



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

MS-763: Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman Collection, 1930-2004.

Series H: United Jewish Appeal, 1945-1995.

Subseries 1: Sermons, Speeches and Writings, 1949-1982.

Box
23

Folder
8

United Jewish Appeal Sabbath Dinner and Ones Shabbat. 14
January 1966.

For more information on this collection, please see the finding aid on the
American Jewish Archives website.

put in speech folder
Chicago Conference - 14 Jan 66

- 25 -

REEL #2

(1/14/66 - ADAMS BALLROOM - PALMER HOUSE, UJA SABBATH
(DINNER AND ONEE SHABBAT - PRESENTATION BY RABBI FRIEDMAN

CHAIRMAN

I doubt very much whether there are many people in this room who have not had the delight of listening to Rabbi Friedman and responded to the warm, brilliant line of communication that he establishes between himself and the audience on the subject that's nearest to his heart, the plight of needy Jews all over the world. And I'd like to take a half a minute to suggest a phrase or two that I think describes Rabbi Friedman - and I call him that literally because he was at one time 'my' rabbi -- I would suggest that Rabbi Friedman has ^{imagination,} ~~imagination~~ imagination necessary to work out ideas and programs that must raise between seventy-five and ninety-five million dollars a year -- I would suggest that those people who witness the New York meeting, who got the letter or heard about the meeting, must know the imagination that this took - and also to know that for the 11th year he was reelected The Executive Vice-Chairman for UJA for The United States. If I were to choose another phrase, I would say that it would be is concern about Jewish people here and

- 26 -

R. #2

CHAIRMAN

all over - five and a half million of us - two and a half million that Ambassador Avner told you about - another three million that I know he's deeply concerned about in Russia - and another half million who aren't free around the world. And I would say, finally, that another phrase that would describe him well is his profound influence and motivation on getting people more deeply involved in UJA. He has a record of achievement as a rabbi, as an executive of one of the highest offices in the Jewish community, as a believer in ideas and ideals of great magnitude as they affect the living and the thinking of all of us here in our Jewish communities. And there is a difference, I think, between being big and being great - big is quantity -- great is quantity - is quality -- and I would like to present what I think is a man of great quality, Rabbi Friedman.
(applause)

FRIEDMAN

Mr. Chairman, Your Excellency, ladies and gentlemen. I would like to be very cold, factual and correct. Number one: Mr. Edelman has been promoted to the rank of National Chairman in the hierarchy of the

- 27 -

R. #2

FRIEDMAN

United Jewish Appeal, which makes him ~~just~~ one of just seven men in the entire country who carry that rank. This is new. He was just elected to this post. You, the people in the area of the country from which he comes, should know that - you should respect him for it because, after what he has said about me tonight, I no longer respect him, so somebody had better. (LAUGHTER AND APPLAUSE) The second thing: He's been absolutely incorrect in describing me. He described me as a person with imagination and with concern for my fellow Jews. If I had any imagination whatsoever, I would not have permitted The Ambassador to precede me because he's left me nothing to say (laughter) - and concern, for all other Jews in the world, should at least include concern for one's self, which I failed signally to do this evening and therefore I'm here, stuck. Now, we have one of two things that we can do - we can either say that we've heard a brilliant speech and all go home - which I think would be the right thing to do - or the other thing that we can do is for me simply to take everything that he said and precis it in about five minutes and call that the

- 28 -

R. #2

FRIEDMAN

'outline of the campaign speech for 1966' - because, really, that's what it was. And so I'll just take the latter course because no Jew who's got the platform ever relinquishes it (laughter) - and I don't see why I should be the first. I promise you, however, that the forty minutes which I had in mind you've now had and so, I would like, really, to take and put that very brilliant and incisive and all-inclusive ~~tool~~ ^{four de horizon} ~~'de raison'~~ into a schematic diagram and say this is the way I shall make my speech during the 1966 campaign - and if you find any merit in it whatsoever, then make your speeches that way. The issues at stake begin with immigration. If anybody asked the question why should we give more money in 1966 than we did in 1965, the first point with which you answer is the first point with which he began - it's the cardinal, transcending, overarching imperative of our modern historic epoch through which we're moving -- we never tire of it - the figures go up one year, they go down one year - it makes not the slightest bit of difference. We are in a period of thrust, here, and great transmigration which, when it's over, ^{will} ~~we'll~~ witness a complete

- 29 -

R. #2

FRIEDMAN

alteration of the demography of the Jewish people -- and we're two thirds through the alteration process. In 1964 saw sixty thousand people ^{move} and 1963 saw sixty thousand people and 1962 saw sixty thousand people -- and this year will probably see forty thousand people or forty-five thousand people, what's the difference -- the figure which is being used right now, in Jerusalem, at the meeting of The Jewish Agency's Action Committee, is eleven thousand families or possibly twelve thousand families for 1966 - use a factor of three point something or four to a family - you're talking about forty thousand persons coming into Israel. We never go by one year - we go by an epoch - we go by an era - we go by a period. And if, in the past five years, we've had a quarter of a million coming into Israel, in the next five years we'll have something less than that - we'll have two hundred thousand or two hundred and twenty thousand - the difference is not great in terms of numbers - the difference is certainly not great in altering the tempo with which this in-gathering is taking place - the difference is certainly not great in regard to money: It will

- 30 -

R. #2

FRIEDMAN

cost more money in 1966 ~~to~~ to handle the forty or forty five thousand people than it cost two years ago to handle sixty thousand people in terms of the migration costs of getting them out of where there are and bringing them in. You've got a clear moral right, backed ~~xxxx~~ up by very clear arithmetic, to ask of yourself first, and of everybody else after that, for a larger contribution based upon the immigration needs -- and what you must be sure to do is ^{to} repudiate any sense that this is a matter of less urgent priority than it was, or that this is a matter of diminishing volume - it simply is not. The publicity about it gets less and less - but don't you ever forget, that whether there's a word of it in writing anywhere for you to see or not, the process by which we are ~~xxxxxx~~ hemorrhaging-out the Jewish populations in Communist countries and in Moslem countries goes on relentlessly night and day - and there are dozens of you in this room who've had the opportunity to see it with your own eyes at various points on the European continent, African and Asiatic continents, to say nothing of seeing it in Israel. So, point number one is the immigration. Point number two

- 31 -

R. #2

FRIEDMAN

II

is the absorption of these people. The Ambassador spoke about the development towns in which we live - in which they live -- we've printed a book, which has been mailed out - and some of you by now should have received it - called 'The Story of Twenty-One Frontiers^{Towns}.' And if you haven't received it, then I would like you to ask for it of the Executive Director in your own community or of us in the UJA office and we'll send it to you. We wrote a story in simple, clear and factual terms of what is going on in the twenty-one towns in Israel, which are called development towns, where most of the people, of whom Mr. Avner spoke, are to be found in residence. These are towns which old veteran visitors to Israel often miss. How many of you, who've been there twice or three or four times, have ever visited (phonetically) ~~Ofakkim~~^{oFAKIm} or ^{or} Yahuda or ~~Nativoot~~^{Netivot} or lots of other names that I could tell you? The underprivileged portion of the population of which he spoke lives in these places. Many of these places have the potential of turning into this socially explosive Watts, Los Angeles type of public riot. I use the word potential because as yet

- 32 -

R. #2

FRIEDMAN

nothing has occurred. But I want you to know, with all the sobriety that I possess, I've been in ^{most} ~~every~~ ~~one~~ of these places - I've done extensive research - I worked hard, beginning nine months ago, in the preparation of the writing of this book - I want you to know that the potential exists - and, in some places which might surprise you - Tiberias is one - you've all been there -- the difference between the Jews who live in the hills on top, the newcomers who have nothing, and the old, established settlers who live on the seashore at the bottom -- fifteen thousand on top, five thousand on bottom - the difference is the difference between Beverly Hills and Watts in terms of neighborhoods in the same city -- and the sense of resentment and the sense of annoyance and the sense of feeling that they've 'been had' exists on the top of the hill, there, just as it exists in many, many underprivileged neighborhoods in large American metropolitan cities. This would be a tragedy anywhere on earth if it came to pass -- it's much more of ~~xxx~~ a tragedy to contemplate something like this happening in the Israel that we've worked so hard to build. It's

- 33 -

R. #2

FRIEDMAN

It is no less possible there because human beings are human beings wherever they live. And what you and I have got to understand is this -- when the drama and the glamor and the excitement and the thrill of telling the underground stories, of the border crossings and all of the things that go into the rescue operation have all been told and are over and done with, and that Jew has been beached at Haifa or at Lydda -- anyone who is short-sighted enough to drop the story at that point will be making a worse error than the Jew who never gets involved with caring for this in the first place. The Jew who doesn't get involved in caring about it in the first place is sitting way out on the sidelines of the Jewish people -- and concerning him and his lack of responsibility and lack of participation and lack of identification, we can merely say that it is as though he never were one of us to begin with and therefore we can't expect too much from him. But, if the best among us, capable of displaying concern, capable of identifying, capable of contributing, capable of going out to tell others, are only capable in a limited way to

- 34 -

R. #2

FRIEDMAN

have our senses titillated by the drama and the glamor and the border crossing stories - and then, when we get into the hard, hard unglamorous work of talking about absorption and social problems and the illiterate and the blind and the underprivileged and the juvenile delinquents and we find that our audiences lose their interest, then the disillusionment is awful - then the letdown is terrible because then you realize that you have among your elite of concerned people a limit on their capacity to be concerned and that's - that's that's a tough thing to have to admit. And so what you have to do and what I have to do is to break through the possible boredom or the possible inability to comprehend these problems, or the possible feeling that, well, these problems aren't any different in Tiberias than they are in Harlem, and you and I have to make the connection - and you and I have to show how it is more serious if there's a social rupture inside an already small and beleaguered people - and you and I have got to take the concern that we have for saving a man's life and realize that you haven't saved his life when

- 35 -

R. #2

FRIEDMAN

you've beached him - you've only saved his life if you take him from the beach - and two years later and three years later and four years later carry him along the path to full integration and full equality and full citizenship in the Israel which he has dreamed so much of coming to, and in the Israel which has been the object of our struggle for so long - and there's no way of putting a price tag on these absorption problems. All I can tell you is that if somebody says why should I give more money in 1966, your answer can be because by now we have spotted twenty-one physical places on the map of Israel where we must pour in a treasury compared to what we spent in the last few years in those towns and on those people, and failure to do so will result in tragedy within a finite number of years ahead. Item number three has to do with ~~the~~ the defense which, as The Ambassador said, is not paid for out of our funds or anybody's philanthropic funds - but, to the extent that the defense costs become so burdensome on Israel that the government and the people are able to contribute less to the refugee and immigrant problem, then

III

- 36 -

R. #2

FRIEDMAN

there is that direct relationship. I would like you to know very simply that a whole new situation has developed within the last three weeks. On the 22nd day of December - that's only three weeks ago - you all read, or I hope you did, the announcement of a new four hundred million dollar arms arrangement between - between not the Soviet Union - The Ambassador was too diplomatic to mention names of countries -- I am a citizen of this country and I can say what I want about the policies of this country -- between the United States and Great Britain and Saudi Arabia. It's not Russia pumping arms into the Middle East now - three hundred million dollars worth of British aircraft - Lightning Supersonic jets and Provost sub-sonic jets - three hundred million dollars worth of English jet aircraft heralded in the British Commons - The House of Commons as a statesmanlike salvation of the British aircraft industry -- because it was going down the drain and now suddenly they've got a new customer to buy three hundred million dollars worth of good aircraft -- and everybody cheered -- and one hundred million dollars of Hawk anti-aircraft missiles from

- 37 -

R. #2

FRIEDMAN

the United States Government -- four hundred million
to Saudi Arabia from the two countries. Point "B"
- the selling by the United States to Jordan of
somewhere between fifty and a hundred Patton ~~48~~ M-48
Medium Tanks - medium tanks? fifty ton tanks.
Number three: The revelation, on the 26th of December,
by the Chief of Staff of the Israel Army, General
Robin, that there are operational in Egypt ten
S.A.M. missile sites - SAM missile sites - the same
kind of missile sites that are around Hanoi now
shooting down American aircraft -- (spells) S.A.M.
stands for surface to air missile -- and the same
kinds of installations that are in North Viet Nam
now very effectively damaging -- because you read
about how many American planes are shot down --
~~this is a radar homing device~~ -- ten of them operational
in Egypt - known by Israeli intelligence but re-
vealed only now because now the chief of staff
apparently decided that the whole world had better
learn that the situation is shifting and the balance
is shifting. Item number four: The revelation by
President Nasser of Egypt that he has just engineered
the wiping off of four hundred and sixty million

- 38 -

R. #2

FRIEDMAN

dollars worth of his debt to the Soviet Union -- and, when that gets wiped off, that means that he's got a new line of credit to buy more -- and the first installations of 'the more' have arrived - one squadron of MIG-21D's, the fastest thing that Russia's got - and the first squadron of twenty-four aircraft have been delivered to Egypt - and I don't want to make any more of this than it is - what ~~ix~~ it is is enough - what ~~ix~~ it is is an indication that the balance is shifting for the first time in many years and that in order to maintain the deterrent posture which has been so brilliantly successful of ~~x~~ the past five years, and which enabled the water project to go through without a ripple - because they didn't dare anything from the Arab side - and which has caused them, on the Arab side, to say, all the time, that they're not ready to attack Israel yet - that brilliant posture of deterrence, through superior strength, which has cost Israel X millions ~~dx~~ each year up to now, will begin to cost her X plus Y because the balance is shifting against her. And this is a fact with which you and I have to be very familiar, so that when a man says why

- 39 -

R. #2

FRIEDMAN

IV

should I give more money in 1966, you cannot say to him so that your money can be used to buy a plane - but, you can say to him because Israel is going to have to increase her purchases to meet this new situation, Israel cannot contribute as much as she does to the immigrant absorption and you've got to contribute more. Point number four in this whole litany is simple - it requires no elaboration. The final drink has been had of the German money - it's all over now. Last year we talked to you about the loss of seven million dollars to the JDC and a half a million dollars to The HIAS -- this year, comes March 31st - just two short months from now - The Jewish Agency loses its last year, which is just over ten million dollars. In 1966, in other words, ladies and gentlemen, the loss is not seven and a half as it was a year ago, the loss is seventeen ^{closer to 18} and a half - and if somebody says to you why should I give more money in 1966, you can say to him because we're losing ¹⁸ ~~seventeen and a half million~~ dollars of German money this year. And if that does require any further elaboration, then I think we'll handle it in the question and answer period tomorrow,

- 40 -

R. #2

FRIEDMAN

so that if anybody is not clear on that whole point, please bring it up and I will or someone else will try to answer it tomorrow. The fifth and last thing in the line of argumentation has to do with the condition of the Jews all over the rest of the world - and that you're going to hear in great detail tomorrow from Mr. Jordan at lunch. He's going to tell you about what is done for Jewish children in Morocco and in Poland and in Persia and in ~~Western Germany - where still -~~ wherever support is still required - or in Italy. He'll tell you about what's being done among the aged and the handicapped in Israel. He'll tell you what's being done behind The Iron Curtain. Just keep one figure in your mind - twenty-three millions of dollars spent by The JDC in twenty-seven countries - it's an easy rubric, twenty-three--twenty-seven -- and you pick up from him tomorrow the specific details and ask him questions and he'll document enough for you and me to make five speeches with - so that's the - that's the diagram. What are the issues of 1966?: Continued immigration - high into Israel - higher to other parts of the world because there are more

- 41 -

R. #2

FRIEDMAN

liberal possibilities into the United States because of the new law that Congress passed this year -- high immigration - dreadful, pressing problems of social absorption in the development towns - the defense picture - the loss of the German money - and the problems of the Jews all over the rest of the globe. Every one of you can make the speech from those five points. The speech adds up to a further push in 1966. And what I'd like to say in conclusion is simply this: When something is rolling, and when it has a momentum, and when it's going, then it can go even further in the same direction.--That's a fundamental law of physics - unless you try to stop it. The American Jewish community started a thrust forward in 1965 comparable to what it did back in 1962 when Joe Myerhoff was the Chairman and the campaign went forward several millions of dollars - and since then it~~x~~ stabilized and it plateaued - it peaked out. In '65 it thrust. I think you understood, in 1965, the beginnings of the very same issues that we're talking about,-the issues are no different - never, never forget it. Nobody is trying to 'con' anybody else, to use a

- 42 -

R. #2

FRIEDMAN

vulgar expression - we're mature enough and old enough and stable enough and grown up enough to understand nobody's pulling any tricks out of the hat or gimmicks out of the air or any fake slogans - the issues are the same, they're just sharper - time intensifies them - you work always against time. Now, in 1965, with a good, favorable climate in America - economic climate - everything - and the realization of the poignancy of these issues - the American Jewish community moved forward and raised about five million dollars more - and so a certain momentum is now built into the 1966 campaign. If the '66 campaign continues to take off from the point at which the '65 campaign ended, it will maintain this same thrust in this same direction, another five million dollars can be leaped ahead. It's absolutely possible from every objective point of view. It's very much needed, or Mr. Avner and I have wasted our time if we haven't convinced you of that. There's no sacrifice involved - and I use that word, which you seldom hear me use, because of a chapter in a book which I just read - and I want to close by reading that to you. There was

R. #2

FRIEDMAN

a book published in Israel called (phonetically)
Gvilei Esk
~~Gwelay~~, which means 'Scrolls Of Fire' - Parchments
Of Fire. It was a book which contained poems and
essays and letters and things of boys - boys and
girls who were killed in the fighting - and the
last things that they wrote were saved and compiled
in this volume, and this is a letter that a boy
wrote to his mother - and there was something so
touching about it that I wrote it down and I carry
it with me now - and I carry it because of the
word I just ~~xxx~~ said, sacrifice. This letter,
that's real sacrifice. The boy was born in - in
Germany in 1928. He came to Palestine with his
family when he was five years old. He went to
school and he went into the army. And, on May the
15th, 1948, he came to kibbutz Nireme to defend the
place and he was killed on a mine that exploded -
and he's buried there at Nireme. He was just short
of being twenty years of age - his name was Yitzhak
Friedlander. April the 3rd was the last letter
he wrote his mother. ~~He~~ ^{he} was killed on May 15th -
so this was a month or so before. "Shalom, mother
dear; Yesterday was your birthday - I did not forget

- 44 -

R. #2

FRIEDMAN

"...but I couldn't find even a minute to send you this letter on that day and that's why I'm writing a day late. I don't know when it will reach you. You may think, as you often do, that your 'Skatzik' has forgotten you, but it is not so. When I got up yesterday morning, I wanted so very much to tip toe up to your bed and give you a warm kiss, say something to you just on the spur of the moment and hand you a gift for your birthday. But this time there could be neither kiss nor gift - this time our lot is separation, loneliness, anxiety and readiness for things to come. Remember, mother, the desire of a nation to live honorably cannot be measured by the number of pretty speeches made at conventions of organizations (ASIDE - THAT SENTENCE IS AT YOU AND ME) - the desire of a nation to live honorably is measured by the sacrifices which each of us is ready to make for the cause. The human brain has developed to such an extent that without lofty ideals life would be of little value - (AND SO THE SPIRIT OF ISRAEL IS HERE REVEALED) Our ideal is to hold our own, physically and spiritually, and this is the one factor which determines how we ~~ix~~

- 45 -

R. #2

FRIEDMAN

will pass the test and which will determine the character and the spiritual resources of our state which is about to be established. Those who fall in these days of battle demand that we stand firm and with pride -without defeatism - and it is thus and only thus that we may see the just victory of our ideals and of our cause. These are my wishes for you mother, and these are things demanded of you and me, not only on our birthday but every day and indeed every moment. In addition al all the above, many, many kisses to you. Your loving son, Yitzhak." Now all she's got left is the letter. He died for an ideal. We don't - we're not being asked to - we're being asked to cherish the ideal - we're being asked to work for it in life - we're being asked to work for it with devotion. You've always done that - you'll do it again in 1966 a little bit better. Thank you very much. (APPLAUSE)

CHAIRMAN

Rabbi Friedman, you certainly set the stage for the conference this weekend, and I'm sure the enthusiasm speaks for itself. Thank you again for a really magnificent presentation. In winding up, may I make two short announcements -- services tomorrow morning... END R. #2