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8

Cabinet meeting. 4 November 1956.

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MEETING OF UJA CABINET



November 4, 1956

Waldorf-Astoria Hotel  
New York City

**ABALON STENOTYPE REPORTERS**  
238 WEST 14TH STREET  
NEW YORK 11, NEW YORK  
WATKINS 9-5826

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, this is the presentation which was arranged for you just as hastily as you arranged to be here. There was no way of knowing until this morning that we were to have this kind of magnificent picture available to us.

There are several specific purposes of this meeting. One was to get you filled in on the background. There are several other specific objectives which we would like to proceed to as quickly as possible. I did say that there would be questions if you wanted to ask them. I would not like to take a great deal of time on that. If anyone has any burning questions which really bother you, please get them out. On the other hand, please avoid what might be less essential things in view of the very few minutes that we have left and the very serious things we want to get to.

Abe said one thing at the beginning. He started to describe the mood of the population in Israel, what was the mood of the civilians, the Jews, the one and three-quarter million Jews of Israel, and as he was saying that I was thinking that the key question is what the mood of the five million Jews here in the United States is. How



How did we feel about this, how did we act to it, what do we want to do about it?

There is one very concrete thing I think we ought to do and that is to try to crystallize our own mood and express it in back of theirs. I think that it is an order of business here tonight for us, and I want to call on Jack Weiler who I think has something to say to us on that question.

MR. WEILER: There is very little to say on any question, I think. We have formed a cablegram that we would like you all to join in as individuals, not as UJA leaders, but as leaders of American Jewry, to send the Prime Minister, David Ben Gurion, in this period of history, and I think that we will all agree that this is a great week, one of the greatest weeks in Jewish history, not only in Israel itself.

From where we sit I think we will all agree that this week has helped in the survival of the Jewish people, not only in Israel but everywhere, because we have said from time on in, what happens there eventually will happen here. They have proved courageous, which reflects upon us that we are courageous, and I think that we who have been



listening to the radio and television know that the story has been entirely different from what Nachman Karni has told us. The radio and television just said simply that the Israelis have taken over the Sinai Desert Peninsula without any resistance from the Egyptians. What we heard this evening, some of the great battles that they have been in, certainly does not prove there has been no resistance whatsoever. They are a courageous people, a fighting people, a valiant people, and we are all proud of them.

I think it is only fair and proper that we here as American Jewish leaders should show a solid front to the people of Israel. We will show it later in evening through our "tachlis," our dedication, but right now I think it is proper that we all join in sending this cablegram to the leader of Israel, to convey to the people of Israel, and this is what we have formed. I want to say at the outset that if any of you do not agree with the substance of this cable, please let us here from you. Don't be bashful. This is an evening where you should let your hair down and throw the questions at these gentlemen here. They will answer them.

Here is the cablegram: "We, the undersigned,



American Jewish leaders, meeting in emergency conference at this grave hour in history, send brotherly greetings. We are resolved to do our utmost to aid the people of Israel in this crucial hour. We note with pride that even through the events of the international situation, thousands of refugees continue to be absorbed in Israel in the time-honored role for which the State was created.

"While your people are devoting all their energies to their security, we are determined to shoulder the burden so far as possible of immigrant care and integration in Israel. Toward this end we shall press forward with the greatest vigor to collect the largest cash sum possible and to mobilize American Jews for an all-out effort, comparable in intensity to their support in 1948."

There is one paragraph we have omitted, and maybe you would like to to be inserted. This is the paragraph some of us thought should be omitted. Teddy Kollek thinks it should go in. I would like your approval or disapproval

"It is our prayer that with the aid of Almighty God the strife in the Middle East will cease and give way to enduring peace, founded upon the useful Judaic ideas of freedom, justice and human brotherhood."



This is the final paragraph. This is written to David Ben Gurion.

"To you and the people of Israel whose sacrifices and labor are making it possible for the Jewish State to live in peace and freedom we pledge our unflagging support." Signed by all of us in this room.

Does anyone have any objections of any nature or description?

JUDGE BENJAMIN: I would suggest the last sentence of the last paragraph be omitted.

MR. WEILER: Let me read the last sentence of the last paragraph again, if you don't mind. Do you want to rephrase it or to you want it entirely out?

JUDGE BENJAMIN: I think the inclusion of the first sentence in the last paragraph is highly salutary and important. I favor it completely. I think the last sentence in that paragraph is inappropriate.

MR. WEILER: You are talking about, "We pledge our unflagging support"?

JUDGE BENJAMIN: That is highly inappropriate, I think.

MR. WEILER: Let me read the last sentence of the



last paragraph, and that is exactly what I have been trying to accomplish.

"To you and the people of Israel whose sacrifices and labor are making it possible for the Jewish State to live in peace and freedom, we pledge our unflagging support."

MR. SYLVAN GOTSHAL: Jack, what I am going to say may make me very unpopular, but I am going to say it anyway.

MR. WEILER: I asked for that, so be unpopular if you wish.

MR. GOTSHAL: I think I have shown that I am as interested as anybody in this room about what is done for Israel.

MR. WEILER: Sylvan Gotshal, for those people who don't know him, is Chairman of the Board of the New York Greater UJA.

MR. GOTSHAL: I am very much disturbed about this action being taken at this time.

MR. WEILER: Let me correct that. This is not being taken as the United Jewish Appeal. This is as individuals.

MR. GOTSHAL: Just a minute. This is very im-



portant and I want you to hear me through. I think there is a lot more to this than just sending a cablegram at this moment.

We are all a composite of the influences that we have in our own lives. It has been my experience over the course of the last few days to have been subjected -- I don't want this recorded.

(Discussion off the record)

MR. ED ROSENBERG: This meeting was called -- I have the telegram in my pocket -- by the offices of the United Jewish Appeal. I just want to bring that to your attention so that you do know that this meeting is that kind of a meeting.

RABBI ISADORE BRESLAU: Mr. Chairman, I don't know how to phrase it. It is a little difficult, isn't it? But I do know this: that I came here to this meeting already prepared to do whatever is necessary to help in the present situation, and I didn't exactly need to be briefed with respect to the bravery of the people in Israel or with the manner in which they are meeting the present situation or to be exhorted to do my duty. I am ready to do anything that is necessary to help, and I do believe that if we were



convened here, we were summoned here for some purpose; that we ought to indicate to some degree what our reaction is with respect to these -- I am using a cliché -- these world-shaking events that are taking place, and particularly to our own people.

May I digress for a moment? I went to shul yesterday morning. There is a regular service in Washington in one of the synagogues. One of my friends' boy was being bar mitzvah and I came there and the synagogue was pretty well filled, as at a bar mitzvah the synagogue always is. The rabbi was very much involved with the boy's bar mitzvah and with the family, with the "jichas" and everything that was presented there, but I went away very unhappy after the service because here we were, several hundred people in the synagogue, not a word not only with respect to the events that were transpiring in Israel but with respect to what ought to be our concern, our immediate and personal concern for the men, the women, the children, the people in Israel -- not the State in particular, but for the people.

I felt badly when I left that service. The rabbi made no reference to it. None of us did. Everything went on as usual. It was a wonderful bar mitzvah. And we



come to a meeting here and we can't let this pass by as just another meeting as usual, and I think we ought to express our concern, our continuing concern for the Jews in Israel. They are the people we helped bring there in the past few years. The State is the people and there is nothing unusual or questionable about any statement on our part with respect to our present interest in their future and in the present condition, and I think we ought to state it.

As I listened to the wording of your cablegram, I took except to the language of it, just as you did (Mr. Gotshal), sir. I don't think we ought to address ourselves to Mr. Ben Gurion or to the State or anything in that fashion, that might be interpreted as though we were speaking to the State, but I think we ought to say something. It would be unreasonable if we didn't, weak if we didn't. We ought to say something to indicate our solidarity, our common interest with the Jews, the Jews, the people in Israel, for whatever they are doing. They are putting on the line their lives and their future. We can't be indifferent to that and we can't postpone it until even after the election.



I presume to disagree with you (Mr. Gotshal), sir I think we should have said it yesterday. We should have said it the day before.

As I listened to Mr. Harmon's very eloquent appraisal of the facts of the situation I felt -- who is he talking to? He is not talking to me. He ought to be talking to many of the people in any community who ought to be listening to him. He ought to be talking to the Jews of the United States. They ought to be briefed on these things, and I think the reason he spoke to us is that we may go back home and rebrief our own people with regard to all these things. That is perfectly proper, but I do believe, Mr. Chairman, that some statement ought to come out of this meeting because we were convened for this purpose, to indicate our support, our strength, our very grave concern for their future.

Today it is a matter of life and death to them, it is a matter of their whole existence. They are the people whom we helped to save from Hitler and brought to Israel. They are our charges, our responsibilities. I am not thinking of the State, and I think it would be improper to phrase to Ben Gurion or to the State or to anybody else in



this particular situation our support. We ought to pledge to the people in Israel our support, and I think some statement ought to be redrafted in this direction, and for that I heartily approve.

MR. WEILER: This can go on. I know everybody feels like letting themselves go with all the emotion they've gotten within the past week. I wish you would confine yourselves to about a minute or less, please. We will try to see to it that everybody will be satisfied, Judge Benjamin and Sylvan Gotshal, and a statement will be sent, but I think Wednesday would be the proper time for sending it, for the moment.

MR. HENRY BERNSTEIN: I want to make a suggestion that will save a lot of time. We can debate this for hours. The reason the UJA isn't in that is because -- I agree with both Judge Benjamin and Sylvan Gotshal -- it wouldn't be wise. I think that the way out of this is for us to make a statement for the Jews of America and let that statement be published wherever it may be published instead of to Ben Gurion or the people of Israel, because it would be very obvious what our intentions are, and that will overcome all the problems that have been raised by this state-



ment.

MR. ABE LEVIN: Jack, I am as emotionally disturbed as any man in this room, and normally I would say let's pop off and say what we feel as a result of events, but, ladies and gentlemen, there is much more at stake than emotion in this thing. The Judge is a lawyer, Sylvan must be a lawyer. There are many implications in this situation. I sat in an office the other day where we thought we were going to be closed down. Since this is an off the record meeting I will tell you it was the Bond office.

We know the enemies of Israel and the enemies of the United Jewish Appeal are trying to take away our tax exemption. Let's not, by our emotional outbursts, destroy what is much more important to Israel than words. We've got a lot of work to do here tonight. Either let's appoint a committee or let's do something that can be said on Wednesday, but let's not hurt the situation.

MR. JOE LUBIN: As far as I am concerned, I will send my own cablegram. I would like to show my feeling in a more concrete way. Let's be practical about this. A cablegram. Is that going to help the army? Is that going



to help anything? Let's get down to it.

The speakers made it clear that what we need is money. We've got to help them in the way that we can help help them. I don't know what your program is for tonight, Jack.

MR. WEILER: You will, when I get through with this.

MR. LUBIN: I am anticipating. I came here prepared to do something, as I said, in a more concrete way. I figured, now, how can I do that? Maybe you would like to have two years' contributions in advance; instead of the \$45,000 I was going to give I would give \$50,000 -- I'll give you a check for \$100,000 and I have paid you for two years. (Applause) There's no use applauding. When Ben Gurion gets that, multiplied by thousands and hundreds or fifty he can say, "Gee, that's better than a cablegram. That's something we can use."

Now, for God's sake, let's not spend the evening talking about a cablegram. I am going to send my cablegram. You send yours, but let's get the money. I'll start the ball rolling by advancing \$100,000 for two years' contributions. I don't know whether that is part of your pro-



gram or not, but that is my suggestion.

MR. WEILER: We are not raising funds tonight. We will accept it graciously.

MR. LUBIN: Jack, let's be practical. Let's send money and not cablegrams. That's all I've got to say.

RABBI IRVING MILLER: Whatever I would say now would certainly be an anti-climax, because as a poor rabbi I can't begin to match the kind of eloquence that we just heard from Joe Lubin, but actually, Mr. Chairman, seriously, I was going to suggest something along the very lines that Mr. Lubin has just spoken of.

I think that any cablegram, no matter how eloquent, that had to be sent from this body as individuals and not as an organization, would in itself already be self-defeating.

MR. WEILER: Let me brief you on that. Our names at the bottom of that cablegram -- Ben Gurion and the rest of them would know where it came from.

RABBI MILLER: Let us get to the "tachlis" of the meeting. The "tachlis" of the meeting is the calling for a cash campaign. Then let us cable that decision to Israel. That we have a right to cable. We have a right to



cable it on behalf of the United Jewish Appeal. It is part of our philanthropic work. Nobody can challenge our right at this moment to say that we are alert to our responsibility to help gather in the Jews from North Africa or from Poland who have been or have to be gathered in, and for that purpose we have to launch a cash campaign.

That will be the most encouraging news to the people of Israel and it can be sent now, even before the election, and it can be sent on behalf of the United Jewish Appeal. I agree with Judge Benjamin -- I would have agreed with Judge Benjamin that we might leave out such words as, "To you, Mr. Ben Gurion, we pledge our unflinching support." I agree that that isn't the tactical thing to do at this moment, but I think that Judge Benjamin would also agree with me that a cablegram which would notify -- whether it is Ben Gurion or Eshkol or anyone -- the proper authorities that we are launching tonight a cash campaign in order that the United Jewish Appeal may carry on the word that it was organized to do, is perfectly in order.

MR. WEILER: Very good.

JUDGE BENJAMIN: We have been through a trying



week, and like Sylvan and everybody else, all of us are faced with the problem of whether the emotionalism of the events will cause us to commit acts of indiscretion which may well jeopardize the future of Israel as well as the position of the Jews in America.

I do not believe that we wish to engage or should engage at this moment, when the United Nations is considering this problem and when our government of the United States is leading in the direction which Abe Harmon prays for, a settlement of peace instead of the instability of the armistice, for us at this time to send a cablegram to a country with which we are in apparent, though not in actual conflict. It may well be divisive with respect to the Jews of America who support the movement of our government for international peace, as well as underlining the support which we may otherwise have from the non-Jews of America, who may consider this movement as one out of sympathy with the attitude of our government for international peace.

I think we have a right to say in behalf of the United Jewish Appeal that the international situation has given rise to opportunities for resettlement of Jews in



Israel of which we must avail ourselves with renewed courage and determination and sacrifice, without going beyond into direct communication with another nation ~~with~~ which we have no right to hold communications political in character, to which we have an allegiance and can have an allegiance which is purely cultural and philanthropic, and for us at this time to indicate directly or indirectly words of possible political allegiance, at a time when the political directions of the two governments are not in complete parallel, will be a disservice to everyone.

I am sure that neither Abe Harmon nor Abba Eban nor any other responsible diplomat on the face of the earth, interested in the welfare of Israel, would deem it wise for the American Jewish community to be placed in apparent conflict with its own government, and so I join with Sylvan Gotshal and I hope in the prayer that we will not be moved by emotional feelings to acts of indiscretion which can do us irreparable harm. Please remember that come Tuesday, will come Wednesday, that the voice of the American people, however much many in this room may defy it, seems to indicate continuance of the administration headed by President Eisenhower.



MR. WEILER: No political speeches.

JUDGE BENJAMIN: We do not wish to place ourselves in the position of even implying opposition to a government with which we will probably have to continue to deal, and so I would urge, Mr. Chairman, that we forego these words of the cablegram to Prime Minister Ben Gurion. I am sure that his representatives here can carry back the good will, not alone the good will of everyone here but their determination that Israel shall not be left wanting for that which it most needs, the sinews -- I should not say of war -- but the sinews of material aid with which to meet its needs. (Applause)

MR. WEILER: Let me finalize it this way, please. Will you entrust us, now that we have your viewpoints and to satisfy all the individuals here, to get up a cablegram, whether it is to the Jews of America or to Israel directly, or possibly no cable -- let us juggle this thing together among ourselves? We will not send a cable with anyone's name without your consent. Is that enough?

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Let me try to do what I think we all want to do and yet avoid the problems. May I make the following suggestions: Number One - let anyone who



wants to, send his own cable. Sylvan said he would not hesitate to sign a cable, which means he would not hesitate to send his own if he so desires. Let anyone send a message of support and encouragement over his own name, if he wants to.

Number Two - let that be sent, if anyone has fear of involvement with a foreign government, to the Jewish Agency where certainly there is no problem of involvement whatsoever. The cable address of the Jewish Agency is JEVAGENCY, Jerusalem, Israel.

Number Three - let me suggest that we sent out of this meeting, which was called as a meeting, the thing that Irving Miller suggested; namely, our determination to press forward to raise as much money as we can for the programs which the Agency supports -- immigration and absorption and colonization. This is a joint statement of moral and financial support which we intend to mobilize, which we certainly intend to do, so that there is no distortion there.

This, it seems to me, solves the problems of making political statements prior to an election. It solves the problems of making contact with a foreign govern-



ment and solves the problem of the collective group, someone being asked to put his name to something which he hasn't seen.

If you want to, send your own message of support. Every man's name in this room is known to the leaders of the Jewish Agency. You are not unimportant people. If you want to, send your own message over your own name to the Jewish Agency. We will send a joint message from this meeting, saying that we will mobilize all our efforts to raise as much money as we can for the philanthropic programs of the Jewish Agency. Is that all right?

(General assent)

MR. GOTSHAL: Rabbi, I am going to talk again. That is not all right. No. Let me tell you why.

This is not for the record.

(Discussion off the record)

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: We've got to cut the Gordian knot on this thing.

MR. HARMON: May I make a statement which I think will cut it? I may be out of order at this time.

I beg your forgiveness for butting into this discussion, but may I take the liberty of saying, after con-



sulting with Teddy Kollek, would it be in order for me to suggest that the fears raised here I have given attention to, and I have listened to the feeling, the sense of this meeting. It has been very encouraging to us. We will, with your permission, convey that, and how we feel about it, to the people in Israel. Any of you who want to do it in your own way, then God bless you if you do it. (Applause)

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: I would like to get on to show Abe that he's got a right to feel encouraged by what he heard here tonight. So far, he can be mightily encouraged by what Joe said.

There are two purposes for this meeting. Let's strike the whole unhappy business of having tried to frame a sentence that would have given some moral support and encouragement. The moral support and encouragement Abe has told us will flow, because he has sensed it flowing and he will get it over.

The two orders of business here were, one, a short term, and one a long term. The short term order of business is to see how much money we can get together from all sources as quickly as possible, without the necessity for underlining why that money is needed. It is clear as



the sun .

The long term objective of this meeting is to talk about the kinds of plans that we ought to be making for not next year's campaign, because that seems like an eternity away, but the kind of plans we ought to be making to lay the groundwork for the kind of campaign whenever we ought to start it, which the Jews of America should be inspired to put on by our leadership.

For the short term objective we have had this year a wonderful and diligent and active Cash Chairman. He is one of our National Chairmen, Sam Daroff of Philadelphia. He put on a big cash push in the spring, May and June, and we don't appoint to these great, honorary, highly paid jobs of Cash Chairman men who shall only serve for one or two months, so he is still serving as Cash Chairman, and I want him to talk now about the cash program of this immediate period in the next few weeks.

For the long range thing, what kind of a campaign we ought to mount -- Morris Berinstein is going to talk to us about it, and in both of these things there ought to be some measure of response and discussion from you.

Sam, would you talk about the cash program and



the things you want everybody here to do?

MR. DAROFF: Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, I think anything that we would discuss on a cash basis, as to what we normally would do, we more or less would have to throw the book away because what we are talking about now are things that would require immediate action on the part of every leader of the United Jewish Appeal throughout the United States, and I mean particularly the men in this room and those with whom we have been in touch throughout the country, who have helped us out on our cash program.

We originally started this campaign with a quota of \$30,000,000. I want to say that while we have done fairly well, we are still considerably away from that particular goal. Let me give you the present picture of our cash situation.

The cash received from September first to November second on our regular campaign was \$9,680,000. In our Special Fund we received \$1,168,000, making a total of \$10,848,000.

In our talks to the various people throughout the country we have these following promises which I honestly feel, in view of the present situation, will be a reality



as to what they told us they would have for us during the ensuing months: 125 cities promised us in November a total of \$4,107,500, and in December \$1,672,500. Now, from the rest of the country -- and I am talking about communities of, say, 5,000 and over -- \$499,000, and from New York City a total of \$1,850,000, and additional cities where unspecified amounts are to come from -- and these are purely estimates because these are much smaller communities -- we anticipate a total of \$500,000.

These five figures would mean a total of \$8,629,000 or a grand total of cash we expect to receive by the end of December of \$19,477,000. This would mean, therefore, that we would be short approximately \$11,000,000 if we are to reach the goal of \$30,000,000 which we have set.

I might say that there are men in this room and a good many men in our Cabinet under my Chairmen, Mike Stavitsky and Sam Rothberg, who have made calls throughout the country. There were 23 members of the Cabinet who have been making these calls and there have been about 35 or 40 other leaders throughout the country who have been talking to various communities, so you see, we have had



quite a few of our leaders who have made calls throughout the country to try to get this particular money in.

Of course, ladies and gentlemen, it is difficult for me to give you any type of a program because it is up to you in your own communities to see now that every possible dollar is made available. My own thinking is, in view of the situation, it is not going to be that difficult in order to get this kind of money in today. Some communities promise a million dollars and turn in \$700,000 and say, "We are \$300,000 short of our goal." Multiply that by community after community and you can realize that in the final analysis there are many millions of dollars of promised money, because they put down what they said they are going to give us and therefore we want a much smaller amount towards the goal than we ought to get.

So I am asking you men in this room, and I have cards here for you for assignment, to please, starting with tomorrow morning, make these calls. Even better -- because in some of these towns other communities might be a short hour or two in traveling, or even longer than that -- gentlemen, this is no time to think even about time or travel because the urgency is that important. Therefore, I am hoping



that come the November 30th meeting when we have our big national meeting, that we won't have to wait until the end of December; that within the course of the next two or three or four weeks we will be able to announce at the November 30th meeting that we have these \$11,000,000 which are so desperately needed for us to send over to Israel.

I am going to call these names out and we have all these cards assigned, Herb, and I would like you men to take these cards and make your calls and then report back either to myself or to the National office as to what you have done with reference to getting this cash in now, because I want to say in my final words to you, I have no doubt that a dollar today is worth ten times more than a dollar is going to mean two or three weeks from today, and it is so important that we try to get this money in today and not tomorrow.

●CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Sam, before you hand out cards I want to say a couple of things about what is on those cards. There is a figure on that card which is the estimated possibility of what cash can be obtained from that community. That is not a maximum. That is an attempt to be minimum as to what can be achieved from a given com-



munity if they will work really hard, and keep that in mind.

The second thing is that on that card there is a name or the names of a person to call who can help you. You might know five people or ten people in a town. Don't call just one. Don't let it go as a perfunctory thing. If you will take this thing and live with it, call everybody you know in the town to help mobilize sentiment, call two people or five people or ten people and call them once and call them twice -- keep at them for the next three or four weeks.

Then I would like to say this: all of you have had experience in campaigns. Mobilizing cash requires as much ingenuity as getting pledges. Try all kinds of ways you can think of. Maybe Joe Lubin had a way. Maybe another man has a way. Maybe a third individual can borrow some money and pay his pledges.

A man who made a pledge in April or May has a perfect right to say, "I have twelve months to pay this." He's got a right to say it, and maybe he doesn't have all the money right now. Maybe you can help him think of ways by which he can put his hands on money and pay that thing



up. If you will look at this thing in terms of the way anybody runs a business, these are accounts receivable. You don't call all your accounts receivable at once. No businessman does that. But when you've got to get in as much cash as you can without disturbing your customers, you try to get the receivables paid up, and that is the position we are in.

The last thing I would like to pinpoint in everybody's mind is this: there is ten million dollars worth of pledges in the Special Fund alone; people who made those Special Fund pledges did so under the full impact of knowing what the emergency was. Nine million dollars worth of Special Fund money has been paid in already in six months, seven months. It is not big, but it is the Special Fund pledges which we've got all the moral right to ask for as quickly in payment as possible, because they know the terms under which they gave that Special Fund pledge, and if you can pinpoint that, it will make it all the easier.

I am sorry to interrupt you, Sam, but I wanted to go into the things which make a real, hard cash collection effort, not just an automatic one, not just a perfunctory one. If you will take these cards and work them the way you



Mr. Jacobs: These figures are probably not correct. I didn't get Nadelman's name for some time, and trying to get it resulted in a small confusion.

Why do people talk to someone reporting a conference? They must think my hands have ears.

Jac



work pledge cards in a campaign, you will get the kind of results that we need in the next three or four weeks.

MR. MARTIN NADELMAN (Houston, Texas): I wanted to say that we in the Southwest have anticipated this cash situation. We said we would pay in two or three months some more money and will attempt to get two or three endorsements on notes and borrow from the bank to give immediately or within the next two or three weeks. I have statistics that I would like to report as of now in promised moneys:

Wichita, Kansas - \$ ?

Kansas City - \$5,000

Fort Worth - \$50,000

Houston - \$240,000

San Antonio - \$50,000

Shreveport - \$50,000

Oklahoma City - \$25,000.

MR. DAROFF: I might say that in Philadelphia since the emergency has taken place, we have a Cash Chairman there and we are making a special drive today, mobilizing a lot of our community people to get on the phone and call individuals to get the cash in, so it doesn't only



mean that you talk to your treasurers and say we want so much money from the campaign. It means having a cash campaign right in your community now to get the money in from the people who have made their pledges, and don't sell this thing short, gentlemen.

I remember only a few days ago we had this national hookup with reference to Bonds, and we had about seventy or eighty people in a room and we collected in additional money I think at that time about \$100,000 in bonds. Do you know that eighty percent of the people in that room gave us the checks immediately for what they pledged, and then we got yesterday the largest amount of money because we got on the phone and picked up another \$100,000 of bond money of people who had made previous pledges. Why? Because they realized the serious discomfort, -- the Jews are not dumb about it, they know what it is all about. They want to help, because you've got to keep after them, and I think if you do, you are going to get the money in.

With that I would like to call out these names, because I know you have some other matters on the agenda to complete. (The cards were handed out by Mr. Daroff)



MR. DAROFF: Gentlemen, thank you very much and I hope that within the next couple of days we will hear from you, and I hope that our response will be really so terrific that we can tell our good friends from Israel just how much we have tried to help them in trying to mobilize all this cash, so that we can at least give them that wonderful support that we are talking about in order to encourage them in the great things that they are doing for us. Thank you very much.

MR. SAM HYMAN (Miami, Florida): As a community representative from Miami, we anticipated the purpose of this meeting, and before I came into this room tonight I sent telegrams to all of the campaign leaders who worked in the Miami campaign last year and asked them to join me at luncheon next Wednesday. The telegram is as follows:

"Am attending emergency meeting National UJA Cabinet here in New York. Very anxious to meet with you and other key campaign leaders on my return to Miami to discuss critical Israel situation. Will appreciate attendance at special luncheon meeting at Federation office this Wednesday noon, November the 7th. Your presence is required. Best regards. Don't fail me. Signed Sam Hyman."



We are going to raise that money.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: I have just been handed the list of people who have agreed to take the New York responsibility and they are, all four of them, here tonight: Judge Benjamin, Mr. Gotshal, Mrs. Michele and Saul Schiff, and the New York push --

MR. HENRY BERNSTEIN: You left out one name, a fellow by the name of Jack Weiler.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: He handed me the list of the other four. Dewey Stone I see just came in from Boston. I had said that he was absent at his own closing meeting tonight, but he got down from Boston awfully fast.

JUDGE BENJAMIN: May I suggest that I have some free days next week, and if some staff member will come to my chambers, I may be willing to violate my code and make some calls.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Thank you, Judge.

Ladies and gentlemen, I said that there were two things we wanted to achieve tonight. One was this, as I term it, short term objective, not unimportant, but short term and immediate objective of getting cash in; and secondly, I said there was the long term objective of trying to figure



out how to set the stage for the kind of campaign we will have to run under these circumstances.

I want to tell you that when the mission was in Israel, there were a hundred people there and every one of those people was important. Among the hundred, everyone worked hard. One of them had lots of special responsibilities that others simply weren't asked to undertake. That one was Morris Bernstein, and I would like Morris to bring before this table tonight the whole problem of where we go from here. That's the way Abe Harmon finished up -- where do we go from here. I think that is the way we ought to finish this meeting tonight -- where do we go from here, and I can't think of anybody better qualified to do it than Morris. (Applause)

MR. BERINSTEIN: Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen and fellow workers, we, of course, left Israel the day before the events that were described to you took place. I think the timing of this is extremely important because that mission of a hundred people that Herb Friedman talked about were thinking about the problems of Israel as we saw them, not as they are today.

Now, it's not too easy to handle a hundred people,



and in our particular case El Al didn't do as well as has been described here tonight. Some got there 24 hours late and via another plane.

I can't help but start off by telling you that I am a little emotional at this moment, also a little tired, and I hope you will bear with me if I break my rule of talking more than five or six minutes, which is something I don't think I have ever done before.

We just finished talking about cash. Let's face the facts. If we all do a superhuman job and if everyone goes home and doesn't forget that this has taken place here tonight, it will make a difference of ten million dollars. I know what the armament bill for the government of Israel has been in the year 1956 not to wage war but to protect itself against war.

I saw, along with the people in this room, the planes land from Poland, the ship coming in from Marseilles that had come originally, of course, from Morocco. 9,000 refugees came in in the month of October into this country that is now waging a war. 9,000 more will come in in the month of November while the so-called war, or whatever the diplomatic statement is, is taking place. Probably 50,000



to 60,000 will come in during the year. This is what we saw as a mission. We saw 60,000 people who have just come in in the past year, and 50,000 to 60,000 more are coming in in the coming year -- tremendous outlays. Whether this belongs in the UJA picture or not, we can't help but mention it -- tremendous outlays for armanent, and I choose to say for defense.

We traveled from one end of the country to the other end of the country. We saw men with machine guns in their various kibbutzes, the gun on one shoulder and plowing with their other hand. We saw everything that looked bad, from a strictly economic standpoint. We saw everything that looked good from the standpoint that Abe Harmon talked about, the morale of the people, the way they were going about their work.

I don't know if Abe remembers it or not, but we had one meeting very late on a Monday night. Teddy was there too and Ambassador Eban was there and we were talking about various things that had to be done, and I have always made it my policy not to bother the officials of the State of Israel with a lot of questions, because God knows they've got enough to do, but I couldn't help but ask one question.



I said, "Gentlemen, how far can you go with this program? How far can you go in taking in this tremendous amount of refugees and how far can you go in spending the kind of money you are for armanent, and in so many cases and in the particular case to which I refer, a cash deal? Are you too proud to tell the government of the United States, to tell the government of Canada, to tell some of these other governments that are so friendly, that economic bankruptcy is almost as bad as defeat on the battlefield? And how long can you go on spending this kind of money with the slim, meager resources that you have?"

Because I want to say to you that I as a member of that mission up till the last week felt a little hopeless. Sure, I knew we were going to come back and raise more money and we will talk about that in a minute or two, and I knew we could whip up some enthusiasm on the part of some people to continue their special gift or even increase it, but whatever meager sort of a businessman I am, I am not that meager that I don't know in my heart that it was impossible for American Jewry to supply the kind of funds that would allow Israel to live in that armed camp for the rest of our generation.



I just couldn't see how it could go on, where year after year after year they would have to spend this kind of money for arms, this kind of money for immigration, for peace, taking everything that you heard tonight without repeating it from the three Israeli gentlemen, and so I left Israel with a heavy heart in spite of what Herb and Bill Rosenwald and all our leaders felt was a magnificent reply from the hundred people who were in Israel.

I want to tell you what that reply was. We had a meeting at ten o'clock one evening, and by the way, if you are looking for a vacation, turn down the next invitation for a UJA mission, and without being vulgar, if you are looking for diarrhea, come along. I can tell you that they traveled us from one end of the country to the other in buses. I think that at the end of the third day most of us wanted to quit, but that is the type of American soldiers we are. We didn't quit. And finally, after getting up at six o'clock in the morning and bussing it all over the joint -- and to me it's not a small country, gentlemen (laughter) -- at ten o'clock that night, after six successive days we called a special meeting of the mission to discuss "tachlis," real, honest to goodness "tachlis," and



would you believe it, diarrhea or no diarrhea, there wasn't one person who didn't attend -- not one.

I happened to have had the pleasure of chairing that meeting and I happened to think that it was chaired -- and please don't take this as political; tonight I think we are afraid of saying so many things -- as democratically as it could have been. Everyone had a chance to say what they wanted to, and with respect to Henry Zucker, we even had professionals there and they had a right to say what they wanted to say, and they said it.

This was, I must stress again and again, before we knew what was going to take place the day after we left. Nothing planted. It was the conviction of one hundred people in that room, of at least of whom seventy percent got on their feet and spoke, and all three of the professionals, all from large cities, that it was absolutely imperative that the United Jewish Appeal hold another emergency drive in the year 1957 for even a greater amount than in the year 1956, so that the money could be forthcoming to Israel direct to help solve a minute part of their problems.

That meeting lasted three to three and a half



hours. A very interesting thing took place in that meeting. The first time in my fund-raising experience, some people, in order to demonstrate how much they felt this, some of the largest givers in the United States got on their feet and said, "We pledge now that we are going to give more than we did last year. How much more we do not know." And when I had to call their attention to the fact that we were not raising funds in Jerusalem any more than we are raising funds tonight, that didn't stop other people from getting up and saying the same thing.

So to sum up what took place in Israel I will tell you that those hundred people of the mission, people from one coast to the other coast, north, south, east and west, without any thought of a war and without any impregnation of any kind, came to that conclusion. The General Chairman of the campaign, Mr. Rosenwald, got up and made an announcement that that was his belief and he was prepared to give more. The National Chairmen of the campaign had a special, private little meeting, and remember, none of us went over there for that purpose, and all decided that as leaders it was our duty to come back to the community in the United States and say that we as National Chair-



men were prepared to continue and increase the pledges that we made last year.

What has happened since then? Three uninvited Israelis have descended upon the scene, and I think I can speak frankly. I have been trying to lose this job for a long time, so if I say anything wrong, I'm sorry. Three uninvited Israelis. They came because they are afraid of what the reaction is in the American Jewish community. They have been used to getting cables in Israel for things a lot less important than this and they haven't heard from us at all as to what we think, as to what we will do and as to what we can accomplish, so they came here today. This meeting was called before then. They have spoken to you and they have poured out their hearts. Some of us may think it was unnecessary. I for one don't agree with that. I think it was damned necessary.

I don't know how long this thing is going to last. I know it is a calculated risk and I tried to give you my own impression from what I saw in Israel, that if I were asked my opinion I would have said please take it, because they couldn't go on and live the way they were living. You just can't live in a country where children aren't safe and



you can't walk out on the streets. When we were out at five o'clock at night, there were airplanes and trucks with guns on them in front of us -- we, as American citizens.

I am leading up to just one thing, and as I say, without trying to be over-emotional, I think the time has come and it's got to be pretty soon when we American Jews speak up. We know what happened in 1948 and we know how we spoke up then. I don't know what the needs are going to be. I don't think these three fine gentlemen can tell us today, but we know they are going to be a hell of a lot more than they were this year. I don't know if this action will go on for another three days or four days. I hope that is all.

We know the calculated risk, as I mentioned before. But there is one thing that we must do as the leaders in this room. On November 30th there is an emergency session being called of the United Jewish Appeal. That is three weeks away. I wish it was only one week away. We don't know how to act any faster. We are not that smart. We want everyone in this room to do two things: to come to that emergency session yourself, Number One. Number Two - I don't care how important you are in your community,



but bring the other three, four or five important people to that session.

This is something that you've got to start wrapping up tomorrow. Make them say yes. Get the hotel reservations, make your plane reservations, set aside that weekend so that American Jewry can really speak up, not with telegrams, but speak the way that Joe Lubin says we have to speak, the way I am prepared to speak, the way every decent Jew should be prepared to speak.

Let me repeat: every man and woman in this room, every leader must be here and you must bring with you the top three, four or five from your community, and don't take no for an answer. Then let us all as Jews get together and decide what do we want to do. I assure you I can promise you it will again be done democratically. There's no sense in a national organization which is the people in Israel. Who is the United Jewish Appeal? The United Jewish Appeal is you and me. There's no sense in adopting some crazy figure. There's no sense in six people manipulating and trying to get somebody to get up and say something that they don't want to say or try to lead people into saying things that they don't want to say.



To sum it up I do think this: somewhere along the line the people of Israel ought to have some idea from the leaders of the American Jewish community as to where they stand and how far they want to go. This can only be accomplished by attendance at this meeting and doing the things that I have asked you to do.

Will you let us know as soon as possible, everyone that you can get, and tell them what it is for. Thank you very much. (Applause)

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: I think practically everybody here was present last year on November 18th. 350 men were in that room, 350 people gave the mandate for the Special Fund of 1956. They could do so because they were the people who had the right to do so. What Morris is pleading for is the same kind of group on November the 30th this year, and more.

You remember what happened November 18th last year. You saw what Joe Lubin and I am sure other men in this room were ready to do tonight on November the 30th. The clear signal has to come out. I don't have any doubt in my mind. I think sometimes the people of the country are far ahead of the leaders. I think this year, 1956,



the leaders tried to be ahead of the people and really lead them. In 1957 we have to be farther ahead of them and lead them still farther. The purposes for which this meeting was called I think have been achieved.

I would like to close it by reading three sentences from the 14th chapter of the Book of Exodus:

"And the Egyptians pursued and went in after them, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, his horsemen to the midst of the sea. And it came to pass in the morning watch that the Lord looked unto the camp of the Egyptians with the pillar of fire and the cloud, and brought into confusion the camp of the Egyptians, and He took off the wheels of their chariots and He caused them to move onward with difficulty.

"And the Egyptians said, 'Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the Lord fighteth with them and for them against the Egyptians.'"

The meeting is adjourned.

(The meeting adjourned at 11:00 p.m.)



*Fel'de*

ADDRESSES OF TEDDY KOLLEK AND ABRAHAM HARMON

TO UJA CABINET

AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES

November 4, 1956





The meeting of the National Cabinet of the United Jewish Appeal convened at 8:20 p.m. in the Jade Room of the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York City on Sunday, November 4, 1956; Rabbi Herbert Friedman presiding.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to welcome all of you here tonight in a mood of gratitude for the speed with which you came together. This meeting was called at a very few days' notice, and if you take a look around the room, you will see who is here and you will know that the people here represent the hard core of those who make up the strength of the United Jewish Appeal.

There are a few people who are missing and I want you to know why they are not here. Bill Rosenwald is out of the country, on the way home. Joe Holtzman is out of the country on the way home. Joe Meyerhoff, Fred Forman, Abe Kay -- people who would have been here had they been in the United States, but this whole thing happened so quickly that these people are still on their way back from Israel, none of them caught anywhere, although there was a tremendous confusion with some people winding up in a pup tent in the airfield at Athens, being evacuated by the American



Air Force and other people coming home via Copenhagen, and most everybody got back by now. These few are still out in the limbo and, I am sure, sorry that they are not with us tonight.

Dewey Stone is in Boston at the closing meeting of the Boston campaign tonight and is flying in to New York tonight after the meeting is over up there, to consult with us here in the morning. With these few exceptions almost the entire Cabinet is here plus people whose strong interest brought them together tonight.

We had a wonderful program all arranged. Moe Leavitt and I were going to tell you what it felt like to be in Jerusalem last Monday and Tuesday, but we are old arrivals to the United States in terms of very, very welcome and pleasant guests who dropped in on us this morning, who left Israel on Friday, and we are going to hear from them tonight.

Obviously, something impelled all of us to get together tonight. It doesn't take very many words to describe what we are here for. The mood is deep. The words which will be used will come from people who are close, and I am going to give you the batting order: Teddy Kolley,



whom I think all of you know and have met personally at one time or another, who is the Director-General of the Prime Minister's office, will speak; Colonel Nachman Karni, member of the general staff of the Israeli defense forces, and Abe Harmon who was, as you know, the Consul here in New York and who is now on the Executive of the Jewish Agency.

This is a delegation dropped in from the skies. These are people who will try to give us in a few minutes the total picture, Teddy talking about the background of the thing and what happened up to the attack Monday night, and Colonel Karni using his map to describe what has happened since Monday and in the few days of the fighting, and Abe to talk after that about -- now that it seems that the fighting is almost over -- what the present picture is and what the hopes are and what will come out of this whole situation.

There couldn't have been, if we had planned this for months, a better line-up of people who suddenly came to our table tonight. These are not formal speeches from these men. They are too close to us, they are friends of ours, you are friends of theirs. It is a livingroom gathering. This is our house. Three friends have come. We want to



know desperately from them, and one by one the three of them will build the picture for us. No introductions, no lengthy biographies -- Teddy and Nachman Karni and Abe Harmon.

Teddy, shoot! (Applause)

MR. KOLLEK: Friends, with some of you we met only about a week ago in Tel Aviv and at that time none of us, certainly not I, knew that we would be meeting here so soon again and, I would almost say, under such good and happy circumstances. When you were in Israel all of us who had contact with you, and especially people like my own chief, Ben Gurion and Eshkol and Golda and others, tried to convey to you what our problems were. We felt that you were extremely well equipped to transmit all these problems and your own judgment about them and what you had seen with your own eyes to your own communities and to the whole of American Jewry.

But then things started happening. They started happening a little faster than any of us thought would be possible. Actually, the first call-ups happened during the very last hours of the mission's stay in Israel and continued for another day or two or three. We felt that we owed it to this partnership between you and us that we



should come here as speedily as possible and tell you what brought about the quick decisions and the decisive actions that took place immediately after your departure. We owed it especially to those who had been over and who couldn't very well imagine on the Thursday or Friday when they left that things would be happening so fast, and we owed it to all of you to give you as full a report as we could.

This is why we tried to come over as fast as possible. We left on Saturday morning, only a little over 24 hours ago. When we spoke from Paris yesterday to Herb and heard about this meeting of yours here, we made a special effort to be here on time to meet with you and give you this report of ours.

The reasons for the decisions that were taken, the background, you know. There was eight years since the armistice agreement, almost eight years since the armistice agreement with Egypt, of mounting aggression all the time. I almost don't have to repeat it, but I will do it very briefly. It started with the blockade of the Suez, with the blockade of the approach to Elath, with the flaunting of the Security Council decision in this respect and with the use of force in shooting at ships that entered into the



Gulf of Aqaba -- although by chance it happened that these ships were going to an Arab port -- by stopping the one Israeli ship we tried to send through the Suez Canal and the incarceration of the crew and the transfer of the ship to the Egyptian navy. It continued by boycott, by all the political pressure and all the great speeches about the destruction of Israel and about the second round. It took on even greater proportions when Egypt started on its great armament with Russian and European arms on top of the few British arms that they had received before.

It finally took on quite alarming proportions during the days when you were there and when a joint command was organized between Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and which was then joined by Jordan, our closest neighbor, and this was defined by these commanders as a ring of steel which would turn Israel into an Auschwitz, -- all of this accompanied for the last few years by raids of fedayeen which were increasing.

During these last few days we had a great quantity of information that there was the feeling in Egypt that they had won the political battle of the Suez over the West and that this thing had been taken off their minds; that



they could concentrate again on the more important fight they needed in order to make their ambitions of conquest in the Middle East, in the Arab world, in Africa really, and that was the fight against Israel. We know that they had planned for an invasion of about ten thousand of these commando raiders into Israel during these next few days.

During the days of the actual battle they managed to send a few hundred in. We tried to underplay this news because we were not interested, during the days of tension, to create any kind of feeling of worry or almost panic within Israel, but a great number of cases of sabotage took place during these last days while the action in Sinai was going on. Amongst the major ones, quite a number of cars were shot at, quite a number of cars touched off land mines and a number of people got killed. The great 66-inch pipeline from the Yaarkon to the Negev was blown up in a central place. Land mines were planted from all over, from the north, from the south and from the east of the country. Several dozens of pumping stations and wells were blown up, and all this was only a small part of the great action that was planned for these raiders to come in, helped by the fact that in Israel there are 200,000 Arabs who could



move freely and are moving freely in their own dress. They were planning to put bombs into cinemas, into office buildings and into all kinds of other places.

We had found out recently, as well -- or we had had second thoughts recently as well -- about the policy of retaliation. We know that you here in the United States on quite some occasions disagreed with us over this policy anyway, but we had had in some cases a fairly good experience. We knew at least at some period in this history of those recent years that a retaliatory action over a certain period of months meant quiet and peace for the villages along the frontier.

We wanted first of all to establish the fact that Jewish life couldn't be taken without anything happening and Jewish blood couldn't be spilled without any action at all being taken in this connection, but during recent months, especially with the internal situation in Jordan deteriorating and the central government not having a great deal of influence, we felt that the political basis for these actions which we had had before had, to some extent, disappeared.

We had believed before that the central govern-



ment didn't want these actions at all; that they were undertaken by individuals and that when something unpleasant happened as a reaction, that then the central government was forced into action, putting the army, putting their best forces into the front lines and trying to prevent raiders from coming in from the other side, and therefore as we couldn't follow and pursue these raiders in their own territory, the only thing to do was to press the Arab government into doing something, and we felt that those raids were the only way of achieving this.

But during the last few weeks and months we had increasing doubts about it, because the internal position in the Arab countries had changed, so between these doubts and between this information, the very live information that reached us and that since has been proved to some extent -- and some of the documents will be published during the next few days and weeks -- we felt that there was no other choice for us but to take this thing into our hands and finish this once and for all, and if in the process we would be able to break the military might of aggressive Egypt, then this is what we wanted really to achieve. If, as we hope and still hope, this would mean the toppling



over of Nasser himself, then this would be the greatest thing that we could do not only for ourselves but for the world as a whole and for the free world as a whole.

Of course, this was treated with the greatest of secrecy and there are many, many people in Israel in the most central positions who didn't know the slightest thing about this until it actually happened. If we should be asked why this secrecy was necessary, I think our answer is that we, at least from the experience of world events especially during the last few months, felt that if anybody at all would come to know about this, we would be stopped from doing what was, in our eyes, absolutely necessary, without any kind of action really being taken against the aggressors, and if that would be so, maybe aggression might be postponed for a week or two or three or four, but actually nobody would act against aggressive Egypt and we would lose the only chance we had to save ourselves and, incidentally, strike a blow in the right direction for the world as a whole.

I would like to say that what we did, I think we had the best of reasons in the world -- self-preservation. What we did is one thing and what the French and the British



did is another. Certainly the motives are entirely different and the reasons are entirely different.

Our objectives were simple: to destroy the aggressive danger against us and to try to achieve a situation in which we were to talk about, again, a permanent peace in the Middle East. We didn't do this because we had territorial ambitions -- that wasn't the purpose of the exercise -- but we believe that our ambitions at this time and our target at this time should be peace, not some kind of temporary arrangement which was meant to be temporary and which was entirely made up of armistice agreements and which was entirely computed when it became a permanent kind of arrangement, which it was never meant to be and which it wasn't able to be.

We have quite some problems before us besides the military problems about which Colonel Karni will be able to tell you much more than I could possibly do, because we withdrew him at the last minute before we left only on Friday afternoon from the center of actions in Sinai, and he will be able to give you a very detailed and full picture on this. But all I wanted to tell you was what were the purposes we wanted to achieve.



Certainly we will have some problems. We will have some problems here in the United States to explain why we did this. We will have some problems to explain ourselves in Asia where we are living and where we want to continue to live and live a peaceful life, because on the basis of our action, to some extent the French and the British came in. If the Asians criticize us on this, there may be some justification, they may have some justification. If anybody in the United States tries to criticize us, we still believe that the French and the British, to the extent even we had some common aim in this action, although we haven't got common motives, may be better bedfellows or better companions in any kind of action than maybe even some great fighters for democracy like St. Marie (?) or Chiang Kai Shek, or even, if I may tell a story -- we have some close connections with all the American experts who are out in Israel in connection with Point Four and other things, and they were pretty much on our side in this and pretty sorry that most of them had to be evacuated. They weren't so worried about Israel. They were worried that the United States found itself suddenly together with the Russians and Nasser against England and France in this



particular situation.

If I may touch on one point which might be of interest from the point of view of world opinion, it is the question of the Arab refugees. As you know, there are about 200,000, maybe a little more, maybe a little less -- we don't know the exact numbers -- of refugees in the Gaza Strip. The numbers are not known because the only way of measurement is by ration cards, and we know that during all this period of eight years nobody ever died and only new people were born all the time, so the ration cards increased at quite some remarkable speed all the time, and a real census had never been taken, but we took the greatest care that none of these people should be touched or hurt in the slightest.

One of our prides is that during this whole campaign there was not a single Arab civilian casualty as far as is known to us, and we took good care that not only should this be so, but through the world press the world should learn about this because we are sure that this is one of the measurements by which we might be judged.

One thing is clear: that if our hopes will come true and we shall not have only fought a successful action



in the Sinai Desert and liquidated about half of the Egyptian forces and a great deal of their fire power and their armor, but if this will mean a toppling over of their imperialism and their aggressive ambitions, that this might be the beginning of a new era of a different orientation in the Middle East, of great possibilities for us of building and continued what we did, and mind you, during all this week every day planes came in with immigrants from Poland. The very plane that took us three out few, after refueling from Paris, into Vienna to bring a planeload like the one that some of you saw, back into Lydda, and they are doing this shuttle service a few times a day. El Al has given up all its transatlantic flights to service passengers coming in and out of Israel and taking care of immigrants who come out of Poland and into Vienna, and are continuing this arrangement as you saw functioning about ten or twelve days ago.

But all this and the things that are happening in Eastern Europe mean, of course, the needs will not be smaller but possibly greater. Such an action as we took in the long run will be a relief because we hope -- I hope Colonel Karni won't be angry if I say this -- for smaller



military budgets in the future, but these days the military budgets have grown, the burdens on the government of Israel are greater. It can take even less care of the other side of the picture than I have just mentioned.

We are here to tell you this. Nachman Karni and Abe will tell you other sides of the story and we are all here to answer questions, if you are interest.

Thank you very much. (Applause)

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Colonel Karni, the floor is yours.

COLONEL KARNI: Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, it is a great privilege to stand here in front of you tonight as an emissary of the troops and the general staff of the Israeli Army, and to tell you briefly about the successful completion of Operation Sinai.

I would not like to have any record made of my remarks.

(Discussion off the record)

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: I don't know whether all of you will remember how Colonel Karni outlined this battle for us in its military framework on the map, but I don't think anybody will ever forget how he told the story in



terms of his prejudices against the air force and in terms of his prejudices the other way, in favor of the people, himself included, who were out on the front until just a very few hours ago. I hardly think that we have expressed to him and perhaps through him our feelings toward him and toward his comrades who did what they did. Applause can't do it, words can't do it. I think he has to take it from us from the heart, that we feel he helped us share in what they did. For that we thank him. (Applause)

I hear that there are questions and, as Teddy said before, they would be willing to answer questions. I think we shall hear from Abe Harmon, and when Abe is done, then if we have any questions we can lump them all together and sort them out and they can run through all the questions at one time.

Abe, again, as a friend of ours, -- it has been many months since he left us. He has been very busy. We welcome him back to the family tonight. Abe Harmon.

(Applause)

MR. HARMON: Thanks very much, Herb. Friends, like Teddy, I like to greet a lot of people who left Jerusalem only a very short time ago and I would like to



say a word or two about the attitude of the civilian population in Israel, and I just want to say this with a considerable amount of satisfaction. As Teddy pointed out, this whole operation had to be subtle. I think, as Nachman pointed out, one of the great factors in the speed of the operation, in its success and in the comparatively very small casualties involved on our side was that we used the factor of surprise, and that meant that the civilian population had to be kept in complete doubt as to what was going on.

On the Friday, last Friday a week back, people began to get the call-up. As you know, our army is, for the most part, a reserve army -- only a very small standing army -- and they were not given any particular ideas as to what it was all about, and it wasn't possible to write anything about this in the press or use the radio, but the word sort of drifted around and the call-up affected everybody. Everybody, I think, had someone in his family or somebody at his place of work who was called up. Something was going on but what, nobody knew.

When the thing broke out on Monday afternoon, the civilian population got the first news at seven o'clock in



evening, and didn't quite know what was going on. The army had to maintain the element of surprise, as Nachman pointed out, with the result that the civilian population got the news at the last minute. We heard one or two names but we didn't know what the development was because the whole idea, as we have heard, was to keep the enemy guessing.

It was pretty tough on people who had boys in the army and daughters in the army or friends, not to be knowing quite what was going on, knowing that the Sinai is a big place and lots of Egyptians are there and how were our boys faring. With the Egyptians blazing forth all the time, the stories about tremendous losses to us and Ramat Avid (?) in flames and that Tel Aviv was in flames, and sitting in Jerusalem you don't really know -- maybe it's true, maybe it's not true -- who knows?

Then the impact of all this on civilian life. I must say that throughout the whole of this last week the amazing thing was the dead calm in the country among the civilian population. My kids went to school every morning throughout this week at a quarter to eight, left their home as usual. When I got back at sometimes three, sometimes four in the afternoon to see what was happening, I



found them down in the street playing with their friends as usual, with the dog, and so on. The only two days in which the civilian population felt anything this last week was the heavy impact on the civilian transport, because a lot of it had to be pulled out of normal service in order to help in the transport of troops and supplies for the army, so the public transport in the cities and between the cities was gravely affected, but apart from that inconvenience the only other inconvenience the civilian population suffered from was the inconvenience of the blackout, and that too was a remarkable thing.

The radio announced it, I think, about two o'clock in the afternoon, that the blackout would be enforced that night, and blackout was enforced that night and was complete, and somehow or other people managed to drape their windows with blankets and go to all kinds of makeshift. It was a highly disciplined, instinctive calm and mature response. There was a great feeling of relief, I would say, that something was being done to smash this hypocritical facade of an armistice agreement with Egypt which had been used for eight years as a cloak to hide Egyptian aggression against Israel. There was that element of relief.



There was an element of elation, of course, when the first news came in of the army's great advance and great victories, but it was always accompanied by anxiety for what was happening to the boys, how many of them were being killed for this, and also by a sense of mature responsibility that this was a colossal enterprise and perhaps a decisive enterprise for our future as a whole.

I think that our civilian population stood up this week as a very mature population and this was a very comforting thought, to know it and to see it, and I saw it from the vantage point of Jerusalem which is, of course, one of the most difficult of our cities. It is a border city, as you know, and it was always in the danger that maybe, well, the Jordanians were in a pact with the Egyptians and there was Jerusalem sitting right on the border, and maybe the Jordanians were going to blast us to see how this city of Jerusalem, which has a very large immigrant population, right on the border -- the ma'aboroth Talpiot which is right on the border and all kinds of other border areas in the city -- how there was no panic. The only trace of panic was that because of the transport difficulty on the third day. It was rather difficult to get



certain food supplies in the stores. The food stores were in the city in central warehouses but there wasn't the transport to distribute the stuff and that was the difficulty, that it took about a day and a half or two days to get over, but as soon as that was gotten out of the way, not even that element of panic existed.

I think that this showed that when the chips are down, this is a united community that knows where it is heading and knows what it needs in order to live, and is absolutely self-disciplined, which is much more important than being disciplined from above. I am told that that was the picture right across the country. I saw it in Jerusalem. I saw once again this fantastic capacity for improvisation which our people have. Even El Al went right to the heights of this thing. They operate well when it is difficult. When it's easy, it's not so good. When it's difficult, this little company does something about it. Three planes out a day, three planes in a day, every plane coming back to Israel chock full, without a seat empty, of Israelis coming back to be in this thing, students leaving in the middle of term in Europe and people who had been on mission cutting their missions short, getting back, and



working the thing. This aspect also came out very much to the fore in the last week.

What has this thing achieved? As Teddy brought out and as Nachman described very graphically, it has accomplished a major objective, not the only objective but a major objective, of rooting out the aggressive power of the Egyptians, and from all the evidence, doing it in the nick of time. God knows what would have happened had this reaction to this continuous and growing Egyptian aggression not come at that precise moment. Certainly the striking power of Egyptian has been broken as a result of what the defense army of Israel did in a period of only five days.

I think another thing that is accomplished is that if people have eyes to see, they must have drawn from this the conclusion not merely that Israel is there to stay in the Middle East, but that the capacity of Israel to protect its rights and to defend its existence is a permanent element of the Middle Eastern situation, and to put it quite bluntly, that in Israel they are dealing with a country which is not going to allow itself to be made an exception of when it comes to its right to defend its existence. That's been proved and I hope that that lesson is



going to sink right in to anybody who is making plans for the future of the Middle East.

Those are two very solid accomplishments. There are still plenty of risks and there is a long way to go. One risk which is pretty obvious is the whole problem of Jordan, and we don't know yet -- there are three alternative risks connected with Jordan, it seems. First, maybe Jordan itself will attack. That seems rather unlikely.

Second, that the Iraqis may sweep into Jordan in substantial forces, which as far as we know hasn't yet happened. If they did, I think notice has been served to the world by Israel that Israel would have to take a very serious view of that, because Iraq is a country which has not even made an armistice agreement with Israel and whose aggressive intentions as far as Israel are concerned have been made abundantly clear by them all over the years and very recently.

The third possibility might be -- and again, it is difficult at this moment to appraise the little news that we have on this -- that the Syrians may go into Jordan, and there has been some news that this may have begun and that they may go into Jordan for the objective of using



Jordan as a much more convenient jumping-off point for an attack on Israel than their own country, because from certain points in Jordan, as you know, they are only within ten miles of the Mediterranean Sea and could cut off Israel at its very narrow waistline.

Well, this is the situation obviously that we are keeping our eyes on very closely indeed, and it is a risk which still faces us.

There is another risk and that is this: that Nasser is still in Egypt. He hasn't fallen, and there is a risk that there might be a thoroughly misguided international action that might have the effect of enabling Nasser to hang on. It is inconceivable to us that anyone interested in undermining aggression or in protecting the interests of democracy or freedom or in promoting the cause of peace should have any interest whatsoever in any kind of action that could conceivably have the effect of enabling the Nasser regime in Egypt to hang on. Now, that is, of course, a risk that still lies ahead of us.

But the major problem, of course, is, where do we go from this point on? The action in the Sinai has had these positive achievements and the results that I have



mentioned, and in addition to them, should have taught the lesson that if you are looking for peace, then strike aggression down as soon as it raises its head, because that is the best time to do it, and then you can do it at the cheapest cost, and the people who have been acquiescing in Egyptian aggression in the Middle East for the last eight years have now seen that the whole appeasement policy wasn't worth the candle, because it would have been much easier to do it eight years ago than it even has been these last five or six days.

But the major question is, what lies ahead? This is the central international question facing the world today, if not at least facing the United Nations which is meeting in this city. There is one view that you ought to turn the clock back and go back to what is called the armistice system, as though the armistice system were an ideal. There is not a word in the charter of the United Nations about the armistice system as an ideal. The United Nations charter talks about peace is an ideal, not about armistice. It is peace. That is what the United Nations is there to protect. That is what the United Nations is there to advance and achieve -- peace, not armistice.



What was this armistice system to which some countries are now inviting us to return? It is a system of no relations between countries. It has been a cloak behind which aggression went on against Israel. How could we return to that? There is only one alternative to that absolutely inconceivable proposal, and that is an advance to peace. We've got to move forward to peace and we oughtn't to be in a position where we have to tell this to the United Nations. It is an absurd mockery of the ideals of the United Nations that throughout these last eight years anybody who had the temerity to mention the word "peace" in relation to the Arab-Israel problem was looked on as though he were using bad language.

There's got to be a move towards peace, but how? And here again there is a new philosophy developing which doesn't exist anywhere in the charter of the United Nations, a philosophy that in order to have peace between two neighboring countries you've got to put up an iron wall between them. Is that the vision of peace? The charter of the United Nations enshrines a constitution of principles aimed at creating bridges between countries, not of dividing them. The iron curtain isn't an ideal. It is the very thing



which the United Nations has got to break down in order to have a system of law in the world.

And if it was said recently that in order to have peace you've got to have law, then it is at least as true to say that in order to have law you've got to have peace, and all our experience of the last eight years is one continuous lesson in that proposition's truth.

That is the question. Our position on this is clear. Taking a decision and action like this isn't easy, and it involves risks that you have heard of from Nachman of people's lives, and let me emphasize what he referred to because I don't know whether it is clear enough yet -- that this Operation Sinai could have been a whole lot easier in the Gaza Strip had it been approached by us as an operation of total war. It wasn't because it was a military operation with the soldiers hamstrung when they went in by the strictest orders, that their objective was to strike at the Egyptian military power and at nothing else, and that aspect of it is worth bearing in mind.

Our position is that there can't be a retreat because it would be a wretched and purposeless and self-defeating retreat to an old armistice system which, in the way it was abused and misapplied by the Egyptians in the



last eight years was a running sore in the Middle East and a constant menace to our very existence.

There's got to be an advance and there's got to be a step towards peace, and there are certain binding tests of peace as far as we are concerned. One, that we are as entitled to freedom of movement as anybody else, and that there can no longer be tolerable a situation in which you have the application on the international scale of that kind of reservation that used to be always included in the legislation of the Czarist empire. "Everybody has rights," it used to be written in their laws, "except the Jews." Well, there can't be a situation in which everybody can move through Suez except the Jews. "Anybody can move through the Gulf of Aqaba except the Jews. Everybody can defend himself against aggression and attack except the Jews." This can't go. This is a decisive test of peace in our part of the world.

Another decisive test of peace is that you must be relieved of the threat and constant menace of attack and, of course, it would be good if you could have decent relations, but there must be a modus vivendi and it's got to be mutual and reciprocal, and it's got to have these two things



in it: freedom of movement and relieving us from an objective situation that menaces our existence by its threat.

This kind of advance to peace is within the power of the United Nations to achieve. If it is looking to the principles of its charter and to its purpose, which is to achieve peace by effective relations between states and not by separating states, but by creating a pressure that will force them to come into peaceful relations with each other as is their duty under the charter.

Just a couple of things in conclusion. First, while all this has been going on, the Executive of the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem last week was considering the business of immigration, and you heard from Teddy that we decided that the aliyah out of Poland has got to go on. The people are getting exit visas, the transports out of Poland are being organized. If we don't siphon the people out of Vienna -- and the Austrians are doing us a good turn in letting them come in -- then that menaces a continuous operation of this movement, so the aliyah from Poland has been coming in. It was 800 in October. The budget for November is 1,200, and when we passed through Paris yesterday we had the opportunity of meeting the Israeli Minister



to Warsaw who was in Paris for consultations for a couple of days, and who told us that the movement of granting visas and travel documents is continuing and that we have to do everything we conceivably can to keep the movement going.

We have to stop for a short time the movement of people out of Marseilles, not for security reasons but because, as a result of the mobilization and the big movement of the army, a lot of our people handling immigrant traffic and moving them to the development centers and so on, were called up and some of our houses were temporarily occupied as billets by the army. But this is a situation that we have already tackled with army cooperation. Some of the people after the first two or three days of excitement have been released from the army and are back at the job.

At least two ships, to my knowledge, are on the way with immigrants from Marseilles and I think that within a day or two more ships will be in -- we will be in a position to move more ships out.

The last thing I want to mention is a very "tachlis" type of thing, and that is the impact of this on the coun-



try's economy and on the Agency's economy. I won't say too much about it because I think it is a fairly obvious kind of thing, like this eats up money. Before we left in the early hours of Saturday morning we saw Eshkol. He is in a very curious dilemma today. He doesn't know whether to be pleased or to be worried and he is both at the same time. He is waiting to see what the outcome will be, and when we said to him, "What do you think this is costing you," he said he doesn't know what to think. Certain things are tangible and definable -- how much they eat -- but how much they use and, above all, the indirect impact of this on the country's economy which is bound to be a very decisive thing, is an unknown factor, and what is also unknown is that you can't run an operation like this on the basis that you mobilize your reserves.

You let Nachman and his colleagues loose in the Sinai Desert for five days and then they finish it and then you can bring all the boys back. You've got to retain strength, particularly when you are facing risks like those that I have mentioned, about maybe Jordan and so on and so forth, so it may have to go on for a little time more, and this constitutes a very heavy pressure. It is one of the



things that you have to go into when you are trying to protect the most essential thing, which is life itself.

That is really all I have to say, except to re-echo what Teddy and Nachman have already said. I don't think that it can be said too often, and that is this: that in everything that we do in Israel, as you know, we have the wider ultimate Jewish purpose in mind and in heart, and it has been a source of more than mere encouragement to us that has lifted the morale of our people, to know that in moving forward towards that purpose, we have you with us all the time. (Applause)

(Continued on Page 33)



ADDRESS BY AVRAHAM HANNAH

Member, Jewish Agency Executive, Jerusalem

To The National Campaign Cabinet

of the United Jewish Appeal

Sunday, November 4, 1956

Waldorf Astoria Hotel, N. Y.

AMERICAN JEWISH  
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One of the great factors in the speed of the operation in the Sinai, in its success and in the comparatively very small casualties involved on our side was that we used the factor of surprise, and that meant that the civilian population had to be kept in complete doubt as to what was going on.

On the Friday, last Friday a week back, people began to get the call-up. As you know, our army is, for the most part, a reserve army -- only a very small standing army -- and they were not given any particular ideas as to what it was all about, and it wasn't possible to write anything about this in the press or use the radio, but the word sort of drifted around and the call-up affected everybody. Everybody, I think, had someone in his family or somebody at his place of work who was called up. Something was going on but what, nobody knew.

When the thing broke out on Monday afternoon, the civilian population got the first news at seven o'clock in the evening, and didn't quite know what was going on. The army had to maintain the element of surprise, with the result that the civilian population got the news at the last minute. We heard one or two names but we didn't know what the development was because the whole idea, as we have heard, was to keep the enemy guessing.

It was pretty tough on people who had boys in the army and daughters in the army or friends, not to be knowing quite what was going on, knowing that the Sinai is a big place and lots of Egyptians are there and how were our boys faring. With the Egyptians blasing forth all the time, the stories about tremendous losses to us and Ramat David in flames and that Tel Aviv was in flames, and sitting in Jerusalem you don't really know -- maybe it's true, maybe it's not true -- who knows?

Then the impact of all this on civilian life. I must say that throughout the whole of this last week the amazing thing was the dead calm in the country among the civilian population. My kids went to school every morning throughout this week at a quarter to eight, left their home as usual. When I got back at sometimes three, sometimes four in the afternoon to see what was happening, I found them down in the street playing with their friends as usual, with the dog, and so on. The only two



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These are two very solid accomplishments. There are still plenty of risks and there is a long way to go. The major problem, of course, is, where do we go from this point on? The action in the Sinai has had positive achievements and the results that I have mentioned, and in addition to these, should have taught the lesson that if you are looking for peace, then strike aggression down as soon as it raises its head, because that is the best time to do it, and then you can do it at the cheapest cost, and the people who have been acquiescing in Egyptian aggression in the Middle East for the last eight years have now seen that the whole appeasement policy wasn't worth the candle, because it would have been much easier to do it eight years ago than it even has been these last five or six days.

But the major question is, what lies ahead? This is the central international question facing the world today, if not at least facing the United Nations which is meeting in this city. There is one view that you ought to turn the clock back and go back to what is called the armistice system, as though the armistice system were an ideal. There is not a word in the charter of the United Nations about the armistice system as an ideal. The United Nations charter talks about peace as an ideal, not about armistice. It is peace. That is what the United Nations is there to protect. That is what the United Nations is there to advance and achieve -- peace, not armistice.

What was this armistice system to which some countries are now inviting us to return? It is a system of no relations between countries. It has been a cloak behind which aggression went on against Israel. How could we return to that? There is only one alternative to that absolutely inconceivable proposal, and that is an advance to peace. We've got to move forward to peace and we oughtn't to be in a position where we have to tell this to the United Nations. It is an absurd mockery of the ideals of the United Nations that throughout these last eight years anybody who had the temerity to mention the word "peace" in relation to the Arab-Israel problem was looked on as though he were using bad language.



There's got to be a move towards peace, but how? And here again there is a new philosophy developing which doesn't exist anywhere in the charter of the United Nations, a philosophy that in order to have peace between twoneighboring countries you've got to put up an iron wall between them. Is that the vision of peace? The charter of the United Nations enshrines a constitution of principles aimed at creating bridges between countries, not of dividing them. The iron curtain isn't an ideal. It is the very thing which the United Nations has got to break down in order to have a system of law in the world.

And if it was said recently that in order to have peace you've got to have law, then it is at least as true to say that in order to have law you've got to have peace, and all our experience of the last eight years is one continuous lesson in that proposition's truth.

That is the question. Our position on this is clear. Taking a decision and action like this isn't easy, and it involves risks. I don't know whether it is clear enough yet -- that this Operation Sinai could have been a whole lot easier in the Gaza Strip had it been approached by us as an operation of total war. It wasn't because it was a military operation with the soldiers hamstrung when they went in by the strictest orders, that their objective was to strike at the Egyptian military power and at nothing else, and that aspect of it is worth bearing in mind.

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It was pretty tough on people who had boys in the army and daughters in the army or friends, not to be knowing quite what was going on, knowing that the Sinai is a big place and lots of Egyptians are there and how were our boys faring. With the Egyptians blasing forth all the time, the stories about tremendous losses to us and Ramat David in flames and that Tel Aviv was in flames, and sitting in Jerusalem you don't really know -- maybe it's true, maybe it's not true -- who knows?

Then the impact of all this on civilian life. I must say that throughout the whole of this last week the amazing thing was the dead calm in the country among the civilian population. My kids went to school every morning throughout this week at a quarter to eight, left their home as usual. When I got back at sometimes three, sometimes four in the afternoon to see what was happening, I found them down in the street playing with their friends as usual, with the dog, and so on. The only two



days in which the civilian population felt anything this last week was the heavy impact on the civilian transport, because a lot of it had to be pulled out of normal service in order to help in the transport of troops and supplies for the army, so the public transport in the cities and between the cities was gravely affected, but apart from that inconvenience the only other inconvenience the civilian population suffered from was the inconvenience of the blackout, and that too was a remarkable thing.

The radio announced it, I think, about two o'clock in the afternoon, that the blackout would be enforced that night, and blackout was enforced that night and was complete, and somehow or other people managed to drape their windows with blankets and go to all kinds of makeshift. It was a highly disciplined, instinctive calm and mature response. There was a great feeling of relief, I would say, that something was being done to smash this hypocritical facade of an armistice agreement with Egypt which had been used for eight years as a cloak to hide Egyptian aggression against Israel. There was that element of relief.

There was an element of elation, of course, when the first news came in of the army's great advance and great victories, but it was always accompanied by anxiety for what was happening to the boys, how many of them were being killed for this, and also by a sense of mature responsibility that this was a colossal enterprise and perhaps a decisive enterprise for our future as a whole.

I think that our civilian population stood up this week as a very mature population and this was a very comforting thought, to know it and to see it, and I saw it from the vantage point of Jerusalem which is, of course, one of the most difficult of our cities. It is a border city, as you know, and it was always in the danger that maybe, well, the Jordanians were in a pact with the Egyptians and there was Jerusalem sitting right on the border, and maybe the Jordanians were going to blast us to see how this city of Jerusalem, which has a very large immigrant population, right on the border - the ma'aboroth Talpiot which is right on the border and all



kinds of other border areas in the city -- how there was no panic. The only trace of panic was that because of the transport difficulty on the third day. It was rather difficult to get certain food supplies in the stores. The food stores were in the city in central warehouses but there wasn't the transport to distribute the stuff and that was the difficulty, that it took about a day and a half or two days to get over, but as soon as that was gotten out of the way, not even that element of panic existed.

I think that this showed that when the chips are down, this is a united community that knows where it is heading and knows that it needs in order to live, and is absolutely self-disciplined from above. I am told that was the picture right across the country. I saw it in Jerusalem. I saw once again this fantastic capacity for improvisation which our people have. Even El Al went right to the heights of this thing. They operate well when it is difficult. When it's easy, it's not so good. When it's difficult, this little company does something about it. Three planes out a day, three planes in a day, every plane coming back to Israel chock full, without a seat empty, of Israelis coming back to be in this thing, students leaving in the middle of term in Europe and people who had been on mission cutting their missions short, getting back, and working the thing. This aspect also came out very much to the fore in the last week.

What has this thing achieved? It has accomplished a major objective, not the only objective but a major objective, of rooting out the aggressive power of the Egyptians, and from all the evidence, doing it in the nick of time. God knows what would have happened had this reaction to this continuous and growing Egyptian aggression not come at that precise moment. Certainly the striking power of Egyptian has been broken as a result of what the defense army of Israel did in a period of only five days.

I think another thing that is accomplished is that if people have eyes to see, they must have drawn from this the conclusion not merely that Israel is there to stay in the Middle East, but that the capacity of Israel to protect its rights and to defend its existence is a permanent element of the Middle Eastern situation, and to put it



quite bluntly, that in Israel they are dealing with a country which is not going to allow itself to be made an exception of when it comes to its right to defend its existence. That's been proved and I hope that that lesson is going to sink right in to anybody who is making plans for the future of the Middle East.

Those are two very solid accomplishments. There are still plenty of risks and there is a long way to go. The major problem, of course, is, where do we go from this point on? The action in the Sinai has had positive achievements and the results that I have mentioned, and in addition to these, should have taught the lesson that if you are looking for peace, then strike aggression down as soon as it raises its head, because that is the best time to do it, and then you can do it at the cheapest cost, and the people who have been acquiescing in Egyptian aggression in the Middle East for the last eight years have now seen that the whole appeasement policy wasn't worth the candle, because it would have been much easier to do it eight years ago than it even has been these last five or six days.

But the major question is, what lies ahead? This is the central international question facing the world today, if not at least facing the United Nations which is meeting in this city. There is one view that you ought to turn the clock back and go back to what is called the armistice system, as though the armistice system were an ideal. There is not a word in the charter of the United Nations about the armistice system as an ideal. The United Nations charter talks about peace as an ideal, not about armistice. It is peace. That is what the United Nations is there to protect. That is what the United Nations is there to preserve and achieve -- peace, not armistice.

What was this armistice system to which some countries are now inviting us to return? It is a system of no relations between countries. It has been a cloak behind which aggression went on against Israel. How could we return to that? There is only one alternative to that absolutely inconceivable proposal, and that is an advance to peace. We've got to move forward to peace and we oughtn't to be in a position where we have to tell this to the United Nations. It is an absurd mockery of the ideals of the United Nations that throughout these last eight years anybody who had the temerity to mention the word "peace" in relation to the Arab-Israel problem was locked on as though he were using bad language.



There's got to be a move towards peace, but how? And here again there is a new philosophy developing which doesn't exist anywhere in the charter of the United Nations, a philosophy that in order to have peace between two neighboring countries you've got to put up an iron wall between them. Is that the vision of peace? The charter of the United Nations enshrines a constitution of principles aimed at creating bridges between countries, not of dividing them. The iron curtain isn't an ideal. It is the very thing which the United Nations has got to break down in order to have a system of law in the world.

And if it was said recently that in order to have peace you've got to have law, then it is at least as true to say that in order to have law you've got to have peace, and all our experience of the last eight years is one continuous lesson in that proposition's truth.

That is the question. Our position on this is clear. Taking a decision and action like this isn't easy, and it involves risks. I don't know whether it is clear enough yet — that this Operation Sinai could have been a whole lot easier in the Gaza Strip had it been approached by us as an operation of total war. It wasn't because it was a military operation with the soldiers hunkering when they went in by the strictest orders, that their objective was to strike at the Egyptian military power and at nothing else, and that aspect of it is worth bearing in mind.

Our position is that there can't be a retreat because it would be a wretched and purposeless and self-defeating retreat to an old armistice system which, in the way it was abused and misapplied by the Egyptians in the last eight years was a running sore in the Middle East and a constant menace to our very existence.

There's got to be an advance and there's got to be a step towards peace, and there are certain binding tests of peace as far as we are concerned. One, that we are as entitled to freedom of movement as anybody else, and that there can no longer be tolerable a situation in which you have the application on the international scale of that kind of reservation that used to be always included in the legislation of the Kaiser's empire. "Everybody has rights," it used to be written in their laws, "except the Jews." Well, there can't be a situation in which everybody can move



through Suez except the Jews. "Anybody can move through the Gulf of Agaba except the Jews. Everybody can defend himself against aggression and attack except the Jews." This can't go. This is a decisive test of peace in our part of the world.

Another decisive test of peace is that you must be relieved of the threat and constant menace of attack and, of course, it would be good if you could have decent relations, but there must be a modus vivendi and it's got to be mutual and reciprocal, and it's got to have these two things in it: freedom of movement, and relieving us from an objective situation that menaces our existence by its threat.

This kind of advance to peace is within the power of the United Nations to achieve. If it is looking to the principles of its charter and to its purpose, which is to achieve peace by effective relations between states and not by separating states, but by creating a pressure that will force them to come into peaceful relations with each other as is their duty under the charter.

Just a couple of things in conclusion. First, while all this has been going on, the Executive of the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem last week was considering the business of immigration, and we decided that the aliyah out of Poland has got to go on. The people are getting exit visas, the transports out of Poland are being organized. If we don't siphon the people out of Vienna -- and the Austrians are doing us a good turn in letting them come in -- then that menaces a continuous operation of this movement, so the aliyah from Poland has been going in. It was 800 in October. The budget for November is 1,200, and when we passed through Paris yesterday we had the opportunity of meeting the Israeli Minister to Warsaw who was in Paris for consultations for a couple of days, and who told us that the movement of granting visas and travel documents is continuing and that we have to do everything we conceivably can to keep the movement going.

We have to stop for a short time the movement of people out of Marseilles, not for security reasons but because, as a result of the mobilization and the big movement of the army, a lot of our people handling immigrant traffic and moving them to the development centers and so on, were called up and some of our houses were temporarily



occupied as billets by the army. But this is a situation that we have already tackled with army cooperation. Some of the people after the first two or three days of excitement have been released from the army and are back at the job.

At least two ships, to my knowledge, are on the way with immigrants from Marseilles and I think that within a day or two more ships will be in -- we will be in a position to move more ships out.

The last thing I want to mention is a very "tactical" type of thing, and that is the impact of this on the country's economy and on the Agency's economy. I won't say too much about it because I think it is a fairly obvious kind of thing, like this eats up money. Before we left in the early hours of Saturday morning we saw Rabinovitch. He is in a very curious dilemma today. He doesn't know whether to be pleased or to be worried and he is both at the same time. He is waiting to see what the outcome will be, and when we said to him, "What do you think this is costing you," he said he doesn't know what to think. Certain things are tangible and definable -- how much they eat -- but how much they use and, above all, the indirect impact of this on the country's economy which is bound to be a very decisive thing, is an unknown factor, and what is also unknown is that you can't run an operation like this on the basis that you mobilize your reserves.

You've got to retain strength, particularly when you are facing risks like these that I have mentioned, about maybe Jordan and so on and so forth, so it may have to go on for a little time more, and this constitutes a very heavy pressure. It is one of the things that you have to go into when you are trying to protect the most essential thing, which is life itself.

I don't think that it can be said too often, and that is this: that in everything that we do in Israel as you know, we have the vivid ultimate Jewish purpose in mind and in heart, and it has been a source of more than mere encouragement to us that has lifted the morale of our people, to know that in moving forward towards that purpose, we have you with us all the time.



ADDRESS BY AVRAHAM HADSHAN

Member, Jewish Agency Executive, Jerusalem

To The National Campaign Cabinet

of the United Jewish Appeal

Sunday, November 4, 1956

Waldorf Astoria Hotel, N. Y.

AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES





One of the great factors in the speed of the operation in the Sinai, in its success and in the comparatively very small casualties involved on our side was that we used the factor of surprise, and that meant that the civilian population had to be kept in complete doubt as to what was going on.

On the Friday, last Friday a week back, people began to get the call-up. As you know, our army is, for the most part, a reserve army -- only a very small standing army -- and they were not given any particular ideas as to what it was all about, and it wasn't possible to write anything about this in the press or use the radio, but the word sort of drifted around and the call-up affected everybody. Everybody, I think, had someone in his family or somebody at his place of work who was called up. Something was going on but what, nobody knew.

When the thing broke out on Monday afternoon, the civilian population got the first news at seven o'clock in the evening, and didn't quite know what was going on. The army had to maintain the element of surprise, with the result that the civilian population got the news at the last minute. We heard one or two names but we didn't know what the development was because the whole idea, as we have heard, was to keep the enemy guessing.

It was pretty tough on people who had boys in the army and daughters in the army or friends, not to be knowing quite what was going on, knowing that the Sinai is a big place and lots of Egyptians are there and how were our boys faring. With the Egyptians blaring forth all the time, the stories about tremendous losses to us and Ramat David in flames and that Tel Aviv was in flames, and sitting in Jerusalem you don't really know -- maybe it's true, maybe it's not true -- who knows?

Then the impact of all this on civilian life. I must say that throughout the whole of this last week the amazing thing was the dead calm in the country among the civilian population. My kids went to school every morning throughout this week at a quarter to eight, left their home as usual. When I got back at sometimes three, sometimes four in the afternoon to see what was happening, I found them down in the street playing with their friends as usual, with the dog, and so on. The only two



days in which the civilian population felt anything this last week was the heavy impact on the civilian transport, because a lot of it had to be pulled out of normal service in order to help in the transport of troops and supplies for the army, so the public transport in the cities and between the cities was gravely affected, but apart from that inconvenience the only other inconvenience the civilian population suffered from was the inconvenience of the blackout, and that too was a reasonable thing.

The radio announced it, I think, about two o'clock in the afternoon, that the blackout would be enforced that night, and blackout was enforced that night and was complete, and somehow or other people managed to drape their windows with blankets and go to all kinds of makeshift. It was a highly disciplined, instinctive calm and mature response. There was a great feeling of relief, I would say, that something was being done to smash this hypocritical facade of an armistice agreement with Egypt which had been used for eight years as a cloak to hide Egyptian aggression against Israel. There was that element of relief.

There was an element of elation, of course, when the first news came in of the army's great advance and great victories, but it was always accompanied by anxiety for what was happening to the boys, how many of them were being killed for this, and also by a sense of mature responsibility that this was a colossal enterprise and perhaps a decisive enterprise for our future as a whole.

I think that our civilian population stood up this week as a very mature population and this was a very comforting thought, to know it and to see it, and I saw it from the vantage point of Jerusalem which is, of course, one of the most difficult of our cities. It is a border city, as you know, and it was always in the danger that maybe, well, the Jordanians were in a pact with the Egyptians and there was Jerusalem sitting right on the border, and maybe the Jordanians were going to blast us to see how this city of Jerusalem, which has a very large immigrant population, right on the border - the Ma'aberoth Talpiot which is right on the border and all



kinds of other border areas in the city -- how there was no panic. The only trace of panic was that because of the transport difficulty on the third day. It was rather difficult to get certain food supplies in the stores. The food stores were in the city in central warehouses but there wasn't the transport to distribute the stuff and that was the difficulty, that it took about a day and a half or two days to get over, but as soon as that was gotten out of the way, not even that element of panic existed.

I think that this showed that when the chips are down, this is a united community that knows where it is heading and knows that it needs in order to live, and is absolutely self-disciplined from above. I am told that was the picture right across the country. I saw it in Jerusalem. I saw once again this fantastic capacity for improvisation which our people have. Even El Al went right to the heights of this thing. They operate well when it is difficult. When it's easy, it's not so good. When it's difficult, this little company does something about it. Three planes out a day, three planes in a day, every plane coming back to Israel chock full, without a seat empty, of Israelis coming back to be in this thing, students leaving in the middle of term in Europe and people who had been on mission cutting their missions short, getting back, and working the thing. This aspect also came out very much to the fore in the last week.

What has this thing achieved? It has accomplished a major objective, not the only objective but a major objective, of rooting out the aggressive power of the Egyptians, and from all the evidence, doing it in the nick of time. God knows what would have happened had this reaction to this continuous and growing Egyptian aggression not come at that precise moment. Certainly the striking power of Egyptian has been broken as a result of what the defense army of Israel did in a period of only five days.

I think another thing that is accomplished is that if people have eyes to see, they must have drawn from this the conclusion not merely that Israel is there to stay in the Middle East, but that the capacity of Israel to protect its rights and to defend its existence is a permanent element of the Middle Eastern situation, and to put it



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These are two very solid accomplishments. There are still plenty of risks and there is a long way to go. The major problem, of course, is, where do we go from this point on? The action in the Sinai has had positive achievements and the results that I have mentioned, and in addition to these, should have taught the lesson that if you are looking for peace, then strike aggression down as soon as it raises its head, because that is the best time to do it, and then you can do it at the cheapest cost, and the people who have been acquiescing in Egyptian aggression in the Middle East for the last eight years have now seen that the whole appeasement policy wasn't worth the candle, because it would have been much easier to do it eight years ago than it even has been these last five or six days.

But the major question is, what lies ahead? This is the central international question facing the world today, if not at least facing the United Nations which is meeting in this city. There is one view that you ought to turn the clock back and go back to what is called the armistice system, as though the armistice system were an ideal. There is not a word in the charter of the United Nations about the armistice system as an ideal. The United Nations charter talks about peace as an ideal, not about armistice. It is peace. That is what the United Nations is there to protect. That is what the United Nations is there to ~~protect~~ and achieve -- peace, not armistice.

What was this armistice system to which some countries are now inviting us to return? It is a system of no relations between countries. It has been a cloak behind which aggression went on against Israel. How could we return to that? There is only one alternative to that absolutely inconceivable proposal, and that is an advance to peace. We've got to move forward to peace and we oughtn't to be in a position where we have to tell this to the United Nations. It is an absurd mockery of the ideals of the United Nations that throughout these last eight years anybody who had the temerity to mention the word "peace" in relation to the Arab-Israel problem was looked on as though he were using bad language.



There's got to be a move towards peace, but how? And here again there is a new philosophy developing which doesn't exist anywhere in the charter of the United Nations, a philosophy that in order to have peace between two neighboring countries you've got to put up an iron wall between them. Is that the vision of peace? The charter of the United Nations enshrines a constitution of principles aimed at creating bridges between countries, not of dividing them. The iron curtain isn't an ideal. It is the very thing which the United Nations has got to break down in order to have a system of law in the world.

And if it was said recently that in order to have peace you've got to have law, then it is at least as true to say that in order to have law you've got to have peace, and all our experience of the last eight years is one continuous lesson in that proposition's truth.

That is the question. Our position on this is clear. Taking a decision and action like this isn't easy, and it involves risks. I don't know whether it is clear enough yet -- that this Operation Sinai could have been a whole lot easier in the Gaza Strip had it been approached by us as an operation of total war. It wasn't because it was a military operation with the soldiers hearing when they went in by the strictest orders, that their objective was to strike at the Egyptian military power and at nothing else, and that aspect of it is worth bearing in mind.

Our position is that there can't be a retreat because it would be a wretched and purposeless and self-defeating retreat to an old armistice system which, in the way it was abused and misapplied by the Egyptians in the last eight years was a running sore in the Middle East and a constant menace to our very existence.

There's got to be an advance and there's got to be a step towards peace, and there are certain binding tests of peace as far as we are concerned. One, that we are as entitled to freedom of movement as anybody else, and that there can no longer be tolerable a situation in which you have the application on the international scale of that kind of reservation that used to be always included in the legislation of the Gaivist empire. "Everybody has rights," it used to be written in their laws, "except the Jews." Well, there can't be a situation in which everybody can move



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