-religious divide. The pluralism is to be reflected in three ways: diversity of clientele, content representing a multitude of outlooks, a non-doctrinaire spirit of inquiry."

"We need real transformational stuff like Willow Creek."

Re-negotiate

Fix old institutions

vs New kinds

virtual ones

Retreat center

Meditation

Internally Pluralistic