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Joint Palestine Appeal address [London, England]. 8 February  
1965.

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LONDON - J.P.A. - 8 February 1965

We meet in the shadow of that event a fortnight ago which signalled the end of the greatest freedom-fighter of the century. The voice is stilled and all men everywhere, even to the ends of newly stirring Africa, know that the champion of liberty is dead. Born to the nobility and grandeur of high Empire upon which the sun never set, he knew nevertheless that men yearned to be free and he spent the most majestic years of his incredible life fighting for that freedom of which the gradually-emerging world knows more today than even he might have dreamed possible.

At the hour when the pitiless tyranny of a fantastic war machine, driven by demons of blackness and hatred, clutched men's throats and froze them with fear, he, almost alone, lifted cherub face and heavy jowls to the blue sky, speaking with the clear tones of a fire-bell, urging resistance and breathing hope where none existed anywhere.

Awkward in body, unhandsome in visage, exotic in dress, he was the uniter of the house, giving courage against the howling enemy without - sustaining not only this island, or even the continent alongside which it lies, but also the

hemisphere and even almost the entire globe, with the golden beauty of his eloquence and the fierce confidence of his growl. Framer of the phrase, owner of the most exquisite tongue dominating his era, this was the spokesman of a people at a time when his fullhearted courage and full-throated voice were really the strongest, if not almost the only weapons, England possessed. He sustained us all - of that no future historian will ever be in doubt - and America and Russia and France and a dozen other nations and a billion other men will forever acknowledge that debt.

He did all this miracle by deed - but even more by word. His deeds were great - performed on the vast canvases which the authority of his many offices permitted him to paint. In both wars and for more than half a century he held every important post of government which enabled him to function with daring and imagination. On sea and in air, on desert and in mountain, he fashioned the fleets and machines which enabled Britain to stand alone until other allies could join with their ultimately greater arsenals.



But more important than his deeds were his words, for they inspired the men who manned the machines, the women who wept and the children who would inherit the world he was trying to save for them. When the long passage of time has made the battles dim, the few immortal phrases will still ring, even perhaps on other planets to which men will travel - so that when future dangers must be faced, the successful surmounting of them will be called "The Finest Hour" and opposition to evil will call forth "blood, toil, tears and sweat." His words will never die. Having performed their function at the moment of crisis, they became part of the eternal inheritance of the human race for ages to come.

From this fact we as Jews have much to learn, for if we recall but an instant we will realize that we too have lived by the word through all the millennia of suffering and struggle. And if we are alive on the stage of history today, it is because of the sustaining power of the words in which we have placed our trust, and by which we have lived.

The word or words are known to all of us - God, bible, ethics, peoplehood, Messiah, history, survival - and many more. Behind these words are concepts - a religion, a philosophy, a raison d'etre, a stubborn insistence that we have a purpose in surviving and a message for mankind. The concepts have been so

strong as to enable us to withstand the most monstrous evils that could be invented against us. No matter what was perpetrated upon us - military defeat by the Romans, barbaric slaughter by the Crusaders, expulsion by Spain, pogroms by the Czars, or the foulest murders of all by Hitler - we stood our ground uplifted by the words of the prophets and the poets and the rabbis and the scholars who taught us that we bore within ourselves a divine message and that we were an inspired people.

If testimony to this fact were needed outside of our own belief, we find it in the words of the very Churchill himself, who said:

"No thoughtful man can doubt the fact that the Jews are the most formidable and the most remarkable race which has ever appeared in the world. We owe to the Jews a system of ethics which is the most precious possession of mankind, worth, in fact, the fruits of all other wisdom and learning together. On that system of ethics and by that faith there has been built out of the wreck of the Roman Empire the whole of our existing civilization."

We accept this tribute, knowing that it was honestly given and unsolicited.

Faith in ourselves has brought us to this moment. We are only 13 million on



this globe, swarming with 3 billion human beings. We are dedicated to the survival of these 13 million - and have witnessed the devising of new instruments to guarantee that survival, insofar as human effort can guarantee anything.

One of these instruments, little more than a hundred or a hundred and fifty years old, is the political fact of freedom. In my country and in yours, we may face the future with some sense of assurance that so long as the democratic form of life prevails, our Jewish form of life will have that friendly environment which will not only permit it to survive but even grow and flourish and expand into whatever new forms of creativity our will and desire shall carry it. We know and feel that wherever conditions of freedom and democracy permeate the environment - be this in the United States or the United Kingdom, Canada or Australia, certain states of Latin America or Western Europe, Jewish life will be free, will not be suffocated, either physically or spiritually, and will be limited only by our own apathy or disinterest. Thus, we struggle in all these places to enlarge the boundaries of freedom, for we know that thus our own freedom will be further guaranteed.



The second new instrument, fashioned only in the most recent days of this 20th century, by which we may guarantee the survival of the Jewish people, is a sovereign state called Israel.

What passion and prayers, what pleading and pioneering were invested in the creation of this state perhaps the Lord alone knows. Twice we had it - twice it nourished in its womb great bursts of genius and brought forth eternal treasures for us and all mankind - twice we lost it - now we have it again. Its sacred and rocky soil has been laved with blood and treasure, both drawn from the limited resources of the people who loved it - and once again it gives forth warmth and energy and new life. Once again we strive to make it strong, secure, viable, so that it can perform its transcendental role.

But first, and before anything else, it must serve as any motherland should - as a sure harbor for those of its children who will be safer and freer there than anywhere else. Almost 2-1/2 million of her people live there already - gathered together from a hundred dispersions on all the far continents of the earth - yearning, straining, seeking to be free and wanted and rooted and united. The land is being rebuilt and a people, being refashioned - both at the same time, inter-acting on each other - not without strain and difficulty, but also not without

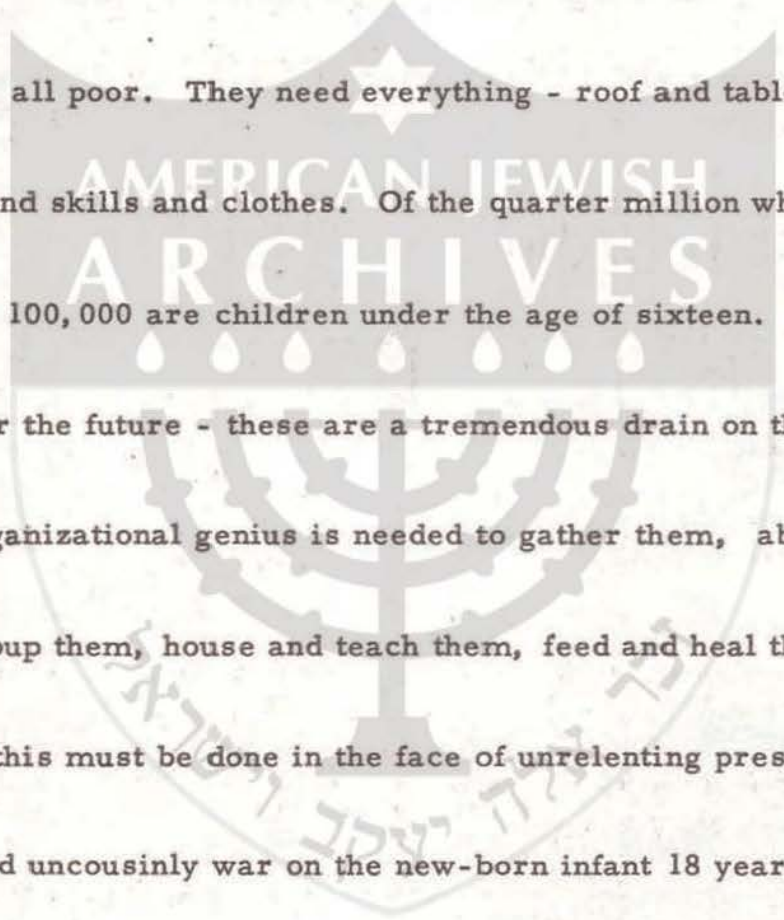


the sure sweet taste of success to inspire us all to even greater effort.

Some are coming there out of the high mountains of the Atlas, hard by the Sahara Desert - and some from the thick forests of Bessarabia, hard by the East European heartland. By the scores of thousands they come each year - sick and well, by plane and boat, old and tired, young and hopeful, but poor, poor, poor, all poor. They need everything - roof and table, and language and medicine, and skills and clothes. Of the quarter million who came in the last four years, 100,000 are children under the age of sixteen. These are a priceless treasure for the future - these are a tremendous drain on the present.

Vast organizational genius is needed to gather them, absorb them, retrain them, regroup them, house and teach them, feed and heal them.

And all this must be done in the face of unrelenting pressure from enemies who declared uncousinly war on the new-born infant 18 years ago, have maintained it ever since, infiltrated the small borders to rob and kill, threatened and fulminated without cessation, and now again are saying openly to the world that they shall murder Israel by thirst if they can do it no other way. Water means life and the Prime Minister made that perfectly clear a few days ago when he said: "Any attempt to prevent Israel from utilizing her just share of the Jordan





River system will be considered as if it were an encroachment on our border."

This is strong and clear language. Let all heed it well.

The open door policy of immigration continues. Jewish life is saved every day. And the other successes of Israel continue as well - her economic growth (although there is still a very dangerous trade gap in the balance of payments); her rise in per capita income (although there are still dangerous pockets of poverty in the new development towns); her full employment (although there are thousands of unskilled immigrants working on public relief projects whose large families are undernourished). A prudent man does well to balance the progress being made with the problems still to be solved. Israel is a success, but not unqualifiedly and permanently so.

What, then, is our task? Why do we gather in these annual banquets which some find so boring, which many evade, and which others attend as though submitting to the yoke of the organizers? Our task is to turn this otherwise mundane affair, annually repeated for so many years now that it has become rote, into a great and glorious affirmation of support - a bold and brave response to challenge - a vigorous affirmative to the thrilling opportunity of saving yet more life and reclaiming yet more land. Through these dull and repetitive



procedures we sing out a brilliant bright fresh new "yes" to the historic question - shall the Jewish people live?

Nothing can be accomplished without money. This annual campaign is the ritual process by which we divest ourselves of money we shall never miss - in order that it be used to obtain freedom for another whom we shall never know. Like all ritual processes, this high and holy ceremony, has a tendency to become cold and mechanical unless we breathe conviction into it.

It is like prayer in the synagogue. How many of you have complained of the monotony - the repetition of the same words? Professor Heschel has pointed out that a possible reason for this is that there are fixed laws: how to pray, when to pray, what to pray. There are fixed times, fixed texts - and the regularity of this has a tendency to reduce it to mere habit.

There is, however, a way to break through - summed up in the Hebrew word Kavanah - meaning a flash of intent, devotion, purposeful emotion, attention. It really means a spontaneous outpouring of emotion. An act of charity is a precious deed. It should not be cold and meaningless and repetitive. It should be filled with Kavanah - with a warm and pulsating eagerness.



Regularity is good because it guarantees continuity of support. Each year we must raise this money - and each year we must return to this ritual performance. But spontaneity should not be suppressed - we must come because we really want to be here - and we must give because we really want to help.

There are those who accept all this - who come each year out of a good sense of duty and responsibility - but who say that they will contribute the same as they did last year because this is a long-term duty and if one increases he only puts himself on a higher level which must then be continued forever. This attitude is called "pacing oneself" and the net result of it is a plateau of contributions which take no account of increased needs.

Much more money is required this year for at least four clear and simple reasons:

1. There is a substantial loss of income due to the completion of the German payments.
2. There will be higher immigration.
3. Absorption costs are rising.
4. Borrowing has reached its limit.

A burst of increased generosity is mandatory. This campaign can and



should achieve its realistic target of three million pounds. A leap of faith is required - a leap of will - a leap forward by one-third from previous goals. Perhaps not everyone can give one-third more - but most can. All should try. A people's greatness is measured not only by its achievements but more importantly by its daring. Determination is the key to power. A sense of power will drive us forward to full victory.

When Churchill spoke to Parliament after Dunkirk, he said words which can also apply to us: "I have, myself, full confidence that if all do their duty, if nothing is neglected, and if the best arrangements are made, we shall prove ourselves once again able to defend our island home, to ride out the storm of war, and to outlive the menace of tyranny, if necessary for years, if necessary alone."

We are not alone, we are a new people today - with a new sense of daring.

We are a nation of Stefan Dornfelds. This man, 47 years of age, father of four children, was a survivor of Nazi concentration camps, Soviet labor camps, and years of perilous waiting in Europe before being permitted to immigrate to Israel.



"A farmer and tractor-driver, Dornfeld, the new immigrant, elected to settle at Kiryat Shmoneh where he could find work in the surrounding farms. And though the first weeks of his adjustment to the long sought for haven of Israel were difficult, by the morning of Thursday, December 31, the Dornfeld family was well on the way towards beginning the integration process. After almost eight weeks in the country, the four children were beginning to learn Hebrew, and Stefan with work in hand could begin the task of building a new life for himself and his family.

"Early that Thursday morning he set out with a team of laborers for a stint of potato harvesting north of Ashmora in the Hula demilitarized zone. When at 8 o'clock Syrian positions opened fire, the workers took cover in a ditch. At one point, after some of the men had already been evacuated, Dornfeld raised his head, apparently to get a glimpse of what was happening. At that very instant, a Syrian shell exploded hard by, spewing its deadly shrapnel in all directions. Dornfeld was killed on the spot, 54 days after arriving in his new-found land."

He dared to be free - never gave up hope or struggle during all the long years - made it - and died - not as a brass-band hero - just an ordinary man



trying to harvest ordinary potatoes.

To his widow and children this is deep personal tragedy. To us this is a symbol of the sacrifices made daily in Israel's struggle for a whole people to be allowed to live ordinary lives, in freedom.

Our part in the struggle calls for no such drastic sacrifices as his. Our part is clear - we must simply give love, partnership, encouragement, and great financial support. We shall be measured - our generation shall be measured and judged - by the style with which we play our part. Will we be found wanting?

I think not. I think not.

