

C-7387 Transcription

"Mission to Israel: The 1970 United Jewish Appeal Campaign Story

Told by Israel's Leaders." Introduction by Edward Ginsberg,

General Chairman. 1970.

[music playing; men and women singing]

Edward Ginsberg:

The song you are listening to is called "Sharm El Sheikh." It was written immediately following the Six-Day War. Israeli troops had retaken that strategic location at the tip of the Sinai Peninsula, and reopened the Straits of Tiran. The words describe the mood of Israel's people today, as they did then two years ago. "Gone is the darkness, the dawn is so near. Will the sun bring us peace now, or the shadow of fear? [01:00] Oh, Sharm El Sheikh, harbor of sand and of sea, can you tell us why, why this has to be?" [singing continues]

My name is Edward Ginsberg, and I am general chairman of the United Jewish Appeal. Just a few weeks ago I had the honor of leading 350 Jewish community leaders from throughout the United States to the hauntingly beautiful outpost of Sharm El Sheikh. We were there as participants in the National Study

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Mission of the UJA. We were there to learn for ourselves and to see with our own eyes the facts behind the 1970 UJA campaign and the Israel Emergency Fund. It is not my purpose today to tell you the 1970 campaign story, because I want you to hear it as we [02:00], on the study mission heard it, from the people of Israel and the leaders of her government. The central fact of life for Israel today is that the country is still at war. We learned this on our very first night in Israel, when we were briefed by General Aharon Yariv, the chief of military intelligence. He is how he described the present situation:

Aharon Yariv:

I've had the honor of addressing the study mission last year, and I spoke about the lasting emergency, and about the necessity, the vital necessity for a long and hard pull. And I also spoke about what it is all about, what the issue at stake is, and during the year that has elapsed, this issue [03:00] has not been blurred, and it is as clearly defined as ever. And the strength of this issue is in its stark, awesome simplicity: the survival and continuous and secure existence of the Jewish state. This is the focal point of the struggle, and not the questions of lines on a map. This is the focal point of the

struggle: whether the Arab world, tens and tens of millions of Arabs, are going to accept a Jewish state in their midst or not. Because this is our uppermost and supreme aim, to have a Jewish state, so that every Jew [04:00] who has to, and every Jew who wants to, can come to it whenever it is necessary or whenever he wants to.

A few figures. The Egyptian air force has, is about, if we take the fighter aircraft, they have about at least a third more fighter aircraft than they had on the eve of the 5th of June. Not after we ended the fight with them, but before we started the fight with them. The Syrians have twice that many aircraft than what they had on the 5th of June. The Egyptians have 50% more tanks than they possessed on the 5th of June. The Syrians have about 50% more tanks than what they possessed. Even the [05:00] Jordanians have almost twice as many tanks of what they had on the 5th, on the eve of the Six-Day War. And, better tanks, and better planes, and better guns, and more guns. This is a problem for us. Because, and I'll say a word about quality, but we cannot disregard quantity totally. We have to have a minimum of quantity, with quality of course, but we have to have a minimum of quantity to face these huge amounts of equipment that are being amassed in these Arab countries thanks...or because of

Soviet help. And tanks and guns and planes, modern tanks, modern guns, and modern planes, are unfortunately very expensive. A Phantom [06:00], if I'm not mistaken, is at least about...not about, is more than 4 million dollars. But, of course, we say quantity is not everything. And we are ready to accept a ratio of one to three in their favor! One to three in their favor. Because we believe in the qualitative aspect, and the qualitative aspect has not changed, because it cannot change in such a short time. It'll take a generation, if not generations. It must take a total social upheaval, which we don't see, in all the Arab countries, in order to cure the Arab soldier and the Arab officer of his weaknesses, for which he personally is not to be blamed, but their weaknesses are still there. [07:00] And no amount of rational structures will be able to change this. So, what you do, meanwhile? And they have therefore come to the conclusion the necessity for the war of attrition. "We Arabs are plenty, and the Jews are few, so let us pressure them. Let us harass them. Let us call them casualties. Let us bleed them, bleed them literally, actually. Let us bleed them financially. Let us weaken them. Let us wear them down and out until they will withdrawal out of their own volition, and it will not be

necessary for us Arabs to go to war, to wait for the big D-Day!"
And they have started with this during the last year.

What have they achieved? [08:00] Harassment? Yes. Damage? Yes. Casualties? Yes. But not one position. Not one position has been given up. Not one inch of territory has been yielded. [applause]. And not one settlement has been abandoned. They are trying to say that conventional warfare will not succeed, perhaps unconventional warfare will succeed as it did in Algeria, as perhaps it does succeed in Vietnam, and there are going to wage guerilla war on us with the Palestinian saboteurs and terrorist. We have no big problem in controlling the new territories. We have difficulties [09:00], but we do control them and there's no doubt about that. Casualties, yes. And you are going to see the movie. We are very sensitive about it. Since the 12th of June, '67, until the 1st of September, '69, we had three hundred and twenty people killed due to enemy action. For us, terribly much. Very heavy. I can say to you, much less than we lost through road accidents! It is no consolation to us.

It is very, very difficult, believe me. Very difficult! To see the young boys you send out, when the moon starts in the evening, to see some of them who were so full of life, [10:00] so dedicated, with all the promise before them, to see them come

back in the grey, cold [unclear] stretchers. Very difficult. The most difficult thing we have to face. The most difficult thing we have to face. We think it is the price that we must pay. We don't like to consider it in terms of statistics, and in fact we are paying it. We don't like it. We hate it! We suffer from it, but we know that we must pay it. Yes, the war of attrition gives us trouble. There is fighting, all along, on all the borders. Some of the settlements have trouble. The army is actually fighting day and night at this very moment, but whilst we fight, whilst we face damage, [11:00] harassment, sabotage, casualties, life must go on. We want it to go on! We want immigration! This is our lifeblood. We want development. This is what we're here for. We want culture. We want education. We do not want to be an armed camp! And I remember a...prominent American journalist asking me, "Tell me please, General, are you going to remain Athens or turn into Sparta?" And I told him, "We are going to remain Jerusalem!" [applause]

If you do not want to be a Sparta, and you want to be a reborn, a new Jerusalem [12:00]...the Six-Day War has given us a historic chance, not an easy and simple one, but a great one. Let us not lose or waste this chance, because history has no pity and seldom offers a raincheck to the one that misses his

chances. We must therefore gird ourselves for the sustained effort to ensure the future of the Jewish state. Not the Jewish community, but the Jewish state! There is no doubt in our minds, and I speak to you...as a soldier of the Israeli Defense Forces, as an Israeli citizen. There is no doubt in our mind as to which road we must take, and we know it is a [13:00] toll road, demanding its price, in sweat and blood, tears and toil! We ask you, I as an Israeli soldier and as a representative of the Israeli soldier, I ask you, ladies and gentlemen, as a representative of our brothers and sisters in the United States, to go this road with us in spirit if not in body. We ask you to help us pay the toll, so that we may share in what is awaiting us at the end of the road. And if you strain your eyes, if you strain your eyes, and if you stretch your imagination a little bit, you can already see at the end of the road [14:00] the dim outlines, but still the outlines, of the future of the Jewish state. Full of promise and success! But it is at the end of the road, and the road is a long and hard one, and I turn to you, as a Jew, an Israeli and a soldier, and I ask you, ladies and gentlemen, join us in taking the hard road, join us in paying the toll, and we shall be together in achieving the goal!

[applause]

Edward Ginsberg:

So the war in Israel goes on, and as we know, the Israeli Defense Forces are unflinching in their [15:00] courage and daring. We were at Sharm El Sheikh, gazing out over the incredibly narrow Straits of Tiran, the Straits that had been closed by Nasser in 1967 when we were addressed by General Chaim Bar-Lev, Chief of Staff of the Israeli army. He gave us a comprehensive view of the situation.

Haim Bar-Lev:

A fortnight ago, the Jewish people have entered their 5,730th year, according to the Jewish calendar. And, uh, of course, it is impossible to say what this year and the years to come have in store for us. But I think it's...quite easy to say, and quite safe to say, that the year [16:00], the next year is not going to be any easier.

Theoretically, this present, the situation, the present uh...situation can develop into three major developments, developments. The first theoretical possibility is a political settlement. The second theoretical possibility is another war. And the third possibility is the continuation of the status quo.

As far as a political settlement is concerned, to my mind, the chances are very few [17:00], and not because the parties would not like to have a settlement, a political settlement, but because the parties, namely Israel and the Arab states, we have a great divergence of opinions as far as the political settlement is concerned. Israel would like to have a political settlement that would grant her security and independence in the broadest, eh...eh, way, of meaning of these terms. The Arab countries would like to have a settlement that would nullify the strategic advantages acquired by Israel [18:00] during the war without granting her safe boundaries, which could serve as a base for a real and long term peace. The gap between those two different attitudes toward a settlement are so large that, to my mind, even the largest and the most respected, eh, world powers...to my mind they are not able, really, to breach these, this gap. So that as far as the political settlement is concerned, to my mind, this remains a theoretical possibility, but with very, very little [19:00] practical chances as far as the near future is concerned.

The second possibility is the possibility of a war. It is impossible to say whether we shall have a war in the near future, in the foreseeable future, or not. But it is very easy

to say that, as far as the Arab countries are concerned, they want a war. Whether they'll be able to carry out their will or not, this of course is another question. But basically, Arab countries, mainly Egypt, wants a war because the present situation is totally unbearable for the [20:00] present leadership of Egypt.

And the third possibility is the continuation of the present situation, which is theoretically on one hand, because the present situation may continue for a long time, for a very long time. But this is not only a theoretical possibility, this is also a practical possibility, because it exists actually, and today, and tomorrow, and yesterday, we live in a certain situation. And, uh, the main question is, what should we do in order to exploit the time, the present [21:00] situation, in ways of preparing ourselves to every possible eventuality? And, uh, I think that the logical conclusion is that we must direct our activities towards strengthening the State of Israel, towards consolidating the achievements of Israel, in every aspect, in the political, economical, military, social aspects of our lives. This is our collective mission, our collective duty, of every Jewish community. And this is also, the personal [22:00] duty of every Jew, not only the two and a half millions

of Jews in Israel, but of every Jew in the world. Everyone [applause]...everyone has got to ask himself, what can he do...on a personal basis, in order to help Israel to consolidate herself, to improve herself, in a way that we shall be able to meet every development: a political settlement, a war if necessary, and the continuation of the present situation as long as it might be needed.

Edward Ginsberg:

[23:00] It became apparent to the members of the study mission, as we traveled throughout the country, as we visited the front lines and spoke with Israel's military leaders, that there was little apparent help for a peaceful settlement. Israel's brave young men would continue to die in defense of their homeland.

We were all full of questions when we sat down one night with a man most able to answer them: General Moshe Dayan, Minister of Defense. Here are some excerpts from that stimulating session:

Edward Ginsberg:

[to Dayan] The question is, how do you relate the current struggle in the context of 4000 years of Jewish history?

Moshe Dayan:

I, uh, relate the, uh, present struggle of the, of us, of the Jewish people, as one chapter that belonging to the past, and I don't know when it will really finish and end. I hope like uh previous generations [24:00], hope that in our time we shall have a country and we will have peace, and we shall have our rest, and the Jewish people will be concentrated here, and all the good and nice things. But, for, for the meantime, if we have to struggle, and we have to fight, it is not an unusual thing for a Jewish man, for the Jewish people. I should put it like that, my first memory, youth memory, when I was a child, at the age of five or six - what I remember it, was the end of the First World War, 1921 or so. My first memory is how my father took me, and we fled, we ran away from Degania B - [25:00] there used to be, already now, there are two, Degania B, but at that time the second Degania, Degania B, was set on fire by the Arabs and my father took me and with all the others we fled and ran away to Degania A and the Arabs took Degania B and set it on

fire. And I still remember it, where that I saw the fire behind us, and we running away to Degania A.

Now I am the Minister of Defense and our forces are fighting, and doing it not so badly, on the Suez Canal. So when I compare the beginning of my life, when had to run away from Degania B to Degania A, and now that we have to hold on at the Suez Canal [26:00], I don't feel so bad.

Edward Ginsberg:

The question is, will the present administration in the United States be as sympathetic to Israel as past administrations?

Moshe Dayan:

Oh, that I wanted to ask you! [laughter and applause]

Edward Ginsberg:

The question is that there's been a status quo for the last twelve months. General Bar-Lev referred to it as "no peace, no war, but status quo." The question is, have there been changes in the last twelve months, good or bad?

Moshe Dayan:

I, I think very high of General Bar-Lev, but I wouldn't have made the same, same statement and definition. "No peace, no war"? There is certainly no peace. Full stop. But no war, I'm not so sure. [27:00] Now what the, uh, and the...especially if you mention the last twelve months, and if the question was whether there were any changes during this time, the twelve months. On the 30th of April, last April, this April, Nasser declared that before that date, and I'm just quoting what he said that until that date, any Egyptian soldier who fired at the Israeli's across the canal would have been put to trial because that was against the order, because Egyptian accep- Egypt accepted the ceasefire, but from that time on, 1st of May on, any Egyptian soldier who will see an Israeli on the other side and will not open fire [28:00] will be put on trial because that will be against orders. Well, this is a change. On the 1st of May this year, the Egyptians, their leader the president, decided to start, to, to, to abolish the ceasefire agreement and to open fire, in a way to start a war. It is not a mobile war. He did not decide to try to cross the Canal, but he did decide, and gave such order, to start fire war, fire fighting by firing across the Canal, and sending commando units. So, this is the

change that the Egyptians, and with them the other Arab countries, decided the beginning of this summer, May, that the time has come that they would renew the war. They needed the last two years to build the, the, their forces [29:00], to get new equipment, to reclaim them, but they felt at the beginning of this summer that they were, that at least they thought they were in a position, if not to try an all-out war, but to start to try a fire war, firing across the Canal. And they have been doing it since then.

Now, this is only one part of the change, because what happened was that there are two parties. We, uh, also did something, and once they decided the ceasefire doesn't exist any longer, they started firing and sending their commando units, we also took an active part, again not trying to cross the Canal and going for Cairo or Amman or Damascus, but we have sent some of our groups [30:00] across the Canal and our units, and uh, our air force, and so on and so forth. It's true that our casualties increased, our casualties...because when there is fire, there, there are casualties, nothing doing. When they open- opened fire with so many [unclear] so many guns, and eventually we have casualties. The number of our casualties increased. But our fortifications now in better position than

they were three months ago. And I think that our forces now are in a better shape than they were three months ago. Which is not the case with the other side.

Edward Ginsberg:

I'm sure that you can imagine for yourselves what the cost of this continuing war is in terms of the Israelis. In terms of the appalling loss of human life...in strictly financial terms, it is enormous. The Minister of Finance [31:00] Ze'ev Sherf spelled it out in black and white.

Ze'ev Sherf:

Until '66, we...in '66 and '65, we spent around...a million dollars, a little less than a million dollars a day for our defense, a day. We are now spending three million dollars each day. What you have seen, what you will see, what you won't see, all together it costs us three million dollars a day. It's a billion a year this time, this year. It will be more next year. Another figure, we spent until the Six Days War, of each hundred, uh, pounds collected [32:00] in revenue, that means all revenue - income tax, custom duties, purchase tax, all kinds of tax - we spent until then, forty pounds, forty percent, on

defense. We are spending now eighty percent. That means that the money we collect in revenue leaves us only twenty percent for all other services. That's the, the, the...beginning with the police you meet on the street, the courts, the hospitals, the schools, the care of the old age, uh what we do for the children. This all together we have to arrange with twenty percent, which we possibly can't arrange. So we are...taking loans, [33:00] and our indebtedness... is now that each child born in Israel is already, is immediately mortgaged with sum of \$700. Each child born in Israel, \$700. And as things are developing, the figure will increase. When I spoke the night before yesterday at a meeting in Jerusalem - you know we have election times - and I speak between one to three times a day. Eh, so when I spoke, there was, that was in a quarter of Jerusalem where there are Oriental, most...living, people of Oriental communities, who have many children so, eh, one woman immediately interrupted, inte- uh interrupt me, and asked me, [34:00] "I have eight children, so how much do I owe?" So I told her, "Don't worry. You won't pay it, your children will pay it." [laughter]. She felt relaxed. And, uh...what's even more, more of a problem to us, I must admit, is that our, our reserve of foreign exchange, which usually by international standards, each

country which has a reserve of foreign exchange for four months of input is regarded as a sound country from this point of view. We had, we had three to four months, a reserve from three to four months [35:00] of inputs until this year. In 1968, it...we, we have been a country with a deficit in our balance of payments, in our account, balance of payments, since the state exists. We never made it good, but we made it up with the input of capital. That's UJA money, [unclear] money, invest- direct investments, the...the payments we got from the German government in the past. It made up. '68 was the first year since 1953, after fifteen years, where the capital inputs did not cover the deficit in trade, balance of payments. And so we, our reserve went down [36:00] by around a hundred million dollars. This year it will go down by two hundred million dollars. And we are ready to go on like that, as long as we can take, as long as you can take it. And now I want...Yes, I would like to add before I go on, I would like to add to my figures, another...We are spending, this year, of the budget, half of which comes from revenue and half of which comes from loans, we have spent this year, we are spending this year a little, about forty percent. I told you eighty of revenue, and it's forty of the total budget. I wonder if some of you know, I don't remember the figures.

[37:00] What's the budget of the United States if you were to have to spend forty percent on military expenditure? But I can tell you one figure. United States of America is spending now, including the war in Vietnam, nine percent of its gross national product. And, you needn't know what is the gross national product. It's enough if I tell you that while United States spends nine percent, we spend twenty-one. We thought it would be twenty, it has become twenty-one. As whatever we produce, all services included, everything, twenty-one percent go to defense.

Edward Ginsberg:

Now, as I said before, the entire burden for the war lies with the people of Israel, the responsibility of world Jewry is to assume other non-governmental expenses. For example [38:00], helping Jews escape from lands of persecution to a life of freedom in Israel; helping their absorption into the society of the community, and in their fields of health, education, and welfare. Over the years we have been the major source of funds for the Joint Distribution Committee, which operates the Malben Home in Israel. This is the twentieth anniversary of the JDC, and at a Malben home for the aged in Netania we had a wonderful anniversary luncheon, at which we were honored by the presence

of the Prime Minister, Mrs. Golda Meir. She was in a reflective, reminiscent mood, and I would like you to listen to some of her remarks, for they distill the essence of the work that this organization has done in two short decades.

Golda Meir:

I remember when children from Tehran came in. Little children, with their little...[39:00] bags, bundles, not too clean...scared, holding on, one to another. And children who, for a long time, had no faith in those that took care of them and would put bread from the table under their pillows because they were not sure, alright they got a meal tonight, but what about breakfast in the morning? It took them a long time to believe that they would have their meals, that they can sleep quietly. And they are grown up men and women, what haven't they already accomplished in this country? And I saw the people in the Cyprus camp, never forget that. Under barbed wire, coming from the camps in Germany to a camp in Cyprus under barbed wire [40:00]. Not a, not a s- blade of grass. Flowers I was handed by the children, made of paper. There were children that never saw a live flower, and only by the Israeli kindergarteners and teachers they learned how to make a flower out of paper. They

never held a rose or any other flower in their hands. I'll never forget those flowers. And I'll never forget those miserable tents, and the terrible conditions, and uh, who was the head this camp? [voices from crowd] [unclear] And I'll never forget him, and with him Leibner that came from Israel. And I wondered at them, how can they live there? How can they manage it? How can do what they are doing? And we saw them come in, and we saw the numbers, [41:00] on the arms of the people, and we thought, can we accomplish miracles? Can these people who have gone through hell, can they really live again? Can they live for themselves even, let alone do something for the country or for somebody else? And I think that the real revenge on Eichmann was not that he was tried here and put to death. That's nothing. But when I sat one morning in court and heard evidence of one of the Jews from the camp, from the ghetto, and here he stood up straight and was alive, and was working, and had a family, and he was at home [42:00], and Eichmann was brought to trial in this man's home, in Israel. Somebody this morning in the meeting I had of kibbutzim and moshavim, one of the young men said, the Jewish people is a crazy people. They get crazy ideas, and they implement them [laughter]. I don't know whether we are crazy. Maybe it's ultra-sanity, that we were able, with these people

broken in spirit in and in body, these children who have lost faith in everything and in everybody, have grown up to be devoted, to have ideals, to be prepared to give their lives for these ideals, believe in the future of our people [43:00], believe in the future of the world, and no sign was left of what was. Memories, yes. But not sign in contact- in conduct and in life. And to all you people, and to us, to all of us... I almost want to say, let us pray for the day when we will have many problems of absorption. Problems there will be, no doubt, but I want to see not only those that were mentioned here, who are candidates for *aliyah* to Israel, I am sure that there are other places from which many, many Jews will come. We have proof. Millions of Jews in Russia did not give up their Jewishness [44:00]. Millions of Jews in Russia are interested in us. Large numbers live with the one hope of being here with us. For sure, they'll create problems, but all of us pray for that great day when Jews from Iraq and Egypt, as they are, with all their problems, should be here, and we should help and try to solve their problems. And Jews that will come from all over, from the east and from the west, from the United States maybe with a different kind of problems, but they will come and we will have problems there too. But, let us hope for problems of this kind.

And the more Jews, and the more problems, the easier we will be able to solve, the great problem of peace in Israel, many Jews in Israel, creative work in Israel...um...a stand and the things that we think right [45:00], without budging! With your understanding and help, as I said to audiences now in the United States, when I am asked, can you take it? And I ask American Jewish friends, can you take it? As long as you can take it, we can take it together! And together we will see that problem, of peace between Israel and its neighbors solved, so many congratulations for this birthday, and many, many happy returns with a feeling of work well done. [applause]

Edward Ginsberg:

This story has not ended. In 1969, some 40,000 Jews came to Israel, most of them with nothing more than what they could carry on their backs. And they are still coming! [46:00] Listen to Louis Pincus, chairman of the Jewish Agency.

Louis Pincus:

I've been asked not once, if this is your position, if things are so tough, why don't you stop a bit the immigration? When an oath was taken seventy years ago, fifty years ago,

thirty year ago...there never has been a wave of immigration before the State and after the State in which it didn't impose, and certainly in the beginning, enormous burdens. I don't think there was ever a situation in which we faced this life and death struggle that we are facing today, and yet nearly 40,000 immigrants will come in - I know you got the figures the other night - will come in this year, and certainly it looks as if more will come in next year. About whom are we talking? We're talking about things that looked like miracles [47:00] a few years ago. We have been told for years that the Jew- Soviet Jewry can be written off, after fifty years of communist regime, assimilation, and everything, those Jews have no desire to join the Jewish people again. We have abundant evidence that if the Soviet Union would really open their gates, and not open the door for a second and close it, and open it and close it, hundreds of thousands of Jews would want to leave, and hundreds of thousands of Jews would want to come. Those of you who heard the report, and those of who you went to Vienna and who saw some of these Jews as the moment they got to freedom...or have gone through the kind of experience that I went through a month ago when I passed through Vienna. When having lunch with them, someone of them got up to [48:00] try to make a speech and had

to stop and choke, and just say, "Well, I wanted to say something. All I can say is...I am here, I bring you a message of the Jews of the Soviet Union, don't forget us." And the bulk of three hundred thousand Jews, leaving out the Soviet Union, are awaiting to come to this country from countries of need and distress. From India, right through to Eastern Europe, to North Africa. There are something like three hundred thousand such Jews, and we know that they want to leave, all of them, for freedom. We also know that most of them we want, and they want to come and be taken in. And therefore the significance of what I have been trying to say to you, and I'm nearly through...is that the Jews of this country will fight and literally fight [49:00] with all they've got. You went to Masada, you took a pledge there. Believe me, the Jews of this country don't need to make any formal pledge. They will make no Masada as another occurrence in the history of the Jewish people, under any circumstances, in this country. We know that. This is the result of a thousand years of history, two thousand years of history. Maybe this is the result of the last forty years of history which saw the Hitler regime. And therefore, for fighting, for supplying the means and weapons and the financial obligations of that, the Jews of Israel know that it's their obligation. You

free Jews, and this is the message you have to take back, will have to do the rest. Those items that I gave you, youth and housing [50:00] and education and health, will all be frozen with the enormous consequences, social and human, that will flow from that, if we are compelled to go on freezing, leave out-leaving alone the nightmare of reducing. And therefore this new dimension that I referred to in the giving of this group has to become, not only for the American Jews but for world Jewry, the new dimension because that is the new dimension of lead. It is a new dimension demanding new priorities, in Jewish life and in Jewish thinking.

I have been asked, and you will all ask yourselves, some of you have even asked me privately: how long can this go on? Let me tell you that's not a question of fact. The question [51:00] of how long is a great, great moral question. It is deep. Men of high moral purpose, of all nations and faiths, have had to ask it down the ages. We Jews have had to ask it time and again. Way back in the time of Pharaoh, down to the Spanish Inquisition, through the grave years of the Hitler regime and the Holocaust, we have asked the question of how long, but we have never, as Jews, waited for the answer. We never gave in. We defied all. We were determined to be true to that past which gives us our right

to existence, and ready for that destiny which awaits us. And therefore, talking in terms of how long tonight, and facing the issues that have been put before you during your mission, and which [52:00] I have chara- covered so skimpily this evening, the Jews of Israel are willing to answer the question of how long. As long as it will take us to get peace and build the Israel, that kind of Israel so near to our hearts' desire; the Israel of social values and moral purpose. This Israel, this tiny Israel, awaits your answer. Will you be with us for as long as it will take? If you are so willing, I believe we will win through to an Israel, which will not only be an Israel which takes in refugees, the needy, the broken, the homeless; not only an Israel that will give dignity and equality to Jews wherever they may live [53:00]; but we will build an Israel, if you will be with us, in the answer to the question of how long, we will build an Israel that will add a glorious chapter to our long, meaningful history. We will build an Israel that will still make its contribution to the forward march of a sorely tried humanity, and for as long as it will take to do that, we in Israel will stand fast. I am deeply of the faith that you will stand with us! [applause]

Edward Ginsberg:

It should be obvious by now that the Israelis are girding themselves with great courage and determination for a long and difficult struggle, on both the military front and in our area, the humanitarian front. And there is another front, and that is the diplomatic channels through which [54:00] sovereign states are supposed to communicate and reach peaceful settlements. We were briefed on developments in that area by the Foreign Minister, Abba Eban.

Abba Eban:

Now, how can I take a starting point, in order to explain what Israel's political struggle is about? The best starting point is that which takes us, in memory, to the great summer days of 1967. This is the reference point for everything that Israel says and does. Whenever the summer months come 'round, we remember the May and June weeks of 1967. I'm not speaking to you so much about the military victory, great and glorious as it was. Far more important is it for us to understand [55:00], not the victory, but the peril and the solitude which preceded it. We brood upon those memories day and night, a new dimension has been added to the nation's memory, and the exploration of it

will take many years. For here, within three short weeks, we found ourselves, embarked on a great transition, from ostensible stability to the very precipice of doom!

There we were, 120,000 Egyptian troops in Sinai. The greatest army ever gathered there, in all its history. One thousand Egyptian tanks with its, with their forward columns, within a few minutes of our homes. All the airports [56:00] in Sinai, all the military aerodromes, equipped with operation orders specifying the precise villages and targets in Israel which they were to bomb; 45,000 Syrian troops glowering down upon us, towards our villages in Upper Galilee; and the Jordan valley; the entire army of Jordan pressing us up against the densely populated coastal plain and western Jerusalem; a maritime blockade cutting us off from two-thirds of the world, strangling the artery through which 90% of our vital fuel came; intoxicated crowds in Arab capitals, shouting with lust of blood and booty...and revenge; tens of thousands of people [57:00] in enlightened capitals striding in processions of solidarity with Israel. Never in our generation has the universal conscious been aroused in such anguish of spirit, but in such total impotence. All the external guarantees, commitments, promises, declarations, on which Israel had sometimes been advised to rely

for her security, melting away into the empty air. Our streets were dark and silent. The country's economy beating on a feeble pulse. Everything held down in a paralyzing mobilization. Many throughout the world were seriously discussing Israel's annihilation, in Arab capitals in exuberance of spirit, elsewhere in deep sorrow [58:00], but without any prospect of intervention.

Now I bring you these memories, and also the memories of those six days in which we passed from mortal danger to successful and glorious resistance. I bring you these memories not in any spirit of academic research, nor in order to galvanize your pride, but because these memories are essential to an understanding of our policy. Unless you understand our memories, you cannot understand our policy, for our policy is anchored firmly in those memories, and from them the chief principle of our policy emerges, clear and bright. It is this: never, never, never shall we return to that position of political anarchy [59:00] and territorial vulnerability from which we have emerged. Our business is not to reconstruct the debris of the old order which nearly brought about our ruin, but this time to be satisfied with nothing less than peace, to build a new order of relations in the... Middle East. We have no

obligations whatever to that old situation, to the old map, to the old chaotic relationship. National suicide is not an international obligation. And therefore, for two and a half years, we have carried into international councils and into world opinion, this doctrine of moving forward and not backward. Not backward [1:00:00] to an armistice corroded by hostility and collapsing under the weight of hatred, but forward to a permanent and stable peace. Not backward to the old map of the armistice lines, which were so arranged as to ensure that every single village and every single citizen of Israel, as of no other state, should live permanently under the shadow of an Arab gun, but forward to a rational and agreed territorial structure, to be elaborated within the framework of a negotiated peace. Not backward to the resumption of blockades and boycotts, but forward to their total liquidation. Not backward to the pretense that Israel has no existence, or is a dream that will soon fade away, but forward to the compulsion for our neighbors to understand the deep, authentic [1:01:00] roots of this people in the soil of Israel, and of the Middle East. We are part of the Middle East, of its glorious history, of its present reality, and of its future destiny. There has not been, there is not, and

there will not be, a Middle East without a sovereign Israel at the very center and heart of its existence. [applause]

In a word [applause quiets]...in a word, the theme of our policy is innovation, to build something such as the Middle East has never...known before. A new story must unfold across the Eastern Mediterranean and until it unfolds, we shall maintain in its entirety the elements of our security which are embodied in the ceasefire lines. There are therefore, [1:02:00] in our conception, only two choices: either the present situation or its replacement by a genuine negotiated peace. There are no third alternatives. No more of armistices and truces and ceasefires: situations in which everything is ambivalent, provisional, transitional, unresolved.

Now [applause]...If I end without any prediction of when peace will come, it is because of the incalculability of our neighbors. I want to go back to one of the illusions which is very relevant to your task here. They've recently been saying, and I hear this from other governments, "even if we cannot drive the Israeli's out by force, even if we cannot outmaneuver them in the political arena, even if we cannot [1:03:00] generate the pressures that we produced twelve years ago, they will collapse themselves under the sheer weight of losses of men, of the

economic burdens which they bear, the responsibility of the administration of these areas, everything will fall like a ripe fruit in our hands."

The burdens are, are very great. Perhaps there might be some justification for this belief that our shoulders would crumble under the weight of the burden...if we had to bear that burden upon our shoulders alone. What they do not take into account is the galvanizing force of Jewish solidarity. In other words, our shoulders are broader than they think. Here they have to deal not with two and a half million surrounded by a hundred million, but with an Israel whose dimensions are enlarged [1:04:00], in geography and in history, by the...endless impulse of, of Jewish solidarity. They forget that when Israel's armies fight, they have the total Jewish pride within their keeping. They forget that when Israel struggles, Israel is hounded by a vision of Armageddon. We know that many things in Jewish history are too terrible to be believed, but nothing in Jewish history is too terrible to have happened. We know that there are millions who share with us the view that if Israel were to fall, two thousand years of Jewish history would lose their meaning. There would not be a third return. It would be to reduce to utter futility our lives in the present, our memories in the

past, our hopes for the future [1:05:00]. Without victory there is no survival, and survival is what our political struggle is all about. For there cannot be anything more important at this crucial phase than a reaffirmation of this Jewish solidarity, in pursuit of Israel's consolidation. With you, we can make it, we can hold the line everywhere. We will pay its price. The price would in any case have to be paid. If our people did not fall at the Canal area, they would be falling here, closer at home. The terrorist groups are not the results of the Six-Day War. They were a cause of the Six-Day War; they came before it. And if we were to be irrational as to go back without peace, they would pursue us [1:06:00] into whatever remained. It is having no choice which constitutes such acceptance and resignation as we have. There are ways, I am certain my colleagues will speak to you of this, in which we can, to the best of our ability, reduce- reduce the price, increase deterrence. But there is a price. So long as we do not have peace, we shall not live as if there is peace. We are prepared to pay this price.

We hope then that as you see the Israeli reality, with critical but generous eyes, you will understand that there was never a time when there was greater pride and depth in the concept of being a Jew than in this, the autumn of 1969.

Edward Ginsberg:

Prime Minister [1:07:00] Golda Meir joined us a second time, and just as Mr. Eban had clarified the issues on the diplomatic front, she spelled out for the political considerations.

M1:

The question is, if it were possible to sit down with the Arab leaders, is there agreement with the present leaders in Israel, the cabinet, as to what would be put before the Arabs in those negotiations? Is that the question? [indistinct voice from crowd; woman coughing] That's right: what the present cabinet would, as an agreed policy, put before them.

Golda Meir:

And this is a very good question. I'm glad it was asked. The, uh, government, immediately after the war, decided, to my mind, one of the, uh, most sensible decisions [1:08:00] that Israel government could have and should have made at that time. Although it is true that shortly after the war we hoped that after have, the, the, after the Arabs having been defeated in

such a way, maybe they will come to the conclusion that that was enough, and they would be prepared to come to their senses and begin negotiations with us for peace. We didn't turn around to them and say, "Since we won the war, therefore we're going to dictate peace terms to you." We immediately said negotiations. But since they were not forthcoming, not until this day, and since there's no doubt that there is not one opinion among cabinet members, or among the people of Israel [1:09:00], we could have been in a position where, as I put it, before there be peace with Arabs, we would have a Jewish war on our hands [audience chuckles]. Not so terrible as a war with the Arabs, but it would have been bad enough, in our situation, with what is going on in the borders, with the tension that naturally comes with it, with economic problems that come with it, to be engaged in a discussion - that's putting it gently - among ourselves where the boundaries should be, that really, to my mind, would have been a disaster. [coughs]

So government said...several things, and we believe that within that, uh, framework [1:10:00], uh we can live and should live until the Arabs are prepared to sit down with us. And the decisions that were taken were the following. One: the '67 boundaries are no more, just the same as the Arabs destroyed the

1947 boundaries of the UN...because they immediately declared war, so they have destroyed now the '67 boundaries. Two: we said, what we want...our secure, recognized, and agreed borders - agreed means between us and our Arab neighbors. Three: that we are prepared to sit down at the negotiating table [1:11:00] without any preconditions. This is the policy that was adopted by government, this was policy that presented by Mr. Eban our, uh, Minister for Foreign Affairs at the United Nations, and we stand by this policy. This policy we adopted, and government has not gone into a discussion what should be the boundaries. So that there is not cabinet decision as to the boundaries, except these principles.

Yes, there's another very important decision that we have taken, until there are peace agreements with our neighbors, we do not budge from the lines of the ceasefire. [applause]. And uh...this of course we have lived up to, and I'm very happy to say [1:12:00] that with the exception of the Arab countries, the Communist Bloc, and uh some Moslem states of the Arabs and so on, of uh, Moslem states maybe in Asia...maybe one or two countries in Africa, there is nobody - for instance, the United States and uh Eur- other European countries, and so on - there's

nobody that asks us to step back even one inch from where we are now, the ceasefire lines, uh before there is a peace agreement.

F1:

[distant in crowd] My question was, as American Jews who want to help [unclear]...how best we can help, is it in terms of money, is it in terms of helping world peace? Are there other ways? What are the most important things that we can do while staying outside of Israel?

Golda Meir:

[1:13:00] We need economic aid. That's not a pleasant subject, but uh, that's the truth, and I'm sure you've heard about that. And, we, we'll need it, I fear, for quite a few years. Uh...look...we can go back, to uh...the days of rationing, of '50, '51, '52. But that means no development, no expansion of industry, no expansion of agriculture, no absorption of immigration. I mean, it means such a setback, not because people would eat less or, or their clothes would be rationed. That I don't care. But it would be such a setback [1:14:00] for the entire country, that it is difficult to picture Israel now under conditions of '50, '51, '52...And since

we have to carry this burden, the only thing that keeps Nasser from attacking us is that he know what kind of an army he will have to face, but even our army, with our boys as they are - and there's nobody better - and with the spirit, and the...preparedness for self-sacrifice, I mean, you- you couldn't dream up a better type of a soldier who's defending his country. But even a type of that kind can't do it empty handed. So, in order to knock down MIGs you must have a plane, and a good plane! And the, the, the price of the planes are...enough to drive one mad! [1:15:00] First we want them, and then when we get them or when we're about to get them, the uh, the price for each one is hair-raising! I saw on television, you were taken to some places and uh...then let you enjoy the trip, and tacked everything with the price of it, alright, so it's, so you know it! You saw it for yourself! So, uh, these are out problems, and this we need help, this is something we need.

Edward Ginsberg:

The facts of the 1970 campaign are perfectly clear. Israel is a nation at war. Because of the extraordinary expenses of this war, there is no money left over for the human needs of the people of Israel, needs which it has always been our historic

responsibility to fill. The dimensions [1:16:00] of those needs are unprecedented, and our response must be unprecedented as well. The people of Israel are determined to hold out against the threat of annihilation, for as long as it takes to win a just peace and build economic independence. We must do no less, because while bombs explode in the markets, while shells shatter the stillness of the desert, planes keep arriving with immigrants yearning for freedom. Their needs are enormous. It was for them that a Jewish homeland was created, and it is for them and for ourselves that we shall not falter now. We shall do what is necessary for as long as it takes. Every man and woman on the National Study Mission recognized this [1:17:00]. In one of the most memorable and moving ceremonies I have ever participated in, they pledged that they would not give in, but give more of their energies, their resources, and their time.

You've probably seen pictures of the mountain fortress of Masada, overlooking the Dead Sea. We climbed that mountain, and we stood on a site hallowed by martyrs' blood, and here is what took place there.

Edward Ginsberg [recording from ceremony]:

Ladies and gentleman, we're here...for a ceremony which we think is only fitting and proper. We'll start the program, and I'd like to introduce to you now the voice of Israel, the voice of Israel Radio, Television, Azariah Rapoport.

Azariah Rapoport:

[1:18:00] Listen to me, friends. Listen to me with your hearts, for I'm going to speak of things which cannot be measured with men's minds. I'm going to speak of things that happened in this very place, on a day such as this. One thousand and nine hundred and one years ago, Jerusalem fell to the Roman legions. The temple was defiled and destroyed. The city, the City of David, was in flames. The Jewish population herded into bondage like cattle. It was the death agony of the second Jewish commonwealth. From the carnage and the terror, a few who cherished freedom fled across the barren Judean wastes to this mountain citadel, the last place on Earth the Jews could call their own. And here in this fortress, 960 men, women, and children [1:19:00] held out against the entire might of the Roman Empire for three glorious years. But tyranny cannot tolerate glory. Tyranny cannot tolerate liberty's light. And so it was, in the year 72, that Rome's finest troops, her vaunted

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10th Legion, marched on Masada, sworn to extinguish the defiant flame of freedom. 960 men, women and children, stowed in this very place, and watched as thousands of Roman slaves built that ramp of beaten earth, watched as the armored Roman hordes rolled the fearful battering ram into position, and finally, as dusk was falling, they watched the last defensive wall burst into flame. In the valley below, they could smell the pigs [1:20:00] roasting in the Roman camp, and in the stillness of the desert air they could hear the drunken singing of the Roman army. And they knew that, with the dawn, their splendidly hopeless dream of liberty would be crushed beneath the tramping boots of vengeance.

And a man arose who was called Ben Ya'ir, and he turned to his comrades and he said, "My loyal followers, long ago we resolved to serve neither the Romans nor anyone else but God. Now the time has come that bids us prove our determination by our deeds! We have never submitted to slavery, even when it brought no danger with it. We must not choose slavery now. Let our wives die unabused, our children die without knowledge of slavery! Come while our hands [1:21:00] are free and can hold a sword. Let them do a noble service. Let us die unchained by our enemies, and leave this world as free men. It was on a night

like any other here, with the sky so full of stars that there hardly seemed room to squeeze one more in, and the moonlight turning the sea below into a vast a shimmering silver bowl. On a night like any other night, one thousand and eight hundred and ninety eight years ago. It was on a night like any other night that 960 men, women, and children ended their lives by their own hands and became for time immemorial a towering symbol of man's transcendent spirit. In the morning, we are told, the Romans laughed at the multitudes of the slain, but took no pleasure in the fact, nor could they do [1:22:00], other than wonder, at the courage of their resolution and their immovable contempt of death. Listen, listen with your hearts to these silent stones, and you will hear the meaning of this mountain, a meaning ever more for us to day, but mean words cannot interpret it. For to tell the meaning of this mountain, words must soar with the freedom of an eagle silhouetted against the high noon. To tell the meaning of this mountain, words must sing with the passion of an indomitable pride and courage. To tell the meaning of this mountain, words must cry out in rage against tyranny, injustice, and war! To tell the meaning of this mountain, words must cross the barrier of language, and touch the deepest chords in the human soul. They must resound and reverberate from mountaintop

and valley, from every riverbed and wadi, from every field and forest, [1:23:00] until all men hear and stand in awe before freedom's majesty and might! Listen to the meaning of this mountain. Listen to its demand that you give your life meaning by acting, without hesitation, without reservation, and without fear, to break the chains that bind mankind, and to live for the liberty of your brother. Listen to the meaning of this mountain. Masada shall not fall again. [applause]

[horn plays] [1:24:00]

Edward Ginsberg:

[Masada ceremony] My friends, Judaism teaches us that the most important thing is to strive for peace. It also teaches us to cherish freedom, and I think most important of all, teaches us to honor the sanctity of the human being. We're here at Masada, it's only fitting that as American Jews we rededicate ourselves to the same principles, the principles of freedom...the sanctity of the human being, and the hope for peace. It's also fitting...that we do this here, in Israel, because this beleaguered people has given freedom, does believe in the sanctity of human life, and [1:25:00] does strive so

earnestly for peace. And so I would ask you to take an oath with me, and if you will repeat after me:

Grant us peace, oh Lord [crowd repeats]
Thy most precious gift of peace [crowd repeats]
Thou eternal source of peace. [crowd repeats]
And let Israel be a messenger [crowd repeats]
Of peace unto the nations [crowd repeats]
And gathered here, on hallowed ground [crowd repeats]
Knowing that freedom is the birthright of man [crowd
repeats]
And peace is his greatest need [crowd repeats]
We dedicate ourselves [crowd repeats] [1:26:00]
And pledge our lives [crowd repeats]
And efforts [crowd repeats]
To strive for that peace [crowd repeats]
Which will ultimately bring freedom to all mankind [crowd
repeats]
Wherever he may be [crowd repeats]
Amen. [crowd repeats]

END OF AUDIO FILE [1:26:23]