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COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES & LITERATURE
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August 19, 1975

TO: Jewish Community Center

RE: Conference: "OUR MANY LANGUAGE-CULTURES: AMERICA'S STRENGTH OR CHALLENGE" - Saturday, November 8, 1975, Clayton Hall, University of Delaware

FROM: Marion E. Wiley, Conference Director

In November a conference (briefly described above) will be held which will hopefully be of great interest to your organization. The conference is on our many "language-cultures." It is a project designed to involve the whole community in discussing our many language groups. It is hoped that the conference will encourage the individual to learn about his own cultural background and the cultural backgrounds of others. The discussions at the conference will also encourage the community to promote definite programs for studying the cultures and values of language groups, including the English language group. The all-day conference is sponsored by the Department of Languages and Literature, funded by the Delaware Humanities Forum, and planned by a committee representing the community.

A vital part of the conference is an exhibit designed and organized by the many groups (German, French, Slavic, Italian, Greek, Hebrew, Chinese, Finnish, etc.). Would your group contribute to the exhibit? The exhibit can include any variety of items, and it need not be complicated. You might wish to appoint a person to take charge of your group's exhibit. Perhaps you may decide to join together with other organizations in your language group. Would your group also be interested in sharing its musical (instrumental) talent? If your group has members who play music together, then this might be part of the planned luncheon music.

The enclosed outline of the conference-proposal will give an overview of the project and hopes that the project needs your participation. Publicity will soon reach you and other members of the community. This letter, however, is a personal request for your support and participation. May we ask you to encourage participation in the conference on November 8th, 9-3 P.M. at Clayton Hall? With much publicity of the event, we anticipate an attendance of about 400 persons.

May I ask you to indicate the nature of your contribution? The conference will be successful with the participation of the language-cultural groups, and I hope every group will enjoy the opportunity. The conference promises to be most rewarding.

P.S. I would be delighted if we could have a Hebrew-Language entry into the exhibit. Would it be possible?

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C. Discussion Groups: these will rotate in order to allow each person to attend at least three different discussion groups. The topics will include some of the following:

1. "WHAT IS AMERICAN CULTURE?" (Is it Anglo-Saxon? Has it constantly changed? Should it change? What should not change? What problems are encountered?)
2. "DO CULTURAL VALUES DIFFER?" (What specific values differ? How does a community, state, or country choose its values? Can they be chosen? Do values get lost? Which values seem to change? What values might we promote? How?)
3. "MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION?" (What is it? Do we have it in Delaware schools? Is it desirable? Is knowledge of a second language or other languages helpful? Why? Is multicultural education the rule in other countries? What is the policy in regard to languages in this area? Do regions of the country differ in regard to multicultural or cosmopolitan education? Are we utilizing the knowledge of persons skilled in languages and informed about other cultures? What changes seem desirable? Why?)
4. "TELEVISION AND PUBLIC INFORMATION": (Does TV, as it is available in this area, promote or hinder multicultural understanding? Which programs? Are foreign language films shown? Are beginning language programs shown regularly? Do other areas have different programs? Are the programs only oriented to the "melting pot" idea? What might television be asked to do in the area of multicultural programming?)

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5. "CULTURAL/ETHNIC ORGANIZATIONS IN DELAWARE": (What are they? What are their goals? To whom is membership open? How well known are these organizations? (Printed list of these organizations will be available to all.))
6. "GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY TO OUR MULTILANGUAGE-CULTURALISM" (Should the federal, state, and local governments encourage the preservation of our many language-cultures? Do they? How? What progress is needed? What programs designed for the preservation of our many cultures exist? Are they valuable? Are they properly funded?)

D. SUMMARIZING GENERAL SESSION, FOLLOWING THE DISCUSSION GROUPS:

Each discussion group will briefly summarize the direction of its discussion. A short questionnaire may be completed by each participant in the conference. The forms will be analyzed later and made available to interested persons.