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# **DRAFT INTERIM REPORT**

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**RF&R Israel Experience Marketing Project**

**June 9, 1987**



DRAFT INTERIM REPORT

RF&R Israel Experience Marketing Project

June 9, 1987



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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to develop a comprehensive marketing strategy for programs to bring North American youth to Israel. The object is both to increase the participation of Diaspora Jews and increase the impact of existing programs on participators.

Clearly program quality is fundamental to the achievement of this goal. Poor quality programs serve as negative marketing. American youth who travel on poorly organized programs return to the U.S. and discourage others from considering travel to Israel. In our review of programs we have not, however, attempted to evaluate the quality of the programs provided.

Our study reaffirms Cohen's finding that word of mouth is the single most important current marketing tool for every program. Quite simply, friends and relatives are more likely to speak favorably of, and urge others to participate in, outstanding programs than poor ones.

Our data is derived from 18 interviews with program directors in key organizations. Most were extremely cooperative and many expressed enthusiasm for upgrading their marketing efforts.

One limitation of our study is that we did not talk directly with participants or those interested in participating. Therefore perceptions of the target population and key players such as local Rabbis and principals of Jewish schools must necessarily reflect perceptions of directors interviewed.





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Research Confirms Current Marketing Efforts Need to be Strengthened

As way of preparation for developing a more effective marketing strategy for Israel Youth programs, RF&R interviewed 17 organizations. Many of these interviews lasted over one hour and focused on how the program was currently reaching out to its targeted audience and how effective it was in recruiting.

There are a number of important conclusions that can be drawn from this research about the existing marketing efforts. We discovered that organizations currently marketing Israel programs to young American Jews are using a variety of marketing techniques, and there are four basic tools that are relied on most heavily. These include:

- o The creation of brochures and other printed materials for direct mail programs aimed at specific target populations (members of youth organizations, those who participate in activities at Jewish Community Centers, etc.)
- o The development of advertisements
- o Holding open houses
- o Working with local Shlichim and recruiters.

Despite these marketing efforts, American youth traveling to Israel are finding out about the programs, for the most part, through word of mouth. It is clear that the marketing strategy in place at the moment is not as effective as it can be. The advertisements are considered to be almost universally ineffective (and certainly not cost effective). In many cases, the distribution of materials is reactive. When someone finds out about a program and calls for more information, materials are sent out.

Furthermore, the research revealed that there are many important marketing techniques that are not being used. For example, the least expensive opportunity -- the use of publicity -- has been untapped. There could be numerous opportunities to develop stories in the leisure, education and travel sections of local newspapers. These stories are not being developed.

Direct mail is another important marketing tool that is not being utilized to its fullest. While some organizations are using it, they have had modest results. A direct mail campaign can be cost effective if the various purveyors of programs cooperate on this (there is simply no reason why high school programs, touring programs, archaeological digs, and sports programs -- and others -- cannot be promoted together). If a teenager is not interested in one program he or she may be interested



in another. Moreover, telemarketing is yet another important technique that is simply not being used on any systematic basis.

Very few, if any, of the organizations we met with had systematic approaches to marketing -- each purveyor seems to work independently. There are marketing techniques that would not be cost effective for them to use independently, but which would be cost effective on a collaborative basis. The lack of cooperation is also resulting in redundant mistakes. One organization is not learning from the mistakes of others. This applies not only to marketing but to ensuring that the trips themselves are of the highest quality.

#### Recommendations

Based on the research, RF&R recommends the development of three pilot projects. These are:

o **Pilot Project #1: Establishment of Resource Center**

One of our most important recommendations is that an Israel Recruitment Resource Center be established. This is a Center of professional expertise to take responsibility for implementation of collaborative marketing efforts and to work with each of the existing organizations to help improve the quality of their independent marketing efforts.

To test the impact the Resource Center could have, we recommend that -- for the first year -- the Resource Center should focus its energies on helping to strengthen the marketing efforts within two to three cities. In addition to this test, we also feel that the effectiveness of two specific marketing approaches should be tested in pilot

cities.

- o Pilot Project #2: Testing the Effectiveness of Direct Mail and Telemarketing

Direct mail is the single most under-utilized marketing technique in the programs evaluated. Yet it can be without doubt the most effective way to reach un-affiliated Jews. A direct mail and telemarketing campaign targeted on both high school and college age youth could yield significant results at a modest cost.

- o Pilot Project #3: Marketing Israel Incentive Savings Programs

We recommend initiating a program to encourage parents and grandparents when their child is young to set up a savings account which would be used only to send their child to Israel. The program could be organized through Hebrew schools as well as a variety of other outlets.

### Conclusion

While some significant strides have been made in efforts to encourage American youth to visit Israel, RF&R believes that there are still a number of opportunities that can be capitalized on. We believe that the approach we have suggested will enhance the overall existing marketing program and reach out to expand its audiences both in the affiliated and unaffiliated segments of the American Jewish community.

**PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS**



## OVERALL OBSERVATIONS

Before outlining our overall plan for increasing youth travel to Israel, we felt it would be beneficial to make a number of observations about the marketing strategies presently being used.

What we have learned so far confirms the suspicion that programs designed to bring American youth to Israel are poorly marketed.

- o Most recruiting is done by word of mouth. This limits the reach of recruiting in affiliated groups and makes it difficult to recruit in the non-affiliated population.
- o The materials used in promoting the various programs are poorly designed. They do not convey an impression of sophistication.
- o Publicity does not seem to be used at all by the various program organizers to interest potential participants.
- o The Shlichim and other recruiters do not seem to be used particularly well.

In addition to this, the existing programs are competing with, rather than cooperating with, each other. They are therefore duplicating each other's efforts, and making



the same mistakes again and again. They are making the same mistakes not only from a marketing point of view but also in terms of delivering the highest quality programs.

One of the problems is that if the Jewish Agency were to give grants to individual programs in its efforts to improve marketing in the Israel Experience Program, it would be favoring one group over another and run the risk of creating political problems. It would also not be getting the most mileage for its dollars since its funds would help the marketing for one program or a few programs, rather than many. There have been conversations about creating an overall agency that would be funded by the Jewish Agency. This overall agency would be responsible for marketing all existing programs.

#### The Quality of Marketing Efforts

The existing recruitment programs for the most part do not have the benefit of experienced professional skills and there does not seem to have been much overall strategic thinking in the field as to how to achieve significant advances in recruitment. Word of mouth remains the dominant means of bringing participants into most of the programs. While funds and energies are spent on brochures, advertisement, and mailings,



the consensus is that these have not proven to be particularly effective. One striking example is the advertisements run by the Young Judea program in Hadassah's publication. The publication has a circulation of 350,000. The advertisements produced only 15 participants for this summer's program.

Can Youth Travel to Israel be Expanded Through Existing Programs or do New Initiatives Need to be Launched?

In our discussions, we have somewhat arbitrarily established a goal of doubling the number of American youth who travel to Israel as part of organized programs within the next two or three years. An important question is whether this goal can be achieved by strengthening and giving greater focus to current programs or whether it can only be achieved by developing entirely new kinds of programs to supplement those already in place.

The question itself poses a dilemma. Many of those who are involved in existing programs would believe it to be a major accomplishment if they could achieve a modest increase each year — which would fall far short of our goal. At the same time, one cannot help wondering if current recruitment rates of 1% to 5% of membership groups in targeted age categories is a reliable measure of real potential. For example:

- o B'nai B'rith Youth Organization has 25,000 members of high school age, yet only 300 participants are slated to travel to Israel this summer on one of their programs.
- o The North American Federation of Temple Youth has 30,000 members of high school age, yet for this summer only 1,500 are enrolled in Israel programs.
- o United Synagogue Youth has 17,000 high school age members, and for 1987 almost 700 are scheduled to travel to Israel.

The same limited response can be found among Young Judea members, the National Council of Synagogue Youth, and others.

While we believe it will be worthwhile to experiment with new programs, we also believe that a concentrated effort in existing programs can also result in a significant increase in the percentage of response. If we could help one or two programs to double their rate of response among members, they could be models for other membership groups on how to raise the level of recruitment among existing programs.

### Developing Results-oriented Marketing Techniques

Before one can identify the most effective marketing techniques, it is critical to identify the target audience. From what we have learned, we strongly believe that the affiliated should be as important a targeted group as the unaffiliated. Enhanced and innovative marketing techniques will improve recruitment among affiliated groups. They constitute a positively pre-disposed group and we do not feel that the potential here is being adequately tapped.

An axiom of modern marketing thinking is to maximize efforts aimed at target audiences where a strong positive response has been clearly demonstrated. Consumer marketing companies have found that increased sales support in markets that are already successful is far more productive than pouring money into low-yield or untested markets. This does not mean that new markets should be ignored. It does suggest, however, that the high promise segments of the population (members of committed organizations) continue to offer the greatest opportunity for growth, and that the new market areas (the unaffiliated) should be approached cautiously with experimental pilot projects.

## MARKETING BARRIERS

In our research we found that there are seven basic marketing barriers: lack of information, cost of programs, American work ethic, fear of the unknown when traveling to Israel, fear of terrorism, separation, and impact of this type of travel on future career opportunities.

### Information

Despite the mailing of brochures and the dissemination of information through other means, there is a widespread feeling that many young people (as well as parents) who would be potentially interested in Israel programs do not know how to get information about them. There are also many who have not thought of an Israel program because no direct appeal to them has been made. The information is not getting out to enough people, or in many cases to the right people.

### Cost

Money is clearly critical, and large numbers of potential applicants apparently never initiate the application process because the cost seems prohibitive. Clearly, dissemination of knowledge of scholarship and financial aid possibilities is nearly as important as that of the program itself.



The availability of financial aid varies greatly among programs and is certainly one of the major factors underlying differential recruitment success in member-based programs.

Expense limitations appear to be a recurrent problem for single parents.

Cost is not just measured in terms of disposable income -- it has a subjective dimension also. The intensity of commitment to the idea of sending children to Israel is probably as important as their income. To a family making \$80,000 but having no commitment to send their child to Israel, \$2,000 may well be regarded as excessive. What is operative here is not cost, but value and belief as a motivating force. A handful of programs

have found a way to translate commitment into economic benefit by offering discounts to early applicants.

There are also opportunity costs which may be taken into consideration. The expense of an Israel summer program may be actually higher than its actual cost since those 16 and over could make money by staying at home and getting summers jobs -- typically between \$800 and \$2,000.

#### Work Ethic

The American work ethic is a powerful deterrent to some.



A trip to Israel is regarded as a luxury, not a productive summer devoted to work or study. Certainly one of the primary benefits of even a short trip to Israel is a chance to break out of the materialistic lifestyle that characterizes many American Jews. But the intangible rewards of such a trip may become apparent only after arrival in Israel.

#### Apathy, Inertia, and Fear of the Unknown

Apathy, inertia, and fear have been powerful deterrents for some target audiences. These are dealt with most effectively by the Muss High School in Israel program. There the local Director of Admissions, whether recruiting individually or with a group in a classroom, appeals to students on an emotional basis that seems to overcome whatever natural reservations they may feel.

Many of the students take action immediately after the presentations from the DA. Many of them fill out application form when hearing about the program. Other programs which encounter uncertainty and anxiety among young people and parents would do well to emulate the Muss model.

#### Security and Fear of Terrorism

Most parents and children think of Israel in terms of what is reported in the media, especially television. This creates a fear of being sent into a "war zone." Recruiting is far more successful with parents who have

been to Israel and know that media coverage is often highly exaggerated.

Facts and statistics are helpful. But the issue really comes down to trust -- "Is this a person/organization I can trust to take care of my child?" Ultimately this is a question which must be answered convincingly.

Advertising in the mass media is not likely to be effective in building this sense of trust. It may be able to plant the seed for the idea of going to Israel on a summer project, but the "sale" has to be made on a personal basis.

#### Separation

Separation is also an important factor for parents. Many see separation looming as their child approaches adulthood, and they are reluctant to hasten the process. The concern over separation increases as a function of time and distance (thus one-year programs for high school students will always have a more limited market than summer programs).

#### Impact of Travel in Israel on Career Choices

Secondary fears that travel to Israel will adversely affect a career, or that a son or daughter will become "too religious," or will decide to live in Israel, can be factors that adversely affect recruitment efforts.

## RECOMMENDED PILOT PROGRAMS

We recommend that three pilot projects be undertaken as phase two of this effort. These should be designed to test out new marketing initiatives which we believe can produce a significant increase in Israel youth program participation. The purpose of the pilot projects would be to find out on a limited scale which efforts achieve the greatest results on the most cost-effective basis.

These pilot projects should provide a sound foundation for a national marketing program which could be launched as Phase Three of this effort.

### Pilot Project #1: Establishing an Israel Recruitment Resource Center

The assumption of this Resource Center, which would serve all of the national organizations involved with youth travel to Israel, is that some centralized means should be found to take new initiatives and to provide ongoing marketing expertise for existing programs. Although part of our initial mandate was to provide marketing help to existing organizations in the course of our interviewing process, it has become clear to us that this need cannot be met on a one-time basis. We found almost unanimous enthusiasm for the idea of providing professional help through this project, but what is being sought is guidance and support on a continuing



basis rather than a few suggestions to improve current efforts. Making sure that new ideas are implemented effectively is as important as coming up with the ideas.

While we believe that the Resource Center ultimately will be helpful to all recruiting efforts, we feel that its effectiveness needs to be tested and its activities prioritized. During the first year, therefore, a number of projects should be undertaken on a pilot basis.

We recommend that the Resource Center concentrate its efforts on two or three test cities to provide data for more extensive programming in the future. Some of the work done by the Resource Center will have applications nationally (such as the designing of brochures), but follow-through activities should focus on the test cities in order to obtain a clear picture of the results being achieved. Among the cities we have tentatively considered for this phase of the project are Philadelphia, Los Angeles, and Peoria, Illinois. We can finalize our recommendations and elaborate on the reasons for our choice of cities in our final report.

We recommend that a budget be established as part of Phase Two for setting up a Resource Center as a one-year experiment. Among the responsibilities to be assumed by the Resource Center are:

## 1. DESIGN SUPPORT FOR RECRUITMENT MATERIALS

The Center would provide professional support in the development, design, and printing of materials used in recruiting American youth for Israel programs. This would be handled by a designer/writer/production team whose services would be provided free of charge to existing organizations. An advisory panel of top graphic communications experts could also be set up to review materials as they are developed. The goal would be to improve the quality of all materials used by the various organizations, and also to create some consistency of approach.

In making this recommendation, we recognize that each organization wants to establish its own look and special character in its printed materials, and the Resource Center team will have to keep this in mind as it provides its services. At the same time its goal will be to convey an overall positive impression for Israel youth programs among parents, teenagers, and student advisors by establishing a quality approach to materials across the board.



It is possible that significant savings can be achieved in printing if the Resource Center negotiates collective budgets for recruitment materials.

Finally, the proper use of recruitment materials will be a major concern of the Resource Center team, and professional guidance will be provided in test cities to achieve a maximum effectiveness.

## 2. REACHING OUT TO THE MEDIA

The Center would develop an ongoing public relations program focusing on getting widespread media coverage in the consumer press on the value of youth travel to Israel.

Articles can be developed in the education, leisure, and travel pages of local newspapers in test communities. The articles can describe existing programs and feature local participants. National coverage in broadcast and print media may also be sought.

One of the most effective ways to capitalize on a successful publicity effort is through a reprint program which is integrated into a sales strategy. A design should be developed for reprints of both local and national publicity

which can be used by those engaged in recruiting programs in the test cities.

3. THE CREATION OF A COMPREHENSIVE DIRECTORY

The Resource Center should develop a comprehensive Directory of Israel Programs. The Directory would serve as a critical reference guide for those in a position to influence American Jewish youth. This would provide valuable information on the program content, costs, financial aid options, and where to write or call for more information on all programs now offered.

This program Directory should be widely distributed in test cities (and nationally if possible) in the fall to Hebrew School Principals, to directors of Jewish Community Centers, to key editors of local Jewish newspapers, to appropriate editors at general newspapers, and to others in the test communities who are in a position to communicate with Jewish youth about their summer plans.

The Directory should also be sent to high school guidance counselors at major day schools, private non-religious schools, and

public schools. These guidance counselors are specifically responsible for helping high school students plan for college admissions, and as the Muss program has shown, educationally-oriented travel to Israel can effectively be marketed as an enhancement of student college application portfolio.

#### 4. THE CREATION OF A MARKETING MANUAL

The Resource Center should develop a manual to be distributed in test cities to organizational leaders and local community recruiters involved with promoting Israel programs for American youth. The manual could include material on how an organization can most effectively market itself, with sections on:

- o developing speaking opportunities
- o reaching out to the media to develop coverage
- o ways to take advantage of free public service announcement opportunities on both radio and television
- o organizing effective group presentations
- o how to organize a direct mail program
- o ways to use telemarketing

- o how to recruit local recruiters
- o building a referral basis among high school guidance counselors

##### 5. DEVELOPING A RECRUITMENT MANUAL

The Resource Center should produce an abbreviated version of the marketing manual described above for distribution to Shlichim, Hebrew School principals, Rabbis, and other current and potential recruiters.

This brochure would help those in a position to spread the word on Israel programs to improve the effectiveness of their efforts. It would tell them how to run more effective recruitment meetings (open houses) and would discuss specific techniques (mailings, telemarketing, talks, parties, picnics, etc.) that can be used in test cities to generate interest in Israel programs. The manual would discuss key points to keep in mind to make sure that these techniques are used effectively.

The manual would also provide a starting point for individual local Hebrew School or Day School principals, Rabbis, or others who would like to see more students from their community go to Israel.



## 6. TURNING ALUMNI INTO RECRUITERS

The Resource Center should set up a system of communications with the previous year's participants. A letter should be written (with a postage-paid reply card) to all those in test cities who have participated in one of the youth programs to Israel within a few months after they return to the U.S. The letter should ask whether recipients would be willing to help recruit other teenagers for Israel programs. Those who agree to be helpful should work with the local program representatives in giving presentations on the attractions of Israel programs. The program alumni should also be asked if they can recommend friends who might be interested in receiving material on an Israel program.

This approach has been used very effectively by American universities. Students still in college as well as college graduates often travel to their home town high schools to talk about their college. They give a prepared presentation and then answer questions that might arise. Using alumni of Israel programs should prove to be equally successful if properly organized.



7. USING HOME PARTY MARKETING TECHNIQUES -- "ISRAEL HOME PARTIES"

The Resource Center should set up a procedure in test cities to contact parents who are active in their local community, particularly those who have recently sent their children on one of the existing programs, and ask if they would be interested in participating in helping in the recruitment process. This technique, originally developed by the direct sales industry (Tupperware, Stanley Home Products, etc.), is based on "parties" held at someone's house witness a demonstration of new products. Similar techniques have proven to be effective in a variety of fundraising efforts.

The Resource Center could develop an experiment along this line by encouraging parents to invite other parents, particularly friends and business associates, who have teenage children (perhaps with teenagers present) to hear about the educational value of Israel programs, and to learn about the experiences of students who have gone on these programs. It may also be appropriate to use slide presentations at these parties to show parents some of the key sites their children would visit if they were to go on a particular program. A local Rabbi might also

talk about the historical importance of the sites and the educational value of the projects.

In addition, we would develop a leave-behind so those interested in receiving further information can request it.

#### 8. CREATING A RATIONALE FOR TRAVEL TO ISRAEL

The Resource Center should work with recruiters to make sure that the greatest "selling" points are emphasized in their recruiting efforts. One of the questions that we asked ourselves as we examined the marketing efforts presently under way is whether or not the current messages being used are effective in appealing to American teenagers. We have seen two that have worked exceptionally well and feel that they should be capitalized on as fully as possible in marketing programs. These themes are:

- o An educational experience in Israel can help a teenager strengthen the chance of getting in to the college of his or her choice.
- o Through a trip to Israel, a teenager will gain a better understanding of the world and experience different cultures.

#### 9. CREATION OF A VIDEOTAPE

The Resource Center should develop a generic videotape on the "American youth travel-to-Israel" experience. The tape can show a selection of historic sites, the atmosphere on some trips organized by American groups, and interviews with teenagers who have traveled to Israel, and their parents. Furthermore, we may want to consider the possibility of interviewing an admissions officer at a major college or university to find out his or her views about how a trip to Israel could enhance a student's chance of "standing out in the crowd." We might also want to interview a celebrity for such a videotape.

Some thought should be given as to whether a separate tape should be developed for teenage audiences and parents. Each audience has different concerns and respond to different messages, and different presentation techniques would need to be used.

#### 10. CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT

The Resource Center should seek to obtain celebrity endorsements as a marketing tool. There are many Jewish celebrities -- actors, singers, sports stars, journalists, writers,

politicians, etc. -- who could be approached to talk about the importance of traveling to Israel for American youth. This type of endorsement could be used at selected meetings, with the media, with quotes in printed materials, in the videotape, etc.

#### 11. CREATION OF A MARKETING THINK TANK

The Resource Center should develop a marketing think tank as part of its pilot program.

Marketing is a fluid process. Institutions are constantly refining their marketing programs and devising innovations by focusing on the marketing techniques being used. This should be done for the Israel programs as well. The Think Tank should consist of four or five of the most creative individuals presently involved with the American Jewish community, as well as marketing experts. This group should meet on a regular basis to discuss new ideas for expanding the number of teenagers traveling to Israel.

#### 12. ONGOING RESEARCH

##### Testing Price Sensitivity

Given the fact that cost is a critical obstacle in most of the programs, careful research is needed to clarify the issue of price points.



Do critical thresholds exist and if so, what are they? Would interest in specific programs rise dramatically if the cost were reduced by \$500? Is a \$900 reduction what is required, or do reductions of this magnitude have no impact?

Also important is the question of limiting subsidies to those with household incomes below a fixed level. How many people will not send their children to Israel due to cost, but would have a household income above any likely level that would be established? How many people would send their children to Israel if a subsidy were available but would never consider actually applying for financial aid? What is the relative attraction of loans versus outright grants? A survey of the interested target segment is needed to address these issues.

#### Monitoring the Recruitment Process of Purveyors

One concern we have, based on our research to date, is that there are many teenagers who are expressing interest in trips to Israel and are requesting material but never taking any steps beyond that. Are these prospects being nurtured effectively? Are presentations to them well done? Is there effective follow-up?

At what point in the recruiting process are individuals being lost and why? Is it after receiving brochures, after open houses, after a Shaliach talks to the parents, etc.? We recommend dealing with all the organizations recruiting in a single locale (Philadelphia is one possibility). We would interview participants, dropouts, and recruiters. At issue are:

- o what gaps exist between the perceptions of the recruiting organizations and the target market?
- o what circumstances or barriers intervene?
- o what are those choosing not to participate doing instead?

There may well be other important research questions that arise as The Resource Center implements the other program elements outlined in this document. It is therefore important that individuals with a strong research expertise participate in all Resource Center planning and review meetings.

Pilot Project #2: Testing the Effectiveness of Direct Mail and Telemarketing

Direct mail is the single most under-utilized marketing technique in the programs evaluated. Yet it can be without doubt the most cost-effective way to reach unaffiliated Jews. A direct mail campaign targeted on both high school and college age youth could yield significant results at a modest cost.

Since there seems to be such fragmented knowledge of the programs currently available, it would make sense to develop a catalogue of programs which could be used as a mailing piece targeted to teenage American Jewish youth. This catalogue should include a description of each program, with quotes from past participants, and should list the appropriate contacts to find out more information. It may be that photographs of Israel should be included in this catalogue, which should be similar in format and appearance to a high quality college catalogue.

A specialist in direct mail can be utilized to target Jews and Jewish students residing in the area for a mass mailing. We may want to follow up the catalogue with a postage paid reply postcard several months later to provide teenagers or parents with a second opportunity to ask for more information or an application form for a particular program. It may also make sense to follow up

the postcard with a telemarketing effort.

Since the costs of a direct mail and telemarketing effort can be quite significant, it is essential that this program be tested carefully.

Pilot Project #3: Marketing Israel Incentive Savings Programs

One of the most interesting interviews we conducted in the course of our research was with Barry Shrage of the Cleveland Federation.

Shrage expressed the view that the current educational "technology" for religious education has failed because it is for the most part a burdensome supplement to the public school curriculum. Hundreds of millions of dollars are spent annually in putting American Jewish youth through this system, and the results do not justify the expenditure. Teachers and principals at Hebrew Schools tend to see this as a curriculum problem rather than a system problem. They mistakenly believe that supplementary Jewish education is a technology that can work.

On the other hand, Shrage expressed the belief that there is a technology that is known to work. Youth trips to Israel constitute that technology. Even if students spend the entire trip on secular activities they come back with a strong Jewish identity. He therefore feels that the effort we are working on is of major importance.



The Cleveland Federation has as a stated goal that all Jewish children should go to Israel as part of their Jewish education. It has set up an "Israel Incentive Savings Program," and currently about 600 young people participate in this program (out of about 5,000 students in Cleveland Hebrew Schools). Each year for seven years a child's parents put \$100 into this program. The Hebrew School adds \$50 per year to each child's fund. The Federation adds \$80 per year. At the end of the seven year period this fund pays for the child's trip to Israel. The subsidy is obviously an important factor in this program. The fact that money is set aside in small portions each year is also important. But perhaps more important, according to Shrager, is that a trip to Israel is a planned, recognized, and accepted culmination of the Jewish education experience.

Shrager has proposed that as part of Phase Two of the marketing program, Hebrew School principals and Rabbis should be approached to consider applying the Cleveland Israel Incentive Savings Program in their own communities.

Shrager believes that we are currently only tapping 10% to 15% of the population of Jewish youth that could be reached if a trip to Israel were institutionalized. By institutionalized he means building the Israel

experience into all supplementary education programs as the culmination of Jewish education. Maximum potential would obviously be achieved if some sort of subsidy and lay-away plan were developed as part of the effort to institutionalize the program.

If a core of principals and Rabbis could be converted, they can market this idea to parents in their communities. If we find enthusiasm for this program we can work with the Rabbis and other Jewish leaders in the test markets to develop an effective marketing program. We would target parents and perhaps even grandparents. If this program were marketed effectively, it is even possible that in the future we will find grandparents starting an Israel savings fund upon the birth of their grandchildren.

This program would not have a dramatic short-term impact on the numbers of young people going to Israel. But if such a plan were adopted throughout the country, within five to seven years (depending upon the types of savings plans developed) a dramatic change would take place. We are extremely impressed with this idea and believe it should be tested as part of the next phase of the recruitment and marketing program.

## ORGANIZATIONS INTERVIEWED

### THOSE RECRUITING PRIMARILY FROM A MEMBERSHIP CASE:

1. B'nai B'rith Youth Organization
2. National Council of Synagogue Youth
3. North American Federation of Temple Youth
4. Ramah
5. United Synagogue Youth
6. Young Judea

### THOSE NOT RECRUITING PRIMARILY FROM A MEMBERSHIP BASE

1. American Zionist Youth Foundation
2. Hillel Foundation
3. Kibbutz Aliya Desk
4. Masada
5. Muss High School in Israel
6. University Programs
7. Youth Aliya