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Strelitz Mission address. 13 March 1972.

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from Herbert A. Friedman

SURVIVAL OF JAWS + JUDAISM —

dependent upon:

1. Education - tradition - act of will
2. Emigration - running from place to place
3. Center - Israel - for inspiration + strength
ישראל

LEADERSHIP — always a handful

Ghetto - last few thousand fought
Israhel - ארץ ישראל

COMMITMENT — for a lifetime

~~ISRAEL~~
ISRAEL

NEEDS YOU - YOU WILL BENEFIT

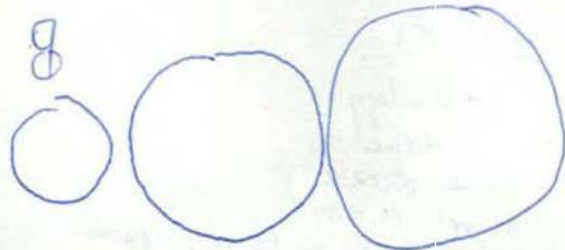
BIBLE + SCIENCE

ethical
social idealism
perfect world
decent society

technology
medicine
cure disease
travel to stars
release man for higher purposes

Margy Silberman -

1E 60:
8 penlite batteries
5 hours tape (as close)





ADDRESS BY HERBERT A. FRIEDMAN
EXECUTIVE VICE CHAIRMAN, U.J.A. (ISRAEL)

To The Members Of The

STRELITZ MISSION

13.3.72

C O N F I D E N T I A L
NOT FOR GENERAL DISTRIBUTION

The Chairman.

This is a dream come true for me to see my friends here. On the itinerary here, it's called the Strelitz Mission. Now we're very delighted here that it's called the Strelitz Mission and I think Leonard has done a great job in getting us organized. For those of you who don't know, Rabbi Friedman's name has been very intimately linked up with all the aims and the work of the United Jewish Appeal. The two become very nearly synonymous. He's a graduate of Yale and Hebrew Union College, served as a U.S. Chaplain in Germany in 1945 and there led efforts to rescue survivors from the death camps. 17 years ago he joined the UJA in New York as Executive Vice Chairman. He's been instrumental in executing and planning the far-reaching UJA programs in which we are all involved today. He, together with the leaders of our communities, the Jewish communities in the United States, have done a fantastic job. And he has many reasons to be proud and we are very proud of him. Today, he makes his home in Israel while he continues his work with the UJA. We know he has an important message to give us, to brief us for our exciting three days here in Israel. Rabbi Friedman.

Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman.

Sam, first I thought you were just a comedian, but after that introduction, I think you're just fine. There's no way in which to begin to describe to you what the problems are. There's no logical beginning or logical ending. We're just all plunged right in the middle and that's really the best way to look at Israel. This place moves so fast, so many things happen here all the time. There are so many challenges that have to be faced and decisions made in the course of one day, that it's hard to do long-range planning. Everything seems to be the result of improvisation. And yet, if there's one thing I'd like to get across to you, it's the fact that that's an illusion.

This place appears to be constantly growing and constantly changing and constantly shifting. You see buildings going up all around you, you see new roads being thrown down. You look at figures and you see cars growing, GNP growing, everything going up. The GNP of this country has grown at the rate of 10% a year for 12 years in a row, second in the world only to Japan. And you would have a tendency to say that you are in the middle of some absolutely volatile, uncontrolled, runaway inflation situation. No planning, everything is just growing like topsy. The opposite is true. Underneath everything, there's one plan that functions in this country, that motivates everything else. It's the driving engine that pushes everything else and it's what keeps the morale in this country as unbelievably high as it is in the face of such terrible difficulties. The underneath plan, invisible most of the time, but deeply imprinted like circuits in a computer, so you can't change them unless you re-program the whole damn thing, is the fact that there must be one place on the face of this earth where Jews can come as of right, not on somebody's tolerance or sufferance. And where they can be safe, not

subject to somebody else's whims of oppression and persecution. That's what's printed on the circuit and that's what drives the engine. So it all comes out of and it stems from the Hitler experience. Because that was something which shocked the Jewish people beyond all comprehension, that that could have happened and the whole world stood by and watched all the people being burned in the furnaces and nobody did anything about it. And that that could have occurred in the 20th Century - that left a trauma.

And the second thing that left a trauma was the fact that apparently your independence depends on your own efforts. And if you're not going to do anything about it, nobody else is. And so right out of the Hitler period of ashes there was developed this furious, creative power - fight the British, push through the illegal blockade on the Mediterranean, land people on these shores whether they had a so-called certificate and a right to land here or not, the devil with all the legalities. It's absolutely identical, in a psychological sense, with the conquering of a continent that took place in the United States at the beginning of the 19th Century. The devil with legalities at that time. You just swept the Indians off their land and pushed them into the Pacific.

Now what happened here was that we said: the devil with the legalities of people who were trying to keep us out of this country. They were not the Arabs. The people trying to keep us out of this country were the British. So we fought the British and we landed on the shores here. And then we found that we were fighting Arabs and that was the greatest tragedy of all. It's too bad that happened. I was reading this afternoon the exchange of letters that took place between Dr. Haim Weizmann and the Emir Feisal, who was the Arab leader before this part of the world was divided up. There were not countries like Syria, Lebanon, Iraq. It was the Arab Emirate; it was successor to the Turkish Ottoman Empire. And Dr. Weizmann and Emir Feisal exchanged letters - in beautiful, elegant French, written in Paris at the conclusion of the peace treaties after World War I in 1919 - in which they talked about how they looked forward to living with each other in peace and how neither would do anything to hurt or jeopardize the rights of the others. It didn't turn out that way.

It turned out that hatred and passion conquered good sense and logic. And now, today, after a half a century of history, what you've got is a situation where 14 Arab states exist in this region where there was only one before, the Turkish Empire. 14 independent Arab states. One Jewish state. Population in the 14 Arab states is well over a hundred million people. Population in the Jewish state - three million, including Arabs. And an apparently implacable war for a quarter of a century in the past and maybe a quarter of a century in the future.

That's a human tragedy, that's a fiscal tragedy, that's a waste and

that's got to be repaired. And we firmly believe, with a great deal of optimism, that we will live long enough to see it repaired. There are those who say that we'll never make it. We'll get wiped out before peace comes under the repeated attacks coming out of the Arab world and the repeated financial burden of living in a situation where we're throwing 30% of our GNP into the war. In the United States, at the height of the Vietnam expenditures, they were spending 9½-10% of the GNP. In the United States, during World War II, with all that fantastic expenditure of money, they weren't spending 20% of their GNP on war. And we're already in for 30% and it's climbing. We're no miracle people; we can't keep this up forever. And there are some who think that we'll go down, either in military defeat or in financial bankruptcy, before peace is reached. We don't think so. If Jews are one thing at all they're fantastic optimists. I think it's one of the ways that's kept us alive. It's one of the secrets of our survival. No matter how bad things appear to be, we simply don't crumble, we don't give in, there's no loss of nerve, there's no loss of will power. We hold very strongly, very firmly, and we believe that we can work our way through with logic and intelligence and application of technical knowhow and good strength. We can work our way through to a solution. We think the same way here also. We think we will see peace before we see military defeat or financial defeat. That's based upon a cool assessment of the assets and the liabilities.

On the liability side, I don't have to tell you. On the asset side, I would simply like to remind you that the three million citizens of this country have no treaty with any country on the face of this earth. Israel has no contractual agreement with any country on the face of this earth, not a member of Nato, not a member of any favored nation clause, not a member of the Common Market, not tied to the United States, its best friend, by any contractual relationship at all. It's a fantastic situation isn't it. All we've got are good friends whom we have to depend upon when the going goes tough. And they come through at a time when we need it and without being obligated to do so. And, boy, isn't that the best kind of relationships. We have no allies - this doesn't frighten us. There are democratic-loving people in the world outside and there are some few million Jews in the world outside. Those are our allies, our assets.

The problems: war, continuous, unending. The United States has about given up its effort to try to convince Egypt to make a partial settlement on the Canal. Now everybody says: let's wait until the President comes back from Moscow. But I think that's the wrong way. I think the President has got to go to Moscow with an idea in his head and sell it to them. And I think they'll buy it. And I think it's pretty clear what he ought to try to sell them. We can talk about that some more when everybody's not too tired, because that's a very deep and intricate argument. And it's something that we should all learn and dissect and analyze in the next couple of days - what could the United States do to try to reduce tensions. Well,

I think Nixon can do a lot on that trip and I think he wants to. But basically speaking, Egypt isn't going to settle for a partial settlement on the Canal no matter what offered to her. And we've offered her a lot of bait. We've offered her that we'll pull back from the Canal. And we've offered her that we'll let her dredge it, and re-cement it, and clean it up, and open it up for traffic - that's 300 million dollars worth of tolls a year - and she can have it. We've offered to the Russians what is obvious to them - if the Canal is open, they can run their fleet right down to India. And that's where they want to be. So there are lots of advantages to their side to get the Canal opened. They are not taking the bait, which means that their stubbornness is getting in the way of their logic. And I think that that's what Mr. Nixon has to try to convince the Russians - for the Russians to persuade the Egyptians to take the bait. Because if they'll open the Canal and reduce tension on the Canal, that might be the beginning of a settlement of the whole thing.

I would just like to add one sentence about the attitude of the American Government. We have very often terrible fights and arguments with them, as you do with any close friend. You see, if you have a superficial relationship nobody says anything impolite to anybody else - how do you do, how are you, would you have a coffee, would you have a scotch. And you know, when two people talk to each other like that, they don't know each other very well and they are not really coming to grips with each other. And when two people sit down at the table and hammer and slug and argue - Mr. Rogers got his head bashed in the last time he came here and the last time Mrs. Meir went there, she got a kiss from the President - that's how friends have to act.

Basically, down deep, underneath, we had bad misunderstandings last year, because the Americans were trying to muscle Israel into pulling back from the Canal without any reciprocal guarantees from the Egyptians. And after a while Mr. Rogers realized that that was a bankrupt policy. And afterwards Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Nixon and Mr. Kissinger, I think among the three of them, created a different policy. And I think Mr. Nixon's policy now is much more realistic.

By the way, having nothing to do with the Republicans, the Democrats, or anything of the sort, people ask all the time: what is Mr. Nixon's attitude towards Israel? I would simply say objectively without any bias - I have no feelings in the matter one way or the other - that of the 24 years of the existence of the State of Israel, during which six American Presidents have been in office, Mr. Nixon's helpfulness to Israel - which is a selfish way of looking at it I suppose, but that's the way we look at it - has been the greatest of any President. It's just a fact, and I think it's an important fact for everybody to realize. He's just been very understanding of these problems, no particular deep emotion. We're talking about emotional attitude towards Israel - he hasn't got any emotional attitude towards

Israel. He has a realistic attitude towards Israel. This is a working democracy, the only one that exists in this part of the world. This is anti-Russian, right down to the fingernails, the only one that exists in this part of the world. This is a country devoted to growth and free enterprise and productivity and creativity, the same values that the United States has. I mean, there's just such a deep harmony of interest between the United States and Israel that when the President of the United States sees it and understands it, being the kind of man he is, he acts on it to a greater degree than previous Presidents have who maybe also understood the same things, but just didn't act on it to the degree that he has. And we thank him for it very much.

Mr. Strelitz: Rabbi, let me just ask you a question. I thought I heard you make a comment about the administered territory, I believe I heard you say that it's not Israeli territory, the people are not Israel's, you don't want the people and you don't want the territory. Now, I'm curious. What territory is it that you're talking about and, specifically, do you apply a statement like that to territory west of the Jordan River?

Rabbi Friedman: The statement referred to what we call the West Bank, all the territory on the west side of the Jordan River, except the city of Jerusalem. The only thing that's not negotiable in the whole territorial question is the city of Jerusalem. That's not negotiable. That's not going to be split up again; we're going to keep that. No sense hiding that, no sense trying to make any kind of diplomacy. Jerusalem is no longer again going to be split. We're not going to have East Berlin and West Berlin, no sir, no more wall, no more barbed wire, no more no-man's-land. It's one city; it's got one united administration, the sewers are linked and the water is linked and the telephone is linked, and the electricity is linked and the bus lines are linked. And from the administration point of view, it's a unit. And the 73,000 Arabs who live in the East side are citizens, and that's it, and they vote. They voted in the last elections for Teddy Kollect as the Mayor, and they're going to vote in the next elections at the end of May. And they are perfectly free to travel across into Jordan, they are perfectly free to come back. Jerusalem is one city. Now, aside from Jerusalem, everything else is negotiable.

So, as far as the Golan Heights are concerned, what's the crucial issue there? The crucial issue there is to keep the guns off the crown. And by the crown we mean the edge of the cliff. You know the topography. The Golan Heights are here, the settlements are down here. It's like fish in a barrel - 1800 feet. Now, when they had the guns at the top of the Heights - pow, pow, pow, for 19 years - that was intolerable. We pushed them back. From the top of the Golan Heights, the edge of the cliff, it's 40 miles back to Damascus in Syria. Now let's not kid ourselves. We could get down to Damascus, down that road in two hours. We're just not interested in going there.

There's no gain in it, no profit in it. And they can have back the territory on top of the Golan Heights, the rear part of it contiguous to Syrian territory. We just want the front part so that the guns can't be brought up to the front. Keep the guns far enough back so they can't shoot down here. How far back? Take the range of their biggest guns, that's all - 175 mm., 205s, if they've got any of the Russian 205s. That's the range they've got to stay back. Behind that, they can have the Golan. What do we care about it? Golan negotiable, West bank negotiable, Sinai Peninsula, negotiable.

Question: What does the average Israeli pay in taxes?

Rabbi Friedman: 48% of the GNP. So then you got this thing of the war going on. And then the other main thing you got is the Russian immigration coming in. And that's in its own way a bigger miracle even than being able to keep on fighting and winning the war. And when I say a bigger miracle, you're going to see. Well, of course, if you want to turn around and go right back to the airport now, at 11.15, there's a plane landing from Vienna with 150 Russian Jewish immigrants on board. You wanna go see them? Now, some of them probably came out of Moscow just this morning. And that miracle I call an even greater miracle than anything in the world. Because they got out of a police state where nobody is allowed out, where the Government does not believe that any citizen has got the right to apply to leave, to go some place else. It's a police state. Nobody gets out, except Jews.

Why do Jews get out? For two reasons. Because they got this country to get out to, and because they got this country backing them up in their fight to get out. And when I say 'fight to get out' - did you ever hear of anybody in the Soviet Union going into the Supreme Soviet Building in Moscow and conducting a sit-down strike right in the great big marble lobby? And say: we're striking here and we're not going to leave this building until you give us exit visas to leave to go to our homeland. And we all have affidavits from relatives living in Israel who want us to come and join them. And they've sent us these affidavits and we want to leave and we want the human right to live where we want to live. And you can shoot us, you can send us to Siberia, you can torture us, you can do whatever the hell you want, we are not leaving this building till we get exit visas. And you got 250 million people living in Russia. Nobody ever did a thing like that until a year ago, when Jews started doing things like that. And the reason they started doing things like that is because they are backed up in their knowledge that, if they can get out, they can come here. And they don't need any formalities and they don't need any permissions and they don't need any examinations, if a man can fight his way out through the Russian Secret Police, the KGB. And that's where you go to apply, by the way. I want you to understand how it works, because this is the most important thing of all. You got to walk into the secret police station, its called the OVIR, the office for

granting visas. It's administered as a branch of the KGB. And you walk in, and you look up at the desk sergeant sitting at the desk, and you say: I want out. And he says: you want out - where? And you say: I want to leave this country; I want to go to my homeland. And he says: You will go to your homeland, to a labor camp in Siberia, goodbye boy. And we have Jews imprisoned in Russia who not only were turned down, who not only did not get their exit visas to leave, but who paid the price for even making the request. That's what you gamble on; that's the risk you take, not that you might not get out. Okay, so they say: alright, go home, we're not going to let you out. No, no, you don't go home. You wind up in a Soviet labor camp in Siberia. So it's all very well and good for people in the United States to be having rallies - which you should do - and signing petitions - which you should do - about let my people go. But any one of you who walks into a police station and faces that! Now, you're doing the right thing, keep on doing it. Keep on protesting, keep on having the rallies, keep on signing the petitions. Nixon is going to Moscow on May 27, whenever he's going, with a list of one million signatures that have been gathered on April 30th, which is called National Solidarity Day in the United States. For one million people to have signed and said: let my people go - that's fine. And, all that support is what you have to give. But the guy who's got to go face the KGB's desk sergeant does it in Kiev, and in Odessa and in Moscow and in Vilna and in Riga. And he runs the personal risk. If he finally can get out, he finally gets the money. We just slip him the money in a way about which I don't want to go into details. But he's got to pay about 1000 rubles to get out, and 1000 rubles is around 1100-1200 dollars, because the dollar's been devalued. And just to show you as a comparison what that means, a doctor in Russia earns 150 rubles a month; an engineer earns 160 rubles a month; an astronaut gets paid 170 rubles a month. So who the hell's got 1000 rubles? That's per person and if you got four people in the family, it's 4,000 rubles. You can't save up 4,000 rubles in a communist country, no way. Nobody's got that kind of money. So we have to get the money in to them. And he gets it and he gets out. And if he gets to Vienna, we pick him up, bring him here. Now, if you don't want to go at 11.15 tonight to see a plane, we have a plane coming in Wednesday morning at 5.15. So if you'd like to get up at 3.30 and leave here about 4.30 and get on out there, we can catch a plane coming in Wednesday morning. Russians, I don't know how many will be on board, 100, 200.

And I want you to understand that the miracle of escape and risk is a great thing that they're doing. And it's a great thing that the people here are doing to take them in. Now, no point in my going on anymore, because I think enough is enough. I'd like to do two things. I would like to answer any questions that anybody would like to ask. And I'll do that and then we can be polite. Because if people want to stay and ask questions, okay. If people are tired and want to leave, okay. But before we break up, there's a second thing I'd like to ask you to do. I'd like to ask you to realize that

all of the motivation in the world that we have here, all of the pulling together that we have, all of the emotional feeling that we have, all has got to be backed up in a very practical way.

You talked to the Governor about taxes. The tax rate in this country is the highest in the entire civilized world, bar none. You hit the 80% bracket on salaries that are running 300 or 400 dollars a month. That's how fast you get up to the top bracket. There isn't any such thing as a 52% limit, no such thing. The taxes that are paid in the United States seem babyish compared to the taxes which are paid by the citizens here. They're brutal. The kind of material support given by the citizens here is one way that this miracle keeps working. And the second way that it keeps working is by money that comes in from abroad. And money comes in from abroad in two ways: either the kind of money you give or the kind of money we go out and borrow. We haven't got any compunctions at all about going to Lloyds of London and borrowing a few hundred million dollars. The Bank of America in San Francisco. We always walk in every few months - can we have a hundred million? Chase Manhattan, which is the transfer agent of Bonds for the State of Israel, where we keep a float going of 50-100 million dollars on deposit all the time to pay the coupons and the interest on the bonds. We turn around and say: will you loan us 100 or 200. We borrow without the slightest compunction.

So the money that comes in from abroad is money that you give or money that we go out and borrow. And I would like to suggest that you face a certain reality in the course of the next three days. It would be very helpful, it would be very meaningful, it would make life here a lot easier, if you all would help us by facing the reality which you know perfectly well - that back in every city in America the campaigns are on now. And these of you who want to, tell us before you are through here, before you leave on Friday morning, what you'd like your contribution to be for 1972. It doesn't make any difference whether you tell us here or whether you tell it at some meeting back in Richmond. What's the difference? All in one pct. It's one family. Geography doesn't mean a damn thing. But if you say what you're going to do here, maybe that encourages a lot of people. And maybe that encourages a lot of people back home. So I'd like you to keep that in mind as you go through the next two, three days. If Leonard or myself, or Norman, anybody, if anybody turns around to somebody else and says: hey, you got an idea you want to do anything about this? If you feel like saying 'yes', say 'yes'; if you feel like saying 'no', say 'no'. But it's not an unconscionable thing to ask; it's a legitimate thing to ask. Now, it would be a wonderful thing if before you left on Friday morning we had everybody on board, on a little list which we put on the teletype right back to Richmond and Norfolk and a few other places, and say as an example to them what a great, voluntary thing this handful of folks did while they were here. Just think about it. It's got a ripple effect.

Now, I would like to thank you for coming. I haven't done that and it's not an oversight. It's just that we just got started plunging right in, talking about big political problems without being civil. You made a big effort to come, you took time out. It's going to be tiring. You did it on a voluntary, free-will basis. We are very, very grateful, terribly grateful for it. Don't think we're not. Of course, I won't bother to say it again for the next three days, because we will really be moving fast and we won't have time. But don't think I don't mean it. I really do. Thank you for coming. Thank you for being willing to listen. Thank you for being willing to understand. Thank you for trying hard to comprehend, in a short time, what this is all about. Thank you in advance for what you're going to do about it. And let me just say that I will not be with you tomorrow, at the Canal. I have got obligations up in Jerusalem. But I will be with you all day Wednesday, up in Jerusalem, and I'll be with you Thursday, when we go north. And I'll see you off Thursday night. And we're still working on Mr. Dayan, and we'll try to get him for you late Thursday afternoon. He's got Sir Alec Douglas-~~Ucse~~ coming in from England. So that two, three top guys are all tied up with him in the next two or three days.

I said that if anybody had any questions, I'd like to answer them. Why don't we do this. Why don't we adjourn the meeting - I'll do it with Leonard's, without his permission, in his absence. And anybody who would like to stay, please feel free to do so. And we'll just sit around, as much as you want, and answer some questions. You've come at a very creative and exciting time in the history of our country. Russian planes are flying overhead taking pictures of us. Other planes are flying overhead bring Russians to us. We're all mixed up with what kind of planes to worry about, shall we worry about the Mig 23s or shall we worry about the 707s. You've come at an exciting time, you've come at a good time. You've come at the beginning of Spring, the flowers are in bloom. You look at the poppies in the fields when you're driving around. And most of all, when you are going through this whirlwind thing, try to look at the faces of the people, not just the landscape and not just buildings, and not just listen with your ears to what we're all going to be talking to you about. Try to use your eyes as much as your ears and try to look at the faces of the people, because they are going to tell you a lot. So goodnight, except for the hardy questioners. And have a good day tomorrow and I'll see you the day after tomorrow.