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CRB Foundation. Tom Axworthy memo. 1994.

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Dear Brian -

5/11/84

I can imagine that you're up to your neck with the big Conference coming up, but I wanted to make two comments:

1. Enclosed is a memo I wrote on Atworthy (CRB) memo, which I have read through very carefully. My memo goes to no one, except you. So, it lies between us for future discussion.

2. Let's make a date for another talk on where you stand with the #30m project you've been developing. I'm in town the whole month of June, giving 6 seminars to our New York groups. So - you pick a date and let me know.

Good luck with the Conference,

Herb

Memorandum to: **Brian Lurie**

From: **Herbert A. Friedman**

Date: **May 10, 1994**

Subject: **Critique of Tom Axworthy's memorandum  
March 11, 1994 to Brian Lurie on the subject:  
"An Expanded Agenda for the Israeli Experience"**

1. Axworthy speaks of *trips* and *visits*. These are good words, but shallow and transitory. The word *experience* is obviously deeper, seeking to implant emotional and intellectual attitudes which will last far into the young person's future.

2. The initial *experience* will need periodic re-enforcement. He doesn't refer to that at all.

3. He thinks of using present institutions ("communities, synagogues and national institutions" - paragraph 1) to provide the larger numbers required - and does not contemplate the creation of any *new* machinery to handle the massive increase which history demands.

4. In paragraph 3 he reveals a basic difference of opinion regarding the crucial issue of costs. He indicates that the communities suggest "increased subsidies" to stimulate participation. He calls this a mistake and suggests instead "scholarships" for the needy. He also adds "designated savings" as a method.

The communities are more right than he is. But neither goes far enough. *The experience must be free* and participants must be selected carefully (by various means: questionnaires, personal interviews, written essays, recommendations, etc.) Such a *selective process* will heighten the desire to join. This is a simple psychological fact.

"Designated savings" is a very good method, and should be organized in every community in the country.

"Wasting money" on kids whose families can afford it, is a suspicious, negative, bureaucratic way of looking at the problem. First let the child be selected. If he/she is selected, and if it is thought by the local committee that the family can afford all or some of the cost, the family should be solicited for a gift to help the local community or the national organization running the project to pay the *entire cost for everyone*. The child of the financially capable family goes free, as does the child of the financially weaker family. All kids are equal. All families are not. So, some families can pay for several kids.



5. In paragraphs 3a) and 3b) he talks about "marketing" and "selling", and depends on the "trip purveyors" to sell the product. Who are they? He must have someone in mind, because he says they don't have skilled sales forces. So what is he saying? I think this approach is completely off-base.

6. In paragraph 3c) he gets to the point of "new institutions" to run the program, then defaults completely by suggesting this "new" institution go into partnership with the Jewish Agency. In my opinion, the "new" institution must be an independent North American body working with its own authority and funds.

7. Paragraph 4 is totally unnecessary. It is even slightly hysterical. A massive campaign of telephone calls to "reassure" (parents) about safety" will procure exactly the opposite result. It will create more nervousness than reassurance. "A crisis response management" is the last thing the Israeli Experience should bother with. Parents' common sense will prevail. Some kids will drop out - most will not - most crises (even wars) are usually over in a few days. Don't try to manage history.

8. Paragraphs 4:1, 4:2 and 4:3 are more of the same with regard to marketing. Already two years have been spent in trying to "sell" the pilot to twelve cities. I don't know how many have been persuaded so far, but the last figure I heard was four cities.

9. The best ideas to be found in paragraphs 4:4 through 4:14 are as follows:

4:4 - mobilize teen alumni to serve as agents in their communities;

4:10 - develop different kinds of experiences in Israel;

4:13 - infrastructure (i.e. buildings, teachers, sports instructors, trained guides, etc.) must be planned and created immediately.

10. The idea promulgated in 4:15 is 100% **incorrect**. To underline the fact that the board function must be planning and allocation, but *not* operating, is exactly wrong.

The North American Board to run the Israel Experience must be totally independent, with no partners, and must be operational in the most detailed sense. It must set policy, procure its own funds, set up and run its own personnel in Israel and set up its own operations in the U.S. to increase the flow of young people.

The model I have in mind is the JDC which has been operating successfully on the above basis for 80 years. The JDC *cooperates* with anyone it decides to; sub-contracts work to other organizations; discusses ideas with many institutions and other forces - but policies and operational decisions are both determined by itself and no one else, and operations are run by its own staff.

THE CRB FOUNDATION  
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FAX COVER SHEET

TO: Brian Lurie  
Fax #: <sup>212</sup>~~514~~-818-9413  
FROM: Tom Axworthy  
DATE: March 11, 1994

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# of pages including cover sheet: 28 8

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AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES

DISCONNECTED

DRAMATIC

THE WORD TRIP IS USED IN ALMOST  
EVERY SENTENCE.

TRIP IS NOT THE SAME AS EXPERIENCE.  
WHICH DO YOU WANT?

IN THE VERY FIRST SENTENCE, HE USES WORD "VISITING"

VISIT IS NOT THE SAME AS EXPERIENCE



# THE CRB FOUNDATION

## MEMORANDUM

To: Brian Lurie

March 11, 1994

From: Tom Axworthy

Subject: An Expanded Agenda for the Israel Experience

### Introduction

1. The Consortium has agreed to the very ambitious goal of increasing the annual numbers of young North American Jews visiting Israel from the present range of 6,000-8,000 to 50,000 by the year 2000. To do so communities, synagogues, and national organizations like NIFTY will have to increase the numbers of their youngsters going to Israel by 25 - 30% annually for the next decade and more. We all agree that this can be done but it will take a massive effort.

Over the past two years the Consortium has achieved a crucial first step - putting the Israel Experience on the agenda of Federations, leaders, and communities, but the hard slog is always in policy formation and program implementation. An old political truism is "Never believe the speeches of the Housing Minister - always count the starts". For the Consortium we have now completed the speechifying phase - now we and the North American Jewish community must count the starts!

2. Towards that end, last fall I asked our Israel Experience team, who are all busy in operational activities, to devote part of their effort towards planning what it would take for the Jewish world to achieve the aim of the Consortium. This planning exercise has a two-part mandate (a) what must the Jewish world do to achieve 50,000 and (b) what can the CRBF do to help the Jewish world attain this goal? When we spoke in February I mentioned the work of this group and was happy to offer to you a preliminary view of some of the group's conclusions. This memo contains our early thinking on the problem. We look forward to meeting you on March 16 to discuss these concepts in more depth. But first some caveats: these thoughts are in the "brain storming" mode, the ten year plan I have requested for our Board to consider was not due to be ready until the fall of 1994 so we still have much basic research and work to do, and the first draft of our thinking has not yet been presented to Charles and Andy, so while they will have a copy of this "best efforts" memo the ideas contained therein do not necessarily have their approval, nor are they official positions of the CRBF. This note is intended to be helpful to you because of the



urgent time frame of your meeting with the Prime Minister of Israel, but it does not reflect the considered positions of the group. That will come later and you and our other Consortium partners will be consulted and informed more fully at the appropriate time. What we have proposed is a catalogue of ideas.

3. What would an enhanced Israel Experience cost? No one really knows and that is one of the key aspects of the ten year plan that our planning group is assessing. Various figures have been used: Marty Kraar told our November 1993 consultation that he felt that \$50 million annually could, in time, be raised for this purpose. You have suggested a tri-partite \$30 million fund - \$10 million additional funds from the Agency, \$10 million from the UJA campaign, and \$10 million from the Government of Israel. But whether the amount is \$10 or \$30 or \$50 million, the real question is how could such money usefully be spent? If we had the money, where would it do the most good? The first response from many communities is "increase subsidies". In our view that is a mistake. We are very much in favour of scholarships for the 25% to 33% of young Jews who cannot afford to go (which already is a large category), but we think it is a waste of scarce resources to subsidize families that can afford to pay for the trip. Much better is to expand the Gift of Israel program so that families, synagogues, and communities begin to save now for the trip. A combination of increased, designated savings plans plus making increased scholarships available for those in need is our preferred outcome. This is important because if the Jewish world did succeed in making the commitment to increase resources greatly but then the money was used for programs that did not deliver the desired outcome, we will have failed in our responsibility to use the best analytic thinking at our command. So this memo does not recommend subsidies. But it does contain a variety of ideas that would have a significant impact. We have grouped them in three categories:

- a. **Marketing** - what must be done to make the concept of an Israel trip something that every Jew will want to experience? Can we make the Israel Trip a rite of passage? Can we make the trip to Israel as essential as a Bar or Bat Mitzvah? What do we need to do to convince the majority of North American Jews that this is something important for them and their children?
- b. **Selling** - once we have created the Israel Experience as a "felt need", how do we make the sell? What techniques should our sales force employ? In general, In recent years we have begun to do a better job on marketing the Israel Experience but the sales dimension

Make it free.

Terrible language.  
Is the Is. Exper. Catchup?

1000

10/2 '94

3500



of the program - the critical part where young people are actually signed up - is still in its infancy. By and large we still rely on the trip purveyors to sell the product, and these purveyors do not have experienced, skilled sales forces. We still have the problem that having persuaded many that the Israel Experience is a good idea, there is still no one to answer the phone.

- c. **Organisation** - this area is the most tentative of the lot but if substantial new monies could be raised for the Israel Experience, how would they be dispensed? There is already much dissatisfaction with the AZYF organization so thinking must be devoted to new institutions. The Foundation is about to create a new not-for-profit institution to promote North American-Israeli youth exchange in partnership with the Agency, so this may suggest a possible model.

4. With all the planning and the good long-range ideas, the Hebron massacre reminds us again that the attainment of our goal is dependent in large part on events far beyond our control. But if we are to succeed in our Israel Experience goal we cannot be passive when external events strike a blow. What can we do collectively to counteract the scenes of turmoil emanating from Israel? At a minimum, at this critical time when teens and families are making the decision whether to go or not in 1994, there should be a massive campaign of telephone calls to those who have signed up, to reassure them about safety, a canvassing of all possible past and present leads to use personal solicitations to counter the negative images, and thought given to a special media or incentive campaign to do our best not to have a repeat of the Persian Gulf history. The security or crisis response management will always have to be part of the Israel Experience planning and we must try now to sail against the wind.

#### Marketing

1. **A Bold Generic Marketing Campaign** - it is time to experiment with a bold sales marketing promotional campaign, one which would retain the highest quality marketing professionals to design and implement a well financed two year campaign with ads in media with high teen demographics - AM & FM radio stations, teen magazines, etc.
2. **Marketing Grant Program** - the CRBF and the Agency have created a marketing grant program of \$200,000 to respond to innovative marketing ideas from Jewish communities, organizations, and institutions. There are many more worthy ideas than available resources. This fund could easily be

*Terrible idea*

*I don't agree.*

*Be very careful*



doubled.

3. **The Pilot Community Program** - as you know well, the Consortium has approved a twelve city pilot program for community-wide organizations of the Israel Experience. The CRBF pays for staff assistance and the UJA provides scholarships. There is no money at present to encourage or pump-prime local efforts. Additional resources could provide organizational seed money for the original twelve communities. Longer term if the pilot program demonstrates that community-wide efforts, an Israel Travel Desk, etc. work, this concept could be applied to every significant Jewish community in North America. Future resources could be applied to continuing efforts to organize. Step by step, community by community, the Israel Experience should be planted deeply. Annual conferences of communities on the Israel Experience, marketing news letters, etc. could be developed to create and sustain the network of people and organizations committed to the Israel Experience. The pilot program is just that - a pilot. If it works we should expand it across North America with enhanced incentives and organizers.
4. **The Gift of Israel** - this savings plan has the potential to be one of the most important marketing devices for Israel. Families who save now are likely to send later. This program is in its infancy. It too must be spread across North America and we need organizers and a sales force to do this. Peter Geffen and Jay Levenberg are not enough to cover the continent.
5. **Curriculum Development** - 80% of Jewish children participate in Jewish educational programs yet there exists no comprehensive curriculum for the teaching of Israel as a living, vibrant society. A comprehensive curriculum combining the best of formal and informal education must be developed, marketed, and introduced so that children by the time they approach the teen years, will be pre-conditioned positively both to Israel and participation in an Israel Experience program. This is about both education and marketing. A major effort is needed.
6. **Strengthening Leadership** - the shapers of Jewish life, lay and professional, must be transformed from passive to active promoters of the import of Israel to contemporary Jewish identity and living, and the import of the Israel trip for all of our youth. Through developing and introducing courses in institutions which train Jewish professionals (rabbis, educators, communal workers, et al); developing one to two week seminars in Israel for all significant lay and professional leaders; through outreach to professional organizations, this initiative seeks to engage the key lay

Nothing  
concrete in  
this P



and professional leadership to our cause.

### Sales

7. Create "Israel Experience Inc." - a free-standing new entity whose mandate and mission would be to enhance the marketing and sales of Israel Experience programs. Functions would include:

800 lines OK

HYPER

establishing a sales office with trained personnel using state-of-the-art technology (including 800-telephone lines), widely promoted, to handle and track inquiries; convene and host forums, fairs and presentations; collect and disseminate sales and program literature to parents and teens; create videos and other state-of-the-art materials;

develop sales manuals and conduct training courses throughout North America;

provide sales and marketing resources to trip agencies and communities;

recruit, train and supervise a discreet number of teen alumni (approximately 200) to serve as recruiters of Israel trips.

8. Reducing the Cost - while cost is not the only barrier to increased participation, the AJC's "High Cost of Jewish Living" demonstrates conclusively the burden of participating in Jewish life for all except those with incomes in excess of \$100,000 annually. the \$3,000-\$4,000 1993 average cost of a five to six week quality Israel Experience program is obviously a dis-incentive for many. We propose a "Come Home to Israel" initiative in which the Israeli Government would provide a free round-trip El Al ticket for every first time high school or college student. It will reduce the cost by over 25%, increase participation and be good for Israel's economy.

9. Scholarships - Jews in financial need should not be prevented from having the Israel Experience because of money. Every community should have a scholarship program.

10. New Product Lines - to appeal to a wider market, the Israel trip must have several different kinds of trips to appeal to different tastes (sports, environment, music, and arts trips, etc.). The CRBF has, in partnership with the Agency, begun a program in Israel to develop new trip modules. This should become institutionalized with an annual module fair where trip developers and purveyors meet, exchange information, contacts, etc. If we consider the trip to be

This is the only good idea

Good idea



part of informal education, then like educators everywhere there has to be an organized system for contact and networking. The first module development fair cost \$75,000 and the first module grants program cost \$150,000. These should become annual events.

11. **Standards** - continuing sales depend on good quality. Apart from word of mouth we do not have any means of evaluating the "good trip". There is no "Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval" on trips. We need a standards body who can help the consumer by developing quality standards and assessing whether various trips are meeting these objectives.

### Organisation

12. **Training: Israel and North American Tour Leaders** - good trips require good leadership for the trip. All Israeli and North American guides and tour leaders should receive training and, most usefully, get to know each other before they meet at Ben Gurion airport. The Foundation has been working with Melitz to create a program to upgrade the skills of Israeli guides. This should be expanded by making it a condition of employment that the guide or tour leader has up-to-date credentials. A similar training program for the North American leaders has to be created. The Melitz program costs the CRBF \$175,000 a year. It requires additional resources to expand its reach and a comparative North American program would cost more because the training would have to be offered in more than one locale, because of the size of the continent.

13. **Infrastructure** - the Israelis say first send 12,000 or 15,000 young people over and then we will worry about infrastructure. But obviously if we begin to achieve our goal the quality and quantity of Israeli sites, hotels, buses facilities, will have to be addressed. This is not an immediate problem but it is one that deserves attention within the ten year planning frame.

14. **Research** - the proposed "Israeli Experience Inc." would conduct normal marketing surveys. But beyond marketing and sales needs, the Jewish world requires long term quality research on the Israel Experience. In particular, there should be a major longitudinal project on the impact of the trip on future Jewish involvement similar to the Coleman educational work in the US. If additional resources were available some of the pot should go towards such expensive but critical work.

15. **The Israel Experience Board** - if the Government of Israel, the UIA, or the Agency commits large new sums to the Israel Experience, there would have to be a mechanism to decide on

Waste  
of time  
use as  
"leaders" kids  
who have been  
to Israel - use  
guides to back  
up the leaders.

pay attention  
to this right  
from beginning.



priorities and programs. Like the United Nations Development Program, this board will allocate resources to the many organizations in the field. the UNDP, for example, collects resources from a variety of sources and then allocates them to existing UN agencies like UNICEF or gives them to outside NGOs like CARE. Given the delicacy of the Jewish Agency issue, such a model might be appropriate to the Israel Experience. The programs of the Agency would not be excluded from such a program but they would not have an automatic claim either. Such a board could be made up of representatives of half Government of Israel appointees and half from North America, or one third, one third, one third, if the Jewish Agency also contributed new resources. This would be a planning and allocation board, not an operating organization. The CRBF has already begun to experiment with new models of cooperation, which might have some applicability, with the Government of Israel directly in our Project Involvement education program and with the Agency in the joint Diaspora-Israel Programme/Mifgashim Centre.

Don't  
allocate  
to anyone.

WRONG.

The Is. Exp.  
must be the  
only operatn.

JDC model  
is best.

20

cc: Charles Bronfman  
Andrea Bronfman

TSA/am

