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Levi, Virginia F. Israel trip report, 1993.

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VFL ITINERARY

Trip to Israel

October 18 - 27, 1993

Monday, October 18

Leave Cleveland/Hopkin 3:15 PM Trans World Flight 164Q
Arrive New York/Kennedy 4:56 PM

Leave New York/Kennedy 10:15 PM EL AL Flight 8D

Tuesday, October 19

Arrive Tel Aviv 2:40 PM EL AL

The Laromme Hotel
3 Jabotinsky Street
Jerusalem Israel
Phone: 2-756 666
FAX: 2-756 669
Reservation Number: 876480 10/19-26/93

CIJE/Israel
10 Yehoshafat Street
Jerusalem 93152 Israel
Phone: 011972 2 617-418
FAX: 011972 2 619-951

Field Travel (Claude Hakim)
(212) 682-2620

Wednesday, October 20

CIJE/Israel Office

9:00 AM - 9:30 PM Seminar

Thursday, October 21

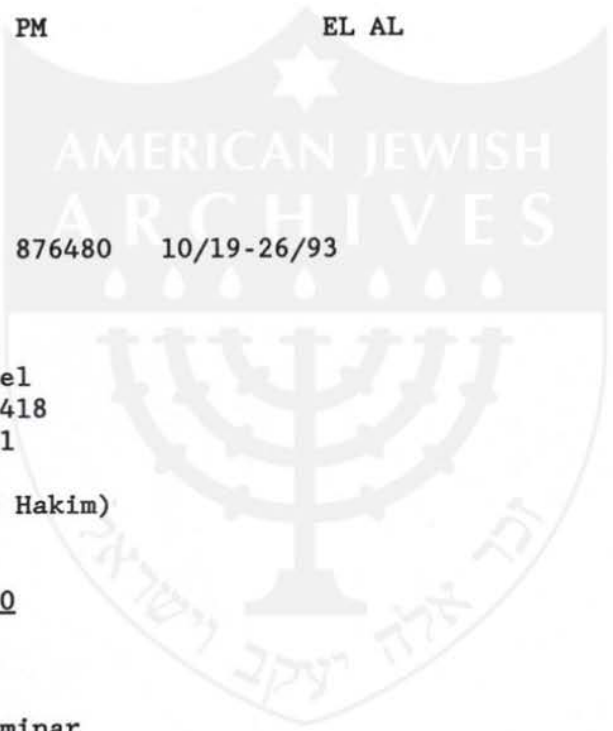
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM Seminar

7:00 PM - ? Seminar

Friday, October 22

8:00 AM - 2:00 PM Seminar

Evening - ? Seminar



Saturday, October 23

7:00 PM - 10:00 PM Seminar

Sunday, October 24

9:00 AM - 6:30 PM Seminar

Monday, October 25

9:00 AM - 5:00 PM Seminar

Tuesday, October 26

Meetings w/ADH
CIJE/Israel Office

Wednesday, October 27

Leave Tel Aviv 1:00 AM EL AL Flight 1M
Arrive New York/Kennedy 6:40 AM

Leave New York/Kennedy 10:47 AM Trans World Flight 389Q
Arrive Cleveland 12:20 PM

Useful Information: Alan Hoffmann - Telephone at home: 249-690
Caroline Biran - Telephone at home: 716-777
Mandel Institute - 662-832
Annette Hochstein - Telephone at home: 732-802
Seymour Fox - 662-452
Elly Dlin - Telephone at home: 422-947
Telephone at work: 751-665

MEMO TO: John C. Colman, Henry Goodman, Stephen H. Hoffman, Stanley B. Horowitz, Jack N. Mandel, Joseph C. Mandel, Morton L. Mandel, Charles Ratner, Richard A. Shatten, Bennett Yanowitz, Henry L. Zucker

FROM: Virginia F. Levi *Ginny*

DATE: December 13, 1993

SUBJECT: Israel Trip Report October 20-26, 1993

Beginning on October 20, 1993, I participated in a series of meetings in Jerusalem to plan and prepare for next steps in the work of the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education. Participants in the entire "seminar" included Alan Hoffmann, new director of CIJE; Barry Holtz and Gail Dorph, project officers; and me. Portions of the seminar were attended by Simon Caplan, Seymour Fox, Annette Hochstein, Oriana Or, Abby Pitkowsky, and Shmuel Wygoda of the Mandel Institute. In addition, Steve Hoffman joined us for one day at the conclusion of the Cleveland Mission to Israel.

We had a very full agenda and worked very long days in an effort to accomplish as much as possible. We left with a sense of accomplishment, but also an awareness that there is much more still to be done.

A portion of the seminar was spent in outlining and thinking through issues which face CIJE and approaches to meeting them. One segment of our meetings was devoted to discussion of what we call the "goals project." This is based on the work of the Mandel Institute, which has brought together a number of major thinkers to provide various definitions of an educated Jew. The CIJE is interested in working with lay leadership in the Lead Communities (Atlanta, Baltimore, and Milwaukee) to grapple with their perceptions of what constitutes an educated Jew and what it would take in their communities to achieve that. This may be an area where CIJE can move quickly to bring other interested communities into the process.

The session on the goals project was the first of many opportunities for us to see the Mandel Institute staff in action and to benefit from their thinking. It reinforced my sense of the extremely high caliber of people we have working at the Mandel Institute. The primary presenters on goals were Seymour Fox, whom we already know as a high-powered intellectual, and Danny Marom, an extremely bright, younger member of the staff who has devoted a significant amount of time and energy to the Educated Jew project.

This was the first opportunity the CIJE staff had to begin to understand the Educated Jew project. It was very valuable as an intellectual exercise and proved to be equally useful as concrete planning for a CIJE action plan began to take shape. It seems to me that an executive summary of the project for the lay person would be a useful tool for both CIJE and the Mandel Institute in explaining this very complex approach.

As the seminar progressed, it became apparent that several issues would resurface throughout. These include:

1. How do we balance the CIJE goal of systemic reform with the federation process of consensus building?
2. We should keep in focus the centrality of building the profession and mobilizing community support to the work of CIJE.
3. The fact that CIJE is operating as an intermediary organization impacts how we mobilize for action.

We had an extremely fruitful day with Annette Hochstein, in which she outlined her thinking on how to begin to get concrete in the area of personnel. She had prepared a list of possible one year outcomes, which we discussed in depth. This provided us with the basis for much of our discussion later in the week and for the Lead Communities seminar we planned for November. It was very impressive to see Annette in her consulting role, taking concepts which have been with us for several years and beginning to flesh them out.

A lot of time during the week was spent discussing the three Lead Communities--where we are and where we hope to be with each. Alan had been to each community once and Gail twice, at this point, and there was a major need to process what they'd learned with Barry, Seymour, and Annette, who had different perspectives.

Steve Hoffman joined us for one day, at the conclusion of the Cleveland mission to Turkey and Israel. He is always very helpful in taking the theoretical and applying it to real life in the communities. In addition to helping plan for concrete action on the personnel front, he participated in some of the discussions about where we are in each of the communities and how to proceed.

There are, and will continue to be, issues involved with each of the communities. Hopefully the MEF reports will help to identify these as we go along, because this is probably central to working with communities as we are doing. The idea to involve CIJE board members more actively in our work with the communities resurfaced.

The remainder of our time was spent on getting more specific. We had a brief session on the use of the denominational training institutions. My conclusion is that we are pretty far from being able to link the communities with the institutions. This requires a lot of additional work. There were some ideas, though, about how to involve local rabbis and move forward, which we will be discussing further.

We also began the discussion of "From 3 to 23." This shorthand refers to expanding CIJE's impact beyond the 3 Lead Communities to all 23 which applied, and beyond. Seymour shared an idea for CIJE to link our own list of consultants with specific community needs for a fee. We didn't pursue it in depth, but there was clear interest and a sense that this is something that should be seriously considered before too long. In the meantime, we will try

to be responsive to requests for information and guidance from other communities.

We also spent time planning the agenda of the Lead Community seminar scheduled for November 16-17 in Montreal. It was to focus on taking the results of the qualitative and quantitative educator surveys which have been completed, or are under way, in each community and turning them into an action plan for personnel. This was really the culmination of all that we discussed during the week.

We also tried to develop a CIJE action plan to take us through to the end of June, 1994. We took important first steps, but didn't get as far on this as we had hoped. More work has been done on this since my return.

The one other thing that I really wanted to do while I was there was see the School for Educational Leadership. Seymour Fox took me over one morning, before our meetings began. It's tough to tell much from a building, but I was very impressed with an entire floor of computers and the ambiance of the floor where classes and consultations are held. The space seems to be well set up and conducive to its purpose. The students arrived while I was there and, from what little I saw, seem very bright and engaged.

There wasn't much time to do other things, but I did manage to use Saturday to get to the Old City, briefly, and to the Israel Museum. I couldn't be that close and not see the famous Apple Core. Stu Neidus and I managed to get together for that. I was glad to see it. It's even larger than I thought, from the pictures. I like Oldenburg's work, and was impressed with this one. I'm sorry that it's so far back in the sculpture garden. I imagine a lot of people miss it. The guide took us to the point inside the museum from which it is also visible. Maybe that's the answer.

As I hope is evident from these notes, it was an extremely full and productive week. I found it both exhausting and exhilarating and came back excited about the directions in which CIJE and its new staff are going.