



Camp Israel

2006



Written by: Orly Kenneth

*Created by: Orly Kenneth,
Robin Verity, Sarah Rabin*

*And the counselors of JCCNV
and JCCDC*

Camp Israel/ Camp Eretz

Draft

ISRAELinDC

An Initiative of

*The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington & The Jewish Agency for Israel's
North American Coalition for Israel Engagement (Makom)*



Day 3:

1989 November 9th

Historical Background:

In the wake of Israel's victory in the Six-Day War in 1967, the USSR broke off the diplomatic relations with the Jewish state. Anti-Zionist propaganda and the rise of Zionology (what is this?) were accompanied by increased discrimination against Soviet Jews. This new wave of state-sponsored anti-Semitism on one hand, and the sense of pride for the victorious Jewish nation over Soviet-armed Arab armies on the other, stirred up Zionist feelings among the Soviet Jews.

In 1970, a group of 16 refuseniks (people who wished to leave the Soviet Union but were denied), organized by a dissident Eduard Kuznetsov (who had already served a seven-year term in Soviet prisons), prepared to hijack an aircraft to Sweden. One of the participants, Mark Dymshits, was a former military pilot. Under the guise of a trip to a wedding, they bought all the tickets for the local flight Leningrad-Priozhorsk on a small 12-seater aircraft.

On June 15, 1970, after arriving at the airport, the entire group of the "wedding guests" was arrested. They were charged with high treason, punishable by the death under Article 64 of the Penal code of the RSFSR.

The affair was followed by a crackdown on the Jewish and dissident movement throughout the USSR. Activists were arrested, makeshift centers for study of the Hebrew language and Torah were closed and more trials followed.

Campaigns in support of Eduard Kuznetsov and other political prisoners sprouted all over the world. At the same time, Jews, mainly from America, began entering the Soviet Union as tourists, sneaking in Jewish books, educational materials. More importantly, they brought information about Israel and the free world, with the promise that everything possible was being done in the West to free Soviet Jewry.





9:00 - 9:15	<p>Campers arrive</p> <p>Wear red scarves* (what does the star refer to?)</p> <p>Counselors- if their level of frustration is high enough, the campers will probably say they want to leave. If not, you should start a discussion about the option of leaving.</p> <p>Ask the campers: What are the risks. What do they have to gain?</p>	
9:15 - 10:00	<p>Someone from the KGB enters.</p> <p>Says that there are rumors that this group is thinking of moving to Israel. There is a letter he wants them to read before they leave.</p> <p>Campers receive the letter, and a map of the JCC with 5 stars marked in different places. Have to go to the places and find notes with information that explains the letter.</p> <p>Counselors- this story does not have a happy ending. You will have to talk to the campers and have them share how they feel. Some will be disappointed. It might affect their desire to leave for Israel. Try to lead the discussion to the ways in which an environment of fear is created and what people can do to face it. This is a good time to focus on the strength of the group and the encouragement that every camper can get from belonging to the group.</p> <p>Another source of encouragement is the knowledge that Jews all over the world care about us. Talk about that as an introduction to Ellen's video.</p>	<p>Letter</p> <p>Map of JCC marked</p> <p>Information</p> <p>hidden in 5 places</p>
10:00 - 10:30	<p>Ellen's Video</p> <p>Ellen Kagen Waghelstein, today a lay leader in the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington, sneaked into Russia in the early 80s with educational material, Judaica and bibles. Her mission was to meet with Soviet Jewry.</p>	
10:30 – 11:00	<p>The Berlin Wall falls</p> <p>Red scarves come off – celebration</p> <p>Counselors talk about the fall of Berlin Wall and show five minutes of the film. Why did the wall fall? Many political reasons, but behind them all the struggle of people who were brave enough to change reality. This is a good time to talk about Tikun Olam. Many children connect Tikun Olam to small Tzdaka projects. The words in Hebrew actually mean “Mend the World”. The idea is that something is “broken” in the world and it’s our responsibility to mend it. The destruction of the Berlin Wall was actually a “mending” process for the world, a Tikun Olam that</p>	<p>Film about fall of Berlin Wall</p>



freed millions of people.

11:00 – Noon We are now free to leave the Soviet Union.
 Counselors start a discussion- what should we take with us on the way?
 In the middle of the discussion, Elina comes in with a suitcase.
 She tells the campers that her daughter has made Aliya to Israel already. She is old and can not go but she wants the children to take the suitcase to her daughter.
 Talks to the children about how lucky they are to be able to go to Israel.
 When she leaves campers try to think what's in the suitcase.
 Open and see.
 Ask campers- are those the things that you would have brought with you? What is similar, what is different? Why?

Suitcase
Jewish /
secular
objects

Noon Lunch

12:30 - 1:30 Prepare for campout

1:30 - 2:30
Pool

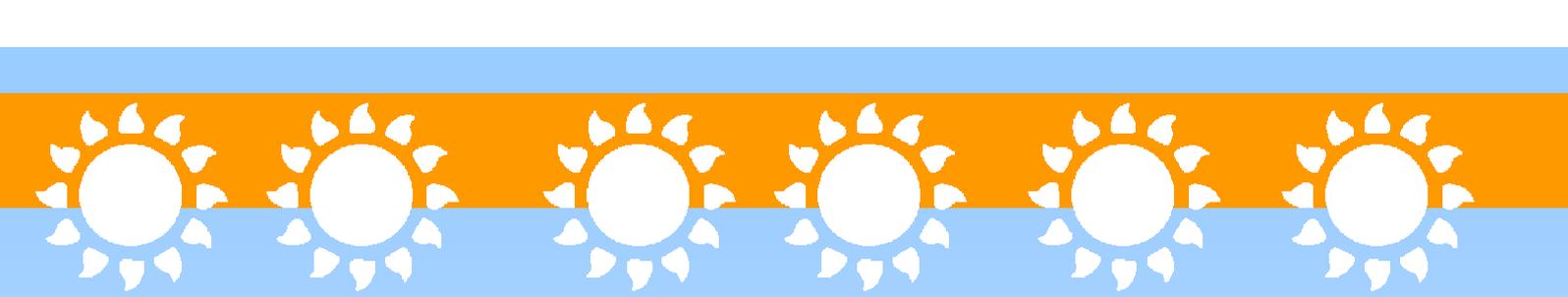
After pool, before boarding the bus, a KGB agent comes to take all their watches/ bracelets (Counselors have to give their watches too). Cannot leave the Soviet Union with all their belongings. Something must stay behind.
 Counselors- the campers might be angry. Try to stay in the game and don't promise them they will get their watches later on. Try to stretch the experience as much as possible, asking - is a watch worth our freedom? What are you willing to give for freedom? Remind them about stories from their own families. What could their great-grandparents bring to the US? Which belongings did they have to leave behind?

3:30 Pohick Bay Regional Park

4:00 - 5:30 Set up tents*(what does the star refer to?), collect wood, leaves, twigs

5:30 - 6:30 Bandana project- transform the symbol of despair into a symbol of hope
or make dinner*(what does the star refer to?)

beads, puffy
paints,
sequence etc



6:30 - 7:30 Dinner and clean up* (what does the star refer to?)

7:30

Hike, jumprope, stories, campfire, S'mores Journal time

Why are parts highlighted?

“There is no future for Jews in Russia. We have decided to leave. We plan to rent a small plane telling the plane owner that we need it to get to a family wedding. We will buy all the tickets for this flight (16 tickets) and while we’re in the air, we plan to hijack the plane and make it fly to Finland. From there we want to get to Sweden and then we can be free to go where ever we want. We have a few seats left on the plane. Do you want to join us? It’s a very dangerous operation. We might be caught by the KGB and sent to Siberia but we might make it to freedom.”

Decide fast!

Eduard Koznatzov



Who was Eduard Koznachov? Eduard Koznachov was a Russian Jew who was a political prisoner in Russia for seven years. Koznachov wanted to have the right to leave Russia and make Aliya to Israel.

What was the idea of the plane? Eduard Koznachov organized a group of 16 Jews who were willing to take the risk and try to leave Russia. It happened in May 1970 (36 years ago).

How did they plan to hijack the plane? One of the members of the group, Mark Dimshitz, was a pilot in the Russian airforce. The plan was that he would fly the plane out of Russia after the hijacking.

How did the operation go? On the night of the operation, the group arrived at the airport. When they were about to board the plane, KGB officers surrounded them and caught them. The operation failed.

What happened to the people of the group? Eduard Koznachov and Mark Dimsittz were sentenced to death. After much international pressure, the sentence was changed to 15 years in jail in the icelands of Siberia. The rest of the group was sentenced to five to ten years in Siberia.