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THE ISRAEL EXPERIENCE PROJECT -- PHASE II

FROM DATA TO ACTION

PROGRESS REPORT AND PROJECT PROPOSALS

Submitted by Annette Hochstein

NATIV - POLICY AND PLANNING CONSULTANTS

February 1987

אנט הוכשטיין
ANNETTE HOCHSTEIN

Mr. Robert E. Loup Rabbi Richard G. Hirsch
Chairman Co-Chairman
The Sub-Committee on the Israel Experience Project
The Jewish Education Committee, the Jewish Agency

Dear Chairmen,


It is my pleasure to submit to you the second progress report of Phase II of the Israel Experience Project.

This report consists of two documents:

1. A progress report, with summary presentations of the specific projects presented for approval.
2. A resource booklet with background planning documents.

We will be pleased to provide additional documentation as needed.

Sincerely,


Annette Hochstein
Project Director

THE ISRAEL EXPERIENCE PROJECT -- PHASE II: FROM DATA TO ACTION

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THE ISRAEL EXPERIENCE PROJECT -- PHASE II

FROM DATA TO ACTION

PROGRESS REPORT AND PROJECT PROPOSALS - FEBRUARY 1987

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THE ISRAEL EXPERIENCE PROJECT -- PHASE II

FROM DATA TO ACTION

PROGRESS REPORT AND PROJECT PROPOSALS - FEBRUARY 1987

Submitted to the Sub-Committee on the Israel Experience Project
-- the Jewish Education Committee, the Jewish Agency --

A. Introduction

We are pleased to be able to submit this report of "work in progress" to the Committee. Indeed, in accordance with the December 1986 mandate of the Jewish Education Committee, this Sub-Committee has begun the preparation of detailed proposals for specific Israel Experience programs. Some of these proposals are ready for decision and implementation, others are in various stages of planning. Clearly, on the road from data to action - the Committee has reached the stage where decisions for immediate action can be considered.

Priorities

The proposed projects follow the rationale set-out in the previous meetings of the Committee. Feasibility and likely impact have guided the selection of programs. Young people - high-school students and young adults - have received priority consideration. As our research had indicated many more people would come to Israel given the appropriate program and conditions (S.M.Cohen, July 1986). Attracting the marginally affiliated and those who have never visited Israel has also been a priority considerations. Major purveyors of programs - such as do bring thousands of young people, who have expressed interest in working with the Committee have been approached first. Their impact is likely to affect the many.

Eight months after the conclusion of the research phase of the Israel Experience project we are pleased to submit a report that summarizes proposals for actual programs.

Background

The findings of the first phase of this project had allowed us to identify four potential areas for action (Summary report, June 1986):

1. The Expansion of Successful Existing Programs
2. The Improvement of Existing Programs
3. Innovations : programs for significant populations who have

never visited Israel

4. General "tools" for program improvement : marketing, staff training, content, monitoring and evaluation.

1. The Expansion of Successful Existing Programs

The findings pointed out the difference between better and less good programs. The Committee asked whether it would not be possible to encourage the growth of programs that have demonstrated success and quality. The Committee recommended to look into the feasibility of such expansion. The case was made for assisting better programs and for encouraging their growth and development - particularly where programs serve potential populations that the Committee wishes to give priority to.

The first two programs we are proposing to work with in this category are The A. Muss High School in Israel Program (sometimes known as the Miami program, directed by Rabbi M. Kipper) and the Am Segula program under the auspices of the WZO's Torah Education Department. The prior serves mainly marginally affiliated youth from public high-schools throughout the United States (see project 1); the latter caters to the very affiliated - Jewish day-school students from all over the world (see project 2). Both offer an intensive short-term study and touring program. We propose that both be allowed the resources to increase the number of participants: High-School in Israel from 800 to 3000 students over a period of 5 years; Am Segula from 7 classes (210 children) to 20 classes (600 children) over 3 years. We are now beginning conversation with additional programs such as the Bible Camp sponsored by the WZO's Education Department.

2. The improvement of existing programs

The data revealed that programs offered by the major purveyors were often plagued with problems affecting their quality (S.M. Cohen, 1986). At the same time it was found that there is a significant additional potential population that could be attracted to quality programs. Our challenge then was to see if we could help improve these programs so that they could fulfill their mission in the best manner. The Committee approved preliminary suggestions to develop programs with the Youth and Hechalutz department and with the Kibbutz movements (see projects 3, 4 and 5)

3. Innovations : programs for significant populations who have never visited Israel

Our data has indicated that very many young Jewish adults who do travel the world, do not visit Israel. The data allows us to believe that many would come, if suitable frameworks were made available to them, if adequate leisure programs, that could be used for the purpose of education, and with adequate tourism

infrastructure were provided, suited to the needs and interests of the 18 to 35 year olds (S.M.Cohen, July 1986). We propose to develop further the proposal of "vacation villages for young adults" and undertake detailed planning of the actual programs, the marketing, recruitment and management of such a town within the coming months.

4. "Tools" for program improvement

Marketing and recruitment for Israel programs are perceived as major stumbling blocks and problems by almost all programs purveyors. We found in fact that marketing is often done without professional know-how and is limited to narrow networks. It is suggested that the Israel Experience project deal with the problem of marketing and recruitment, by introducing a new level of professionalism into the area.

We propose to undertake a project - limited at first - in the area of marketing programs in the United States. The project involves engaging the services of experienced professionals who would study the problem together with the purveyors, and would develop a marketing strategy for Israel programs (project # 6)

Next Steps

Very much more needs doing if the Israel Experience project is to have its full impact. Numerous good programs should be expanded. Skills have to be acquired in the realms of staff, of content development and more. We need to know more about the impact of programs - about what is most likely to work. Efforts at raising the professional level of the field should be undertaken and where they exist they should be encouraged. Decisions will have to be taken as to priorities, levels of subsidies, future development of the field.

Towards the June meetings we will strive to provide the Committee with suggestions for next steps. We hope these will include additional proposals for programs, in keeping with the policies decided upon by the Committee.

The pages that follow provide summaries of the proposed programs. Background data, including budgets, will be presented at the meetings.

Proposal for the expansion of
the A.Muss High School in Israel program

Proposal prepared in Consultation with:
Rabbi M. Kipper, (International director); Rabbi Fred Guttman
(Principal, Mosenson Campus); Ms Felice Traktman (International
Director of Admissions)

Target population

Public high-school students from the USA. Increase participation
from 800 per year to 3000 per year over a period of 5 years.

Description

The program offers a two-months' course in the history of Israel to American public high-school students - many of them with little or no prior knowledge of Judaism or history of Israel. The course consists of classroom work and field trips. Approximately half of the classes are on campus and the other at significant sites in Israel. The youngsters are tutored for science, math, and second language requirements of their home schools. Participants reside on two campuses in Israel. The program is accredited in the USA and is non-denominational. This year there are approximately 800 participants. The program runs the whole year, in 5 consecutive terms of two months each. Each class is headed by an experienced teacher/educator.

The Israel Experience project has included the program in its 1985 sample participants' evaluation (S.M Cohen, Jan. 1986) has conducted a number of site visits and has consulted with experts (see resource booklet 2). In addition independent evaluations have been conducted by the program for various purposes. There is strong evidence and wide consensus that this program is one of the best available, and is in fact very good.

The proposal

We suggest that the Committee encourage this program to grow at an accelerated rate - 30% annual growth - during the next 5 years. This would raise the number of participants from 800 to 3000 per year. Following these 5 years, the program would continue to grow annually by 10%.

1. The program enjoys presently support from the Joint Program for Jewish Education - the present proposal includes this support. The program also enjoys some support from the WZO's Education Department.

The funds would serve to encourage new communities to join the program at an accelerated rate, and would largely follow present patterns of expansion and funding :

- 1) reduced program cost to participants from new communities during the first 3 years of participation
- 2) cost of directors of admission - in charge of recruitment - for their first 5 years of work, following which the local community will pay their salary. Each year of the proposed 5 years the equivalent of 2 full-time directors of admissions will be added.
- 3) Scholarship money for additional assistance to youngsters for whom the additional money would make the difference between participating or not.

Rationale

* Our data had shown that high-school students are a large potential population for Israel programs.

* This program attracts students who are not likely to visit Israel within conventional frameworks

*This is a quality program that has demonstrated ability to grow over the 14 years of its existence.

* The program addresses one of the population groups the Committee wishes to give priority to.

*The program exhibits many of the characteristics of good programs, as defined in the first phase of the project
Namely :

- *professional planning
- *quality content
- *high-level educational, administrative and social staff, involved in the planning, identifying with the goals of the program and knowledgeable about the Diaspora background and culture of the participants
- *professional and effective recruitment system (one of the few in the field)

In addition :

*This is a community-based program, which recruits in communities exclusively upon agreement with local community leaders (Federations or other community groups) and upon undertaking of local financial support for the program. Effectively the program is supported by the students and the community, following the initial years.

* We found evidence to believe that the program can muster the manpower and physical resources needed for the proposed growth.

Monitoring and evaluation

A monitoring and evaluation system will be set immediately upon approval of the project. It will include :

- financial reporting
- reporting on participation
- formative evaluation - primarily to help ensure that the quality of the program will not be affected by the effort to increase numbers.

Proposed decision

1. To approve in principle the 5-year budget subject to review and evaluation after 3 years.



Preliminary proposal for the expansion of
the "AM SEGULA" program

Project Committee

Aharon Eldar - the Torah Education Department
Dani Kahn - the Torah Education Department
Dr A.Morgenstern - National Inspector for the Teaching of History
Amos Safrai - Kfar Etsion Field School
Aryeh Rotenberg - Kfar Etsion Field School
Haim Aronovitz - Nativ Consultants

Target Population

Jewish day-school students from various countries.
At present there are close to 200 participants.
Target for 1987/88 - 360 participants (12 classes of 30)
Target for 1988/89 - 600 participants (20 classes of 30)

Description

"Am-Segula" is a 6 week to 2 months long study and tour program for Day-School student sponsored by the WZO - Torah Education Department. The program has been running for 4 years and is considered one of the better high-school programs available. Program content is partly fixed and partly set in accordance with the requests of the individual schools participating. Religious and historical themes are taught with heavy emphasis on touring the land. The staff includes part-time teachers (Hebrew, Jewish studies), counselors and teachers from the youngsters' school. The program enjoys financial support from the Joint Program, however demand for the program exceeds the available subsidies, and schools have to be turned down.

Rationale

Our evaluation data has indicated that Am Segula is one of the better programs available, ranking very high on a comparative evaluation of all programs and on the evaluation of short-term programs.

Am Segula serves a highly Jewishly-committed population. Our data indicates that many more people - particularly high-school people - would come if they could afford it. It appears that economic factors - program cost - are a key factor limiting participation.

Reports from the field indicate that when a class visits Israel in a program of this kind, its impact on the whole school - as regards attitudes to Israel and knowledge of Hebrew - is significant.

The Committee has often raised in its discussion the concern that the attempts to bring in more of the less-affiliated population to educational programs, might in fact push down on the list of priorities those good programs serving the very committed. Am Segula is just such a program.

The proposal

It is proposed to develop the Am Segula program and allow it accelerated expansion over the next two and a half years. Work has begun in January with the Department to review and plan changes and expansion. A steering committee of educators is presently at work, designing an improved and strengthened curriculum as well as a more permanent and expanded staff format. The plan is to apply this new format experimentally to two groups in the spring - one from Los Angeles, the other from India. Following the experimental run the expansion program will be designed.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring of the preliminary phase will be set up immediately jointly by Nativ and the Department. It will be carried out jointly in the first phase.

At the same time we will carry out evaluative site-visits - following the model developed with High-school in Israel, in order to advise the Committee on the program.

Proposal for the creation of
Kibbutz Institutes for Jewish Experience

Project Team

Staff : Israel Maizel for the Kibbutzim
Ami Bouganim for Nativ Consultants

Steering Group:

Len Goldzweig
Prof. Moshe Kerem
Israel Maizel
Dr David Mittelberg

Prof. S. Fox
Ami Bouganim
Annette Hochstein

Target Population

Young adults from various countries.

The Institutes will gradually replace the Kibbutz Ulpan, and will serve about 5000 young people annually, following the initial experimental phase.

Experimental phase :

Year 1 : 180 participants

Year 2 : 660 participants

Rationale

The Kibbutz Ulpan was initially set up to serve Olim within their first months of arrival in the country, and afford them the opportunity to learn Hebrew and to experience Kibbutz life. The program offers half days of study and half days of work. It is jointly sponsored by the Aliyah Department of the Jewish Agency and the Kibbutzim. The Ministry of Education contributes to the Hebrew teaching.

Over the past years the Kibbutz Ulpan has come to serve as a medium-length stay for young Jews seeking the special kibbutz experience within the framework of a visit to Israel. A small proportion of participants remain or return as Olim. For most this is what we have come to call an Israel Experience program.

A few thousand young people (2000/3000 last year, somewhat fewer this year) join the Kibbutz Ulpan annually. They come usually as individuals, recruited after arrival in Israel or through Shlichim abroad. The Kibbutz Ulpan offers a 6-months stay combining study of the Hebrew language and work on Kibbutz. Hospitality, some tours and some seminars are also offered.

Our data has shown that the present Kibbutz Ulpan has lost much of its appeal and that its quality leaves to be desired. Also the teaching of Hebrew is not as effective as it should be, the

kibbutzim are not always hosting the young in the old tradition and the program has known a general decline both in quality and in the number of participants. On the other hand our data indicates that there is a significant potential population that is keen to come to a medium-term Kibbutz experience.

The Kibbutzim have responded to the challenge of our data with extreme openness and view the work of the Committee as an opportunity to revitalize programs, upgrade them, adapt them to the needs of the late eighties and twenties. Task forces of Kibbutz educators and experts have discussed the problems and the potential for change and have designed a proposal for the planning, designing and experimental implementation of the Kibbutz Institutes. The full-blown project - following the experimental phase would offer thirty Institutes annually.

The proposal

The proposed Kibbutz Institutes for Jewish Experience are a fundamentally changed version of the Kibbutz Ulpan for the study of Hebrew. The program includes the creation of specialized Institutes in a number of Kibbutzim, who, while retaining the general Ulpan model (1/2 work, 1/2 study) will provide studies in a variety of subjects. While Hebrew will still be taught in most institutes, the emphasis will be on the subject of specialization. These subjects will include Institutes on Jewish studies subjects, Israeli Society, and more. It is proposed to set up initially four Institutes, each specializing in a different subject (Advanced Hebrew; the meaning of Jewish Identity; the Performing and Plastic Arts; the Kibbutz as Social Experiment). Each Institute will run three times a year for 3 to 3 1/2 months each time and will serve 60 participants at a time.

The carefully developed programs will offer - in addition to Hebrew teaching, formal classes in the special subject of the Institute and work, an orientation program at the beginning, a set of tours and educational workshops, and a program of interaction with the kibbutz itself. Seminars in the participants' mother tongue will be conducted at some of the specialized Kibbutz seminar centers. The interaction of the participants with the Kibbutz will be carefully developed. Thus work, family adoption, meetings with peer groups and planned participation in the cultural life of the Kibbutz will all be planned so as to engender in the participant a feeling of belonging to Kibbutz society.

The development of the various models, the training of staff, and the ongoing monitoring and evaluation will be conducted during the experimental phase by teams of experts in the various fields. (See description - Resource Booklet 2)

Monitoring and Evaluation

A monitoring and evaluation system will be set up immediately upon approval of the proposal. It will have two components :

- Financial reporting to the Committee
- Monitoring and evaluation by "Oren", the Israel Experience center of the Kibbutzim at Oranim (see below project #)



OREN - A project for comprehensive educational planning of Israel
Experience programs in Kibbutzim

target population

Approximately 20,000 participants annually in a variety of educational programs in Kibbutzim - from short-term summer visits - to year-long academic programs.

The rationale

* The Data of phase I has shown that the Kibbutz programs - while potentially attractive to many - are not as good as they were in the past or as they could be. The kibbutzim responded to the research findings with the express desire of undertaking a complete revision of their programs. The first concrete example is the proposal for the transformation of the Kibbutz Ulpanim.

* Our data informed the Kibbutzim of the extent of their involvement in Israel Programs. They have taken a new look at this involvement and are - for the first time - engaging in a centralized systematic effort to deal with the program.

* Since publication of our findings a small team of professionals - volunteers and other - have engaged in coordinating this effort. 50 Kibbutz educators, many with significant experience in Programs, have served as task-forces and think-groups. The goal of this project would be to bring Kibbutzim to view Israel Programs as a significant branch of Kibbutz activity and bring the Kibbutz to allocate the professional and other resources needed to develop this branch.

* The Kibbutzim offer a unique aspect of Israel and of Jewish existence. They are a major resource for educational purposes, and should be developed as such.

* Like most of the field Kibbutz programs suffer from poor staffing, unprofessional planning and poor logistics.

* Our proposal is for a concentrated effort to improve and professionalize Kibbutz programs. We believe this will result in increased participation and in improved impact.

The proposal

It is proposed to establish a unit for comprehensive educational planning, monitoring and evaluation of Israel Experience programs to deal with the entire population that is serviced by the kibbutz movement - approximately 20,000 people annually.

The unit will serve as a central resource for improvement, planning, innovation, monitoring and evaluation.

It will be located at Oranim - the School of Education of the Kibbutz movements.

Its first task will be to bring about the implementation of the Committee's findings and recommendations. Namely that Kibbutz programs should be revamped and improved to meet changed needs.

Monitoring and evaluation

- Financial reporting to the Committee
- Overall evaluation of the effectiveness of the Unit

This unit will include monitoring and evaluation of the Kibbutz programs. The reports will be shared with the Committee.



EXPERIMENTAL SUMMER PROGRAM - THE YOUTH AND HECHALUTZ DEPARTMENT

Project Staff

Haim Mayerson- Project Coordinator, Youth and Hechalutz Department
Jonny Ariel - " " " "
Gary Copitch - " " " "
Ami Rouganim - Nativ
Haim Aronovitz - "
Rabbi Lee Diamond - Educational Consultant to Nativ

Steering Committee, in addition to the above:

Menahem Ravivi - Director General, Youth and Hechalutz Department
Alec Meir - Director, Short Term Programs Division, Y & H Dept.
Prof.S.Fox - Senior Consultant, the Jewish Education Committee
Annette Hochstein - Nativ

Description and Target population

This is a proposal for an experimental summer program for 250-300 less-affiliated high-school students from the United States. It is to be carried out from June to August 1987 by the short-term programs division of the Youth and Hechalutz department. The goal of the program is to serve as an experimental demonstration project. If successful it can be replicated by the department on a larger scale in the summer of 1988, and will hopefully affect a large number of participants, possibly 2500-3000.

Rationale

Our research findings had indicated that the impact of many summer programs could be enhanced, and that the number of participants could be increased if their quality were improved. Clear goals, professional planning, educational leadership, adequate staffing, good logistics that come to serve the program's educational goals, appropriate recruitment and selection procedures, appropriate preparation and follow-up program, adequate budgeting - these are some of the elements that differentiate good from less good programs. We believe that the proposed experimental program will demonstrate what can be achieved by a program carefully thought out and carefully carried out with adequate human and financial resources.

The proposal

The Youth and Hechalutz department has responded to the challenge of the research and to the opportunity offered by the initiative of the Jewish Education Committee. An experimental unit was set up in its short-term program division a few months ago and has been meeting regularly to design the program and its implementation.

The proposed 6-week long program is planned for 8-9 groups of about 35 participants each. 5 of the high-school groups are regular summer tours, 3-4 groups are kibbutz-based tours. The program is characterized by different, improved and trained staffing; carefully planned content; preparation and follow-up projects; logistics suited to the proposed educational goals and plans.

* The program will have a new staff structure, with an educational leader at the head of each group. This person, generally more mature, professionally experienced and trained than the usual counsellors, is being prepared by the project to act as educator and guide throughout the summer. He/she will take part in the detailed planning of the programs, will help recruit the appropriate counselors, will take part in the orientation and will be generally in charge of the whole program.

* A new program with content guided by different educational considerations has been outlined. It affords a carefully thought out mix of leisure and educational activities, geared at the interests of the young American participants. The touring program follows a historical sequence (from the period of the patriarchs up to the present times) with special emphasis on the Second Temple period and on modern Israel. Site visits, hosting with families, meetings with exciting personalities, will provide opportunities to clarify and explain new concepts, symbols and ways of life. (See program - Resource Booklet 2)

* Youngsters will be prepared for their experience in advance of their trip and will be helped to reflect about it upon their return. An orientation program in the United States will take place prior to departure. Youngsters, who come to these programs from throughout the US, will get a chance to meet each other and will be prepared for the program. A series of Newsletters will be sent to participants, starting soon after registration and for a number of months following their return. (see description - Resource booklet 2)

A reunion may take place several months following the end of the program.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The program will be carefully monitored from its onset, with the goal of identifying problems, suggesting changes and evaluating success and formulating recommendation towards the larger scale application the following year.

VACATION VILLAGES FOR YOUNG ADULTS

Staff

Mr Ami Bouganim has developed this project with the assistance of Mr Yoram Cohen.

Target population

Several thousand 18-35 year old Jewish travellers, travelling individually or in small groups.

Description

This proposal concerns the establishment of a series of vacation villages as an innovative approach to the use of leisure for educational purposes. The project suggests to develop at first one such village, as a pilot.

The villages will offer all amenities needed to answer the needs of young tourists as well as an extensive educational infrastructure. Thus the villages will include :

Lodgings and all hotel services (at 3-4 star levels)

Tourism linked services - information, recreation, service-shopping

Adequate sports facilities and equipment

Centers for cultural activities : synagogue, auditorium, study rooms, dancing-hall etc.

In addition to its operation as a leisure center the village will include a fully trained educational staff, and will be headed by an educator of stature, capable of creating a special atmosphere in the village by virtue of inspiring the staff and the visitors.

Visitors will "buy into" the village for a given period - probably one week. During this period all the activities of the village will be available to them. These will include, besides the option to sunbathe, swim, relax and socialize with visitors from other countries as well as from Israel, a large choice of activities. For example : introductory classes on Israeli/Jewish subjects, arts and crafts studios, social events (folk dancing, singing), guest lectures, walks and tours of the area as well as longer tours throughout the country. The educational staff will be available at all times for formal and informal interaction. The atmosphere of the village will be Jewish and will strive to attract young Jews from all countries as well as a significant proportion (perhaps 30%) of Israelis.

The full-blown idea involves the creation of a network of such vacation villages, in Israel and Western Europe, serving as

landmarks on the travel route of young Jews. Each village will specialize in a specific theme, suited to its location and setting and the educational and leisure opportunities of its environment.

Rationale

Our research has indicated that young people find the current opportunities for travel to Israel unattractive. (S.M.Cohen, 1986). There is no adequate infrastructure to suit their social and economic needs. Young people are by and large not attracted to large group vacations. Rather they look for leisure, physical activity, adventure, convivial social settings, contact with Israelis and opportunities for spiritual search.

New concepts of leisure are challenging traditional ideas in informal education, and point to the extensive educational uses that can be made of leisure environments.

Thus, based on current theories of leisure and on the findings of our market study, we conclude that there are possibilities for combining opportunities for an educational Jewish experience with the leisure patterns which young adults are seeking and are accustomed to.

The proposal

We suggest that the Committee consider the establishment of a first prototype village to serve as pilot and testing grounds. A preliminary feasibility study that we have conducted indicates that the rental of existing premises is feasible, and that the cost of running an experimental village in rented premises might be of the order of \$500,000 annually.

In order to take the decision to go ahead, further planning must be done, to include detailed programming, marketing and management plans. Thus we are suggesting here that the Committee fund the next planning phase.

MARKETING ISRAEL PROGRAMS

Description

This project aims at developing strategies for marketing Israel Experience Programs in the United States.

A two-phase proposal has been developed with a New York-based public relations firm. The first and more limited phase will aim at studying alternative modes of marketing and recruitment - through frequent consultation with this Project and with the marketers and recruiters for the existing programs (AZYF, Kibbutzim, Denominational programs, Universities, independent purveyors, and any others who may be interested . . .)

Regular meetings will take place every 1 or 2 week during a period of 2 - 3 months. The meetings will serve as a learning forum as well as an advisory body for the purveyors. At the same time a strategy for marketing Israel programs will be developed.

The second phase (not included in this proposal) will be an experimental phase. It may consist in the experimental application of one or more marketing strategies in 2 or 3 urban centers in the USA.

Rationale

Marketing and recruitment for Israel programs are perceived as major stumbling blocks and problems by almost all programs purveyors. Our data (S.M. Cohen, July 1986) showed that more than half the people interested in visiting Israel do not know where to turn to for information, do not know of any program except for conventional tourism packages. We found that marketing is often done without professional know-how and is limited to narrow networks. We are suggesting here suggested that the problem of marketing and recruitment be addressed generically (how should one sell Israel programs in general), in order to introduce a new level of professionalism into the subject.

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- Hochstein, Annette "The Israel Experience" - Educational Programs: Summary Report (June, 1986)
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Robert Loup
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Michal Modai
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Jose Nessim
USA
Esther Leah Ritz
USA
Avraham Schenker
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Mark Schlusell
USA
Stephen Shalom
USA
Ed Shapiro
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Eliezer Sheffer
Israel
Fred Sichel
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Henry Taub
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ISRAEL EXPERIENCE PROJECT - PHASE II

FROM DATA TO ACTION

AMERICAN JEWISH

WORK IN PROGRESS, FEBRUARY-JUNE 1987



June 1987

אנט הוכשטיין
ANNETTE HOCHSTEIN

June 1987

Mr. Robert E. Loup Rabbi Richard G. Hirsch
Chairman Co-Chairman
The Sub-Committee on the Israel Experience Project
The Jewish Education Committee, the Jewish Agency

Dear Chairmen,

I have pleasure in submitting to you our third report on Phase II of the Israel Experience Project. The report will provide a brief overview of progress made on the various approved programs since the last meetings of the Education Committee.

The specific projects include:

1. The Experimental Summer Program of the Youth & Hechalutz Department;
2. The Am Segula project of the Torah Education Department;
3. The kibbutz Institutes for Jewish Experience;
4. The Marketing of Israel Programs;
5. The Alexander Muss High School in Israel Program;
and
6. Vacation Villages for Young Adults.

A number of publications and appendices are presented in addition to the report. Amongst these: The first Newsletter to participants in the Experimental Summer Program, Prof. S.M. Cohen's Market Study report prepared for Phase I of this project, and an interim report on the Marketing of programs.

Sincerely,

Annette Hochstein

Project Director

Sub-Committee on the Israel Experience Project

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Co-Chairman: RABBI RICHARD G. HIRSCH

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ISRAEL EXPERIENCE PROJECT - PHASE II

FROM DATA TO ACTION

WORK IN PROGRESS, FEBRUARY-JUNE 1987

At the meeting of the the Israel Experience Sub-Committee of the Jewish Education Committee, progress will be reported on the following projects:

1) Experimental Summer Program: The Youth & Hechalutz Dept.

At its meetings in December and February, the Sub-Committee recommended to undertake an experimental summer program for 250-300 less-affiliated high-school students from the United States, who would come for a six-week summer program. The goal of the experiment was to demonstrate what could be achieved through a well-planned, well-staffed program with adequate preparations of the youngsters for their experience and with a structured follow-up program.

An experimental unit was set up at the Youth & Hechalutz Department to conduct this experiment and the staff of this unit continued their intensive work with Nativ staff on this project. A coordinator was hired to direct the project in the United States.

The following progress can be reported.

1. In Israel

7 group leaders have been selected and hired to be in charge - each of one group. They are a high-level, motivated group of people, of the kind, we believe, who can offer the type of

educational leadership needed. In general, they are more educated, more mature, and more experienced as educators than counselors in most Israel Experience projects. Junior staff - American and Israeli counselors - have also been selected.

2. Staff Training

The group leaders are participating in a staff training program which includes both planning meetings in Jerusalem and extensive on-site training. The latter includes going to the actual sites that will be visited in the summer, where one group leader undertakes to "guide" the others through the site. The activity is then discussed, analyzed and criticized by the whole group.

The group leaders and counselors have met jointly to get acquainted, to discuss the program, and to get joint training.

The training program has been designed by the staff of the experiment. An article is being prepared, setting out the rationale for what would be adequate training for people guiding Jews in informal programs through Israel. Additional publications will be prepared in the near future and will include a source book for group leaders. We believe that these publications will be of interest to many in the field of Israel programs. A selection will be ready for the winter meeting of the Committee.

3. Planning

Each group leader has prepared a detailed program for his/her group based on the general program that was presented to the

Committee in February. This was undertaken because it is assumed that counselors will be much more effective if they are involved in the planning of this program and are committed to what the program wants to achieve.

4. Junior counselors have been hired. It was decided to hire all staff from among people that are presently in Israel. Traditionally, an American counselor travels with the group from the U.S. However, these are very often young people with little training and no real prior knowledge of the program. Problems of communication with the Israeli staff occur quite frequently, and many of the Americans were not sufficiently familiar with Israel. In order to meet these problems, and to make it possible for staff members to be trained, acquainted with each other and with the program before the summer, American counselors have been hired from amongst young people - usually students - who are spending a year in Israel.

5. In the U.S.

A coordinator was hired for the project and started to work on March 1. He is Reed Travis, a talented and effective professional. Within a few weeks of work, Mr. Travis succeeded, with the assistance of staff at the Israel Program Center of AZYF, to undertake a vigorous recruitment campaign, thereby changing dramatically the recruitment situation. The recruitment resulted in a spurt of recent registration with 200 participants registered and a waiting list of a few dozen. This is less than what had been anticipated for the experiment; however, given

the late start of the experiment, it is a remarkable achievement.

6. Linda and Steve Schaffzin have worked on pre- and post-program material for the experiment. Appendix 1 includes a copy of the first letter each youngster has received soon after registration and a questionnaire as well as the newsletter that went out to all participants in the month of May.

A newsletter will be sent to parents at the end of June. All the participants will receive a travel diary which will be distributed to them at the orientation. The diary will include essential information as well as background data, maps, and space for daily notes.

7. An orientation program will take place in the U.S. The group leaders will fly over for the orientation program and accompany the group to Israel (it should be noted that this does not increase the total cost of the program since these flights replace those of the American counselor usually accompanying the group).

8. In keeping with the Committee's demand for close monitoring and evaluation, an extensive monitoring and evaluation schedule has been established. Three staff members will deal with the ongoing monitoring of the implementation of the program throughout the summer. Their task will be to ensure that problems are dealt with effectively and speedily.

A variety of techniques will be used for the evaluation of the program. These include formal elements such as a questionnaire before the trip and after the youngsters return home, and informal elements such as the participation of participant observers in summary discussions and other activities of the groups. A small team of evaluators will spend 2-3 days with each group to do on-site evaluation. The group leaders will keep a daily diary that will be included in the evaluation too. The formal elements of the evaluation will be applied to control groups in other programs of the department. We believe that these various methods will provide us with adequate information for a thorough analysis of the project.

9. In order to allow for a possible replication of the experimental program and its expansion to 750-1000 participants next year, we suggest that funds be reserved to allow for the continued employment of the experiments' staff to begin designing and planning the expanded project for 1988. The cost would be \$50,000 for 6 months. Of course the decision to actually run a program in 1988 will be taken by the Committee following conclusion of the evaluation of the experiment and in accordance with the development policy to be determined.

2) Am Segula - The Torah Education Department

The goal of this project is to expand and improve the Am Segula program of the Department for Torah Education and Culture Diaspora of the WZO. A team which includes representatives of the Torah Department and of Nativ Consultants is designing a detailed pilot program.

The principal elements of the proposal include:

a. The Program:

- * Preparation of a core program, common to all groups.
- * Involvement of educators from the day schools whose students participate in the program. They will be invited to participate in the planning and programming of the project.
- * Pre-program preparation towards the visit to Israel (newsletters, formal and informal activities, family retreat, etc).
- * Training program for the educators and counselors who will participate in the pilot program.

b. Staff:

Previously, Am Segula had no permanent educational staff. As a result, it has been difficult to prepare the overall plan. The pilot program aims at changing the situation. Since Am Segula runs throughout the school year, it is the planning team's assumption that the program will involve the staff throughout the year. The advantages of a high

level permanent, trained and knowledgeable staff are obvious.

* A highly professional educational staff will be recruited for the pilot program. This staff will be employed throughout the year for the following tasks: to plan, design and teach a program that will make use of the full potential of the Israel experience as an element in the Jewish education of the participating youth.

* The staff will participate in in-service training undertaken by the department prior to the running of the program, during the program, and after it.

* The proposed staff will consist of:

- 1 Senior Educational Coordinator - full-time
- 1 Administrator - full-time
- 2 teachers (one senior, one junior) - 1-1/2 posts
- 1 Social Counselor - full-time
- 1 National Service Volunteer -
- 1 Educational Tour Guide - full-time

c. Criteria for Choosing Groups for the pilot project

It is proposed that the following criteria guide the selection of groups for the pilot project:

- * Different types of programs for participants from different background and culture, religiosity, cultural environment, etc.
- * Possibility for significant input by the department in the program. (Not all day schools are open to such maximal

input.)

* Distribution of groups throughout the school year.

d. Follow-up after the Program

* Our assumption is that the experience in Israel should be the basis for further development of content and subject when the youngsters are back home. Therefore, the project will have a follow-up component built in.

* The proposed follow-up program may include the following elements:

- a. A personal link through a newsletter and personal letters.
- b. Preparation of the group to view themselves as ambassadors of good-will in their home countries.
- c. A visit to the school by a staff member of the project.
- d. A mission of Israeli youth of the same age group to visit the community.

e. Evaluation

The pilot project will be carefully monitored and evaluated.

f. Budget

The present proposal is primarily for the hiring of high level professional staff to plan, design, coordinate, and implement the pilot project.

In addition to the staff, there will be costs for the preparation of materials as well as for one visit of a staff member to each of the schools included in the pilot program. The purpose of the visit is to ensure adequate planning, coordination, and preparation of the project. A detailed budget will be worked out following approval of this proposal. It is estimated that the budget for the pilot project will not exceed the sum of \$200,000.



3) The Kibbutz Institutes for Jewish Experience

BACKGROUND

The kibbutz movements have developed the concept of Kibbutz Institutes for Jewish Experience as part of a program of upgrading and adapting the Kibbutz ulpan to present-day needs. The concept was the result of consultations by task forces of kibbutz educators and experts who have considered the decline in the effectiveness of the kibbutz ulpan.

Planning

The general program for the Institutes was completed and presented to the Sub-Committee in February 1987. Task forces have been set up for the development of detailed programs for the first two Institutes. Since the first Institute will focus on the teaching of Hebrew, the kibbutz movement has hired a specialist in the teaching of Hebrew. Her task is to help re-plan this aspect of the program. Preliminary operative recommendations have been developed.

A team is working on the program for the second Institute. Preliminary guidelines have been developed for the teaching of Jewish thought, which will be the central theme of the second Institute.

Budget

In keeping with the recommendations of the Committee, a detailed budget has been prepared and submitted to Mr. Loup and Rabbi Hirsch for approval. The approved budget for this year is of the amount of \$246,000.

4) Marketing of Israel Programs

As approved by the Committee, a project aimed at developing strategies for more effective recruitment for Israel programs in the U.S.A. has been undertaken. Mr. Robert Loup met several times with representatives of the New York-based Public Relations Firm of Ruder, Finn, and Rotman and approved a preliminary project. We are pleased to enclose a draft interim report of this project with recommendations for action. (Appendix 2)

It should be noted that the work has benefitted from the cooperation of all the purveyors of Israel programs that have been approached.

5) Alexander Muss High School in Israel

At its February meeting, the Committee approved this project, aimed at the expansion of the "A. Muss High School in Israel" program from an annual number of 800 participants to 3000 participants per year. A budget was approved for this year with the understanding that this will be the first year of a 5 year commitment. Negotiations have begun for the inclusion of a number of new communities into this program. Some will begin sending youngsters this coming year. Among the communities contacted are some from California, Missouri, Massachusetts, Arizona and Maryland.

6) Vacation Towns

In February, the budgets sub-committee allocated \$100,000 towards a feasibility study of the vacation town project.

A number of firms specializing in feasibility studies in the field of tourism have submitted proposals. The budgets sub-committee will be consulted when all offers and prices are in. Meanwhile, we are continuing to develop the educational program and are considering alternative strategies for marketing.

7. Development planning

The Education & Culture Department of the WZO runs a large number of Israel Experience programs for day school students, for individual highschool participants, for teachers and more. Findings of the Israel Experience Project have indicated that some of these programs could successfully be expanded. The Subcommittee at its February meeting considered undertaking such a plan for the "Bible Camp" program. Further discussions with the Department have led to the following suggestion: rather than deal with one program, we would try to impact many or several of the Department's Israel Experience programs. This would be done by creating a team within the WZO's Education and Culture Department whose task will be to evaluate and plan the expansion of the Department's Israel Experience programs. The cost of this undertaking would be up to \$50,000.

