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Rabbinical student program. 1972.

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P.O.B. 92
Jerusalem
Israel

January 19th, 1972

Professor Ezra Spicehandler
Hebrew Union College
King David Street
Jerusalem

Dear Professor Spicehandler,

With this letter I confirm the following dates and itineraries:

1. February 20th Problems of Israel's Security and Morale.
2. February 27th Problems of Immigration and Absorption;
Problems of Development Towns.
3. March 3rd Poverty in Israel.
4. March 19th Development of the Land as seen through
the Lachish Model.

Each of these for study trips will be a full day in length and United Jewish Appeal will arrange transportation and meals on the way, and briefings from experts in each field to be studied.

Most sincerely yours,

Matthew H. Simon

cc: HAE
CV

MHS:amg

January 19th, 1972

Mr. Chaim Vinitzky

Matthew H. Simon

On February 10th, for the the Jewish Theological Seminary student body, and on February 20th, for the Hebrew Union College student body, I propose the following working itineraries, for a day-long survey of Problems of Israel's Security and Morale.

7:30 a.m. Meet at Hebrew Union College Auditorium for a half hour briefing of overall problems of security and morale and a detailed review of the day's itinerary.

8:15 Leave Jerusalem for Jordan Valley.

9:15 Visit former Nachal unit now operating as quasi-permanent Kibbutz.

10:25 Visit Adam Bridge to see policy of "Open Bridges."

11:30 Continue north along Jordan River to see electrical fence and military defence system.

12:30 p.m. Arrive Kibbutz Tirat Svi. View Kibbutz shelters and view defence perimeter. Discuss problems of living under threat. Examine exposures to fire from Jordan and the mountains of Gilad and Golan. Have lunch at Kibbutz or use box lunches,

Return to Jerusalem

Second proposed itinerary

7:30 Meet at the Hebrew Union College Auditorium for one hour briefing on the defence systems of the Jordan Valley including the establishment of Nachal outposts and the anti-infiltration fence, etc.

8:30 Leave Jerusalem for Beit Shean Valley Kibbutz.

11:00 Tour Kibbutz and review problems of living under threat. See defence perimeter and military installations.

Mr. Chaim Vihitsky

January 19th, 1972

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1:00 Lunch at Kibbutz Ein Gev
2:00 Tour Fik Area of the Golan Heights.
3:00 Return to Jerusalem

I submit these proposals in answer to your request. I trust on Sunday we can make a final decision so that I can communicate with the two schools involved.

cc: HAF
 DS

MHS:amg

MEMORANDUM

Date January 23rd, 1972

To Rabbi Friedman

From Matthew H. Simon

Subject Report on first coffee meeting had with 3rd year rabbinical students at the Jerusalem school of the Jewish Theological Seminary.

On Wednesday, January 19th I initiated the first of four lectures to approximately 25 students attending the Junior Year Program in Israel of the Jewish Theological Seminary. This means that at the end of this year the men in attendance will have only one more year until ordination.

Following an experiment developed by Rabbi Earl Jordan, wherein UJA held a series of meetings with theological students prior to ordination, it was decided to attempt the program in Israel where most rabbinical students spend one year of their studies.

In the United States there are many distractions, not the least of which is the fact that most students have pulpit or teaching assignments, making their schedules tight and not allowing time for elective programs. In Israel it is easy to speak to future rabbis about UJA and now they are beginning to understand the process of American Jewish support for Israel. The Seminaries themselves - both HUC and JTS - were eager to co-operate in the planning of the program.

The opening lecture-discussion was on the "ABC's of the American Jewish Community." We reviewed the many organisations that exist in the Jewish community and their relationships to the Federations and the relationships of the Federations to UJA. The original time allotted was one hour, the students kept the discussion going for two hours. This is the best sign of initial success.

The second lecture will concern the history of Jewish support for Israel, leading to the future role the synagogue and the rabbi can play as an instrument for the support of Israel through Federations and UJA. The third discussion will concern the creative role the rabbi can personally play in influencing decision making in his congregation and community, relative to support for Israel. It was thought to leave the last topic open at this point to see what the students themselves will be interested in learning and discussing in this framework.

Rabbi Friedman

January 21st, 1972

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Within the next few days Professor Ezra Spicehandler will arrange a firm time for the first lecture-discussion at Hebrew Union College.

Early Thursday morning I caught up with Operation Israel No. 7, the Men's Mission with Lou Goldman as chairman, and rode 'buses with them to Haifa and the Naval Base, after visiting the Absorption Center at Pardess Hanna, to interview Anton Grune. I will file those reports later.

M. Friedman



CC: IB
EJ
File

*file
rabbinical
students*

MEMORANDUM

Date February 24th, 1972

To Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman

From Matthew H. Simon

Subject Report on the first Hebrew Union College/UJA Study Day and coffee

On Sunday, February 20th, I accompanied 85 students who are members of the Hebrew Union College, on a Study Trip sponsored by the UJA. The group visited Nachal Argamon, Kibbutz Tirat Zvi and a military stronghold along the Jordan River. In addition we also reviewed problems in the city of Beit Shean and participated in a discussion with the City manager. UJA had sponsored two such study days with members of the junior year of the Jewish Theological Seminary. This was our first contact with prospective reform rabbis attending Hebrew Union College.

Two years ago HUC required all first year students to participate in a year of study in Israel. This replaced a voluntary junior year of study. ^{+ some junior} The large number of participants is due to the fact that all freshmen are present in Israel and they are enrolled in both the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati and the Jewish Institute of Religion in New York.

The group was a good one. Many of the students tended to be critical of the Jewish Agency and its policy toward social welfare problems. Some of the questions were answered during the day as I moved through the two buses. It was announced that I would speak at a coffee evening and I invited everyone who questioned UJA and Jewish Agency policy to raise whatever questions they wanted at that time when we would have more leisure and the chance for a give and take.

On Monday night approximately 20 students participated in a two hour long discussion about the structures of UJA and how its policies are determined and the role of the congregational rabbi in "federations and fundraising for Israel. The students were most challenging and I feel that our conversation was creative in that many of their questions and misconceptions were cleared up. Since the majority of the students were freshmen their questions were based on inexperience and lack of prior exposure to American Jewish and Israeli Institutions. I feel that the time we spent with them will have great future benefits in that we were able, at the start of their rabbinical training, to answer, in a direct fashion, many of their misgivings.

M.H.S.

*file
rabbinical
students*

MEMORANDUM

Date February 25th, 1972

To Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman

From Matthew H. Simon

Subject

The theme that runs through most of the questions asked by Hebrew Union College and Jewish Theological Seminary students revolves around the Jewish Agency.

Students, like new immigrants, have an initial confrontation with low and medium level bureaucracy which shunts them from office to office with rarely a smile or a helpful word.

Perhaps a side benefit of our conversations could be a recommendation to the proper office of the Jewish Agency that an adequately staffed one stop information desk be maintained where questions of students and new immigrants can be handled. This would eliminate the "wild goose" chases and the frustration of waiting in lines only to discover that one has to go another office. The complaints are from people whom we wish to be life-long friends. As colleagues and friends of the administrators involved, perhaps we can help develop mechanisms that can be implemented.

After three rabbinical student trips, I have some idea of what students wish to see on future trips. First and foremost, they desire longer and deeper contact with Russian immigrants - perhaps meeting a plane on arrival. They would appreciate a tour of social welfare projects in Jerusalem, led by Les Jaffe. They are anxious to visit an Air Force or a Navy Base to see the security problems of Israel, as we regularly show them to Operation Israel participants.

MHS:amg

Matthew

MEMORANDUM

Date February 29th, 1972

To Rabbi Herbrt A. Friedman

From Matthew H. Simon

Subject Report on Second Hebrew Union College Study Day

On Sunday, February 27th, I accompanied two bus loads (66 people) of Hebrew Union College students on a UJA study day. We emphasized specific UJA style projects to make visual to the rabbinical students the work of the United Jewish Appeal.

In Hebron we viewed the new housing development and met with Rabbi Levinger, the head of the new Jewish community formed there. In Beer Sheva we met, for one hour, with recent Russian immigrants and this was the high point of the day. (In Beer Sheva I ducked away for half an hour to visit Bernard Zinn at the Central Hospital of the Negev. He continues to be in good spirits and has begun exercising the hand stump. He hopes his recovery and rehabilitation will be fast enough to enable him to attend the Ulpan before leaving Israel.)

During the afternoon we discussed the development of the Lachish region and we toured Kiryat Gat. This day was perhaps the best of any of the rabbinical student days sponsored by the UJA. It clearly indicates that the story of the Russian immigrants is the single most emotionally charged issue for Americans.

After Paesach I wish to propose two final days for the combined student bodies of the Hebrew Union College and the Jewish Theological Seminary. In Jerusalem we ought to set up a poverty problems study walk led by Lester Jaffe, perhaps on a Friday afternoon when the days are longer, and we could do it without 'buses. For a final study trip I think it crucial that the rabbinical students have the impact of meeting an immigrant plane. With 24 to 48 hours notice they agreed to be ready, regardless of the hour, to go to Lod. Following this we should take the students to a military base, as we do regularly with Operation Israel Missions. This will be our final impact during their year in Israel and should have major benefit for UJA in future years.