

MS-763, Box 72, Folder 5 Transcription

United Jewish Appeal updates. [sound cartridge]. 1988.

M1:

[00:00] All right, I don't know where that ended, but the next big theme, I believe, has got to be not to let American Jewry forget North Africa. I could understand why you're so interested in stressing Eastern European Jewry, and that's perfectly OK. But I think that if you pipe down on the Moroccan, North African theme, you're going to make a big psychological mistake. And you may lose a good deal of ground that was very carefully built up between, let's say, 1953 and 1955, 1956, on the subject of the importance of getting the Jews out of Morocco.

Now, [01:00] it's quite likely that it is possible to make your division of labor, I don't know, the JDC's in Morocco, and maybe you can engender through them a good deal of publicity about the real conditions of Jews in Morocco, or find some of other way of doing it, but I think that it would be a grave mistake to let American Jewry forget the situation of the Jews in Morocco.

Thirdly, I'd like to say this: that somehow or other -- and I don't think that this can be sloganized, or dramatized -- I

think it's got simply to be expounded on an intelligent level to intelligent people -- that if anybody thinks that with the means that have been put at our disposal, in 1957, we were really able to absorb the 100,000 Jews who would have arrived in Israel in 1957, they're crazy. It's not going to be that way. [02:00] I think Al just mentioned the (inaudible) effects that it's having on our economy, the big economic headaches that it's causing the government, the backlog of housing that it will generate, and particularly the backlog in employment possibilities that will have to be created. It may take us years before we create, at the present rate of investment that's going on in Israel. All these things have got to be put across.

Just mention one point, [Dan?]. There's a grave psychological problem in this country, at the moment, that may swell into one of the major political issues in the country, and that is the problem of discrimination [03:00] in favor of the immigrant that comes in today, and against the immigrant who came in three or four or five years ago, and who's still living in a *ma'abara*. A couple of weeks ago, we had a riot, almost, in Bnei Brak where there's a *ma'abara* of *pahonim*, I think, where people have been living for about three or four years. And just on the border of this *ma'abara*, we are today, are building new houses -- proper

houses, so-called -- but not *pahonim* -- for new immigrants who are expected in the next few months, and naturally the residents of the *ma'abara* regard this as being discrimination of the worst kind. From their point of view, they're absolutely right.

Well, even to dispose of *pahonim* we need to build 20,000 housing units in the next two years, and even that [04:00] will not finally dispose of the inferior housing of immigrants who came in five and six years ago, and are still living to this day in wooden huts. You've got the problem of absorbing new immigrants in the *kibbutzim*, putting up houses there to absorb immigrants who have already arrived in the country. These are many indications of what will happen to be done, not only in 1958, but for many years afterwards, to absorb the 100,000 who came in 1957.

One of the big troubles -- and I don't know how you get 'round it -- in the UJA campaigning is this. When you make a slogan of \$100 million for a special emergency fund, and even though you only end up with 31, and you regard that objectively as a being a damn good effort, and you say it is, [05:00] and it is, the public thinks that they have 100 million. The 70 million is --

we need it. Because we don't have it. We could have used it. And because we didn't get it, we'll be needing it until we eventually get it. (break in audio)

M2:

On the way down from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv, one afternoon -- one *Shabbos* afternoon -- we picked up three very lovely young girls in an army uniform. And the three of them, in the back of the car, really represented a cross-section of the new generation of Israel. One of them was tall, and dark, and two of them were short and light -- one of the red-headed. [06:00] Of the three, all of them were born in Israel. All of them were about 18 years. All of them had just begun their service in the army. The father of one was a Yemenite. The father of the second was born in Russia, and the father of the third was born in Germany. The German parents had come here in 1936. The Russian parents had come here about that time. The Yemenite parents had come about 25 years ago. Here you had three generations of people from three separate parts of the Earth, who had come here for three different reasons, and yet here were their three kids -- all looking different, still, even though it was the second generation -- yet making up one common front, because they were very clear in explaining that while their parents might not

have understood each other -- and might still not -- if their three sets of parents were to meet, still the three girls, all born [07:00] in the country, understood each other very well, and felt completely as though they were one common population, and therefore the country would have one common future, as soon as the differences between the parents had been ironed out in the successive generation.

It was really a coincidental and impressive demonstration of this kind of belief we have that the generations will merge their differences, and that out of this melting part will come one common population. We talked for about an hour and a half on the way down, just ironing out this one problem, and it was an encouraging thing to feel that it's not just theoretical, but that it's absolutely practical to say that there will be a melting of the strains of the population into one population, which [08:00] feels itself to be homogeneous, and that's the important thing. (break in audio)

Somebody told the story of the little boy who came from Poland recently who hadn't learned how to speak Hebrew, and who was always in trouble with his classmates because he didn't understand them, but then when he caught on to what was happening here in Israel, he coined a phrase, which describes

the whole situation. He said, "Never mind. In Poland they understood me, but they wouldn't play with me. Here, they don't understand me, but they do play with me. I'd rather have it this way, [09:00] because here I think they really do understand me." (break in audio)

I went out to Bat Yam, which is outside of Tel Aviv, south of Jaffa, to see a section of about 500 of the asbestos houses which have mostly Poles living in them. They are not bad. They're a compromise between a permanent dwelling and a tin hut. They've got several good years of life in them. They're clean.

Most of these are brand new. Water is piped inside. The conduits for electricity are even laid in, although there won't be any electricity inside the huts for a couple of months. The sanitary facilities at the moment are outside, but inside of a very few weeks, they'll be brought in. The piping is already inside the houses.

I must say that the condition of the people was [10:00] not bad, and that the amount of goods which they had with them was not bad. For instance, in the first three houses into which we went, two of them had pianos. Three of them had sewing machines. One of them had a refrigerator. One of them had about a dozen oil paintings hanging on the wall. Two of them had two

bicycles each. In other words, there are some consumers' goods here, which obviously have been brought in, either for liquidation, or in the event that the people can hold on to them, for greater luxury later on in life. In either case, they represent a substantial asset. You can't say that the people are empty-handed.

The burning question among them, of course, is work. Once they get work, they're satisfied. Without work, they grumble, and their period of adjustment and orientation simply takes longer.

[11:00] There is a difference between the Poles and the Egyptians, and all other immigrants such as Moroccans, or Yemenite, or Iraqi, on the question of work. The latter group -- the North Africans -- will go to the labor exchange and take work which is given to them, whether it's afforestation, or roadwork, or ditch-digging, or whatever it might be. The Poles are more particular, and they try to get work in their trade. This means that for long periods of time, they appear to be unemployed, and are unemployed. They got a little something to live on -- to hold out on -- that's true. But rather than take just any ordinary work, they prefer to wait and see if they can hit in and find something in their own lines. This gives the

impression that large numbers of them are unemployed, and this also makes for the possibility of they have letters going back to Poland where they say that there's [12:00] no work in the country. Constant efforts are made to get them straightened out on this, at least psychologically.

But to come back to the question of dwellings, this style of housing -- this asbestos proposition which can be put up in six weeks -- and which costs about 23 or 2500 pounds a unit, which includes all of the public institutions of a community, such as the schools, the cultural center, the clinic, and it even includes the roads. They'll let you take all of the major capital outlays for community, and you advertise them over the cost of each dwelling in the community. You come to a figure of 2300 or 2500 pounds per dwelling, which compares with 6,000 pounds for a permanent place. This type of settlement gets the name of *shikun zmani*, which means a temporary [13:00] *shikun*, and they don't use the word *ma'abara* for it, nor should they, because it's considerably better than a *ma'abara*. This is in distinction to a *shikun keva*, which means a fixed, permanent type of *shikun*.

Here at Bat Yam, for instance, the length of time they'll probably have to stay in these temporary asbestos houses is no more than a year or a year and a half, because on the spot nearby, there are being built 600 permanent houses in a *shikun keva*, and these people are going to be lucky, because they'll be able to get right into them.

Just had a conversation this morning with Mr. Ben-Gurion, and it was very wonderful, except that it was fouled up by the presence of Kollek. If he hadn't been there, it would have been very good. I must say, the old man looked fine. A little bit abstract. I had a feeling his mind was wandering off on other things, but he came to life when he talked about the question of a large-scale immigration [14:00] from Russia. Apparently this was the main thing that he was thinking about. Either he put a theoretical question to me, or he was really serious, because he said, "What would you do in America if we got 300 or 400,000 Russian Jews in one year?" I tried to ask him if he was being serious or being theoretical, and he said, no, he had had a talk with the ambassador in Moscow, who had said to him that there was a chance that if anything were to happen, the Russians might say, "Good. You want free exit of Jews. We will have free exit for a year. All Jews who want to go to Israel from Russia may do

so within the period of a year." He referred, by the way, to the fact that this was similar to what had happened in Iraq in 1950, '51.

Personally, he -- Ben-Gurion -- didn't think that this condition would prevail, but as a possibility, he thought that if the Jews of Russia were given a period of time in which to leave, [15:00] hundreds of thousands out of them would avail themselves of it. Some estimates he heard went as high as a million. I told him that [Tour?] in Paris had said that he had heard that it might be a half a million, but the point was that whether it's a half a million or a whole million, it's clear that you're talking about very large numbers. And B-G repeated it several times during the conversation. "Would the Jews of America rise to the occasion?" That was the language he used. "Would they rise to the occasion and how much money would they produce if Israel were flooded with -- take any number you want. Two hundred thousand to five hundred thousand who might come out whenever the opportunity were given.

I tried to duck the question, but then later when Teddy came in and we talked about heights and what kind of stimulation would produce what kind of result, I thought that maybe for a year, if

there were huge excitement, and if Ben-Gurion himself came to America, and if American Jews had free [16:00] access to go to Russia, and if they could watch the boats coming out of Odessa, and if they could see this fantastic stream of hundreds of thousands of people moving, and if we could publicize it properly, and get enough steam up, maybe, maybe you could reach a quarter of a billion dollars. Two hundred and fifty million. Two hundred million. Some kind of figure which would represent the entire Jewish population in America re-establishing its roots with Russia, from which half of them come. That's the whole psychological problem, and that's going to take the kind of a build-up which can't be done overnight. We've got to get the Jews of America to start thinking in terms of Eastern Europe and nothing but Eastern Europe. Now, I'll report on the rest of the conversation with the old man later, but this was the main point that he was making.

As I say, he looked sort of abstract, and vague, and he might have been thinking far into the future, or he might have been thinking of the immediate present. I don't know. He didn't give me any exact [17:00] hints. But that's apparently the way his mind is running, and just for the record, let me note down that that's the way that my mind has been running, because thinking

in terms of what I would say to the actions committee on Thursday, I've been thinking for weeks about building about the thesis that we have to develop a historical perspective among the Jews of America, and this historical perspective has to do, obviously, only with Eastern Europe. I'll develop that later, because Kollek is getting a little impatient now. Let him say hello.

M3:

You're talking to the boys. (inaudible)

Teddy Kollek:

You mean this little machine can really do all this? It's wonderful. [Herb?], it's very good seeing you hear. I think our conversation with B-G was much better than you thought. He's really enthusiastic. He hears from everybody these days what American Jews are doing. He believes in them as much as you do, and as much as all of us do. (break in audio)

M2:

[18:00] The other items of Ben-Gurion's conversation, beside the Russian business, were all very interesting because they revealed certain side lights about him. First of all, he wanted

to know all about the present Supreme Court. Apparently the nature of the decisions they're making impresses him very much. He calls it a revolutionary court. He wanted to know what kind of a man Warren was.

Secondly, he wanted to know how Senator Humphrey was speaking about the result of his visit here. And he seemed quite pleased from the press report from *the New York Post* wherein Humphrey had said that he couldn't take Nasser's word at face value. It seems there's a little confusion about the way Humphrey [19:00] did report his visit. At times, he seemed to speak favorably about Nasser. Other times, not. Ben-Gurion had the impression that Humphrey had come away with a bad reaction toward Nasser.

Thirdly, he asked about *The Reporter* magazine. He wanted to know how Ascoli felt, and he was looking forward to seeing Ascoli's article. He said he told him that *The Reporter* was the most important liberal journal in America, more so than *The Nation*, or *The Republic*, and therefore he was very curious about Ascoli's reaction.

And fourthly, he kept asking questions all the time about Lessing Rosenwald. What was his reaction? And I had to tell him, frankly, that Lessing Rosenwald hadn't changed, or hadn't

said anything to indicate he'd changed. Hadn't offered to do anything publicly. [20:00] He kept shaking his head, and said, "Well, at least he isn't fighting you as much anymore, is he?" In other words, I got the impression Ben-Gurion wanted to feel that his visit with Rosenwald had had some affect upon him.

I asked him about the mood of the country. He said that was good. And the mood of the people was good. He was a little upset because he had just heard a report at the cabinet meeting the day before from the minister of health, who had asked for money to build another insane asylum, because lots of the new immigrants were coming in. Lots means relative numbers. Enough cases of insanity were beginning to appear in this large new Eilat to necessitate another institution. And this disturbed him. Aside from that, I couldn't seem to get a rise out of him. And as I said before, at the beginning, I had the feeling that his mind was [21:00] working ahead, probably toward the Russian situation. (break in audio)

I've had long talks with Joseph about a large number of subjects. We've talked about the conference next June -- 1958. I told the agency executive about it. Their reaction was very

favorable. I'm going to have to have one last meeting with him before we leave in order to finalize responsibility for the thing. His question of responsibility is the plaguing one, of course, and I think it's safe if all I do is jump in his lap and expect him to create the machinery to carry the thing up.

The same thing will apply to the mission. He, [22:00] by the way, is in favor of our going to Jerusalem first, and I'm definitely not. I want to begin at [Besharon?] first. And so, I think before I leave, we'll just have to issue the orders to tie up [Besharon?] and follow last year's pattern. He's persuaded me on this matter of not taking the group overland to Eilat, but flying them down and back. And of course, then there's the further suggestion that we fly them from [Beitar?] down to Eilat, and from Eilat back up to Haifa. This saves us all the ground travel up to Haifa, and since we're in the air anyhow, it doesn't make that much extra difference. And then being up north we could cover what we wanted up there, plus any immigrant activities in the port.

We haven't [23:00] settled the military part of the program yet. I think maybe the thing to do would be to take a captured Egyptian destroyer out into the harbor and do some gunnery

practice or something with it. Although, another suggestion was that we try to arrange to have a paratroop drop somewhere. We spend a lot of time talking to a number of people about the Rosenwald village proposition. Everybody seems to be for it. [Eschol?], and Joseph, and [Deparmen?] and Teddy. The point seems to be to pick an agriculture village, which would have a permanent place on the map. Call it by its equivalent of his Hebrew name, which would be *Ya'ar Shoshanim* or "the forest of roses." [24:00] Rose envoweled. And then put the name Rosenwald in brackets after it. *Ya'ar Shoshanim*, and then in brackets, Rosenwald. And do it when the mission is here in the fall, and that was my suggestion, so that they could have the pleasure of watching this being done in the presence of all of his friends and colleagues. This brings up the question of whether he comes on the mission or not. It might be that this is an inducement to get him to come.

I also took up the matter of Wallenberg's honorary degree. [Aparmin?], who's very close to Professor Mazar, says that he's obstinate on the matter of not issuing degrees indiscriminately, and further more the UJA has never done anything for the university. And furthermore, the only non-academically deserving [25:00] people who have ever received degrees are two. George

Weiss, who was the chairman of the board of the American Friends for about 15 years, and Alan [Bumsman?], whose family built about half the campus. Now, outside of these two people, the only ones who have ever received honorary degrees are Ben-Gurion and some academically justifiable individuals in the scientific world. (break in audio)

And let me interrupt this because the last (inaudible) came in, and I'll finish giving the rest of those notes about [Dolph?] Joseph later. Let me ask [Chaim?] a few questions. First of all, it was good to see him again, and to meet his wife. I started to ask him [26:00] how things are in the country, and he said that people have sort of a settled feeling. This is the relaxation of tension, perhaps, after Sinai. Six months later, the people sort of got the tension out of their systems. Then I asked him how things were going down in the southern command, whether there were still fedayeen coming across. He was describing to me a very interesting process. I'll let him tell you about how they tried to track these people.

Chaim:

One tracker -- we're following the tracks -- found that two men were carrying away a cow. And tracks began to lead off to the

Gaza Strip when the tracker decided he'll go midland into the Negev area to some known hiding place, feeling that he might find two infantries and the cow there. When I asked him why did you [27:00] decided not to follow the tracks towards the Gaza Strip but move to the hiding place, he said, "Well, these are two men, and they'll have to divide the stolen things between them. They can't divide a cow, so probably hide during the day. Go out, and try and steal another cow, and then have to divide it. He tracked to them to that hiding place, and the two of them were shot, and the cow is recovered.

M2:

All right. Now we're not so much interested in cows as we're interested in knowing whether many of these people -- these infiltrators -- are coming across, and are they coming just to get cows and pipe and things, or are they coming to get information, or are they coming to harass the population, or what is the reason that they are coming across now?

Chaim:

There are two reasons that bring them in, or rather two objects. One is the stealing, and in that way, harassing the border settlements. The other one [28:00] is to gain intelligence. The

fedayeen organization is coming in with less arms, more intent on obtaining information and coming out than they previously used to do -- come in and just murder people and leave the area. These are being tracked by trackers at daytime, and when contact is established, they generally get killed. Now, all infiltrators who come to steal and indirectly harass the border settlements, they merely operate at night with groups of four to five, using scouts. They have observation from the other side that's the border. During daytime, see any infantry left in the area. They stalk it at night, grab, and move back. We look after this by strengthening the guard at the settlements, and having [29:00] military ambushes and patrols in the area.

Unfortunately, given they are located in early hours of the morning just before crossing the border, we can't chase them to the other side because there's United Nations force there. In some settlements, people feel a bit tired of this thing, but it may be changing mood. These settlements will very soon recover, and work will go on on the frontier.

M2:

You said that you couldn't chase them on the other side because the United Nations troops are there. Don't the United Nations

troops do anything to prevent the infiltrators from coming over onto the Israel side?

Chaim:

Well, the infiltrators manage to get to very near to their posts, and nobody stops them. They're not allowed to fire at them. At daytime, they have observation posts along the border, but infiltrators don't come in during daytime. They come in about nine, [30:00] ten o'clock in the evening. It's very easy to cross the border. The UN observe them, but there isn't much they can do about them. They even won't let us chase them on the other side when we see the infiltrators 10 to 15 meters on the other side of the border.

M2:

If it's the purpose of the UN forces to keep peace on both sides, then one part of keeping peace is to prevent the crossing. Have you complained to the UN and asked them to take steps to stop the crossing from the Gaza side?

Chaim:

We did, and we keep on making these complaints, and somehow the infiltrators manage to get across, but nothing happens. We

couldn't even manage to come to some arrangement where once you know that some cattle were wrestled across the border, to get them on the next day or so. It just disappears, and we can't get even a positive answer where [31:00] the stuff is.

M2:

I heard about an incident that took place at -- I'm not sure if it was [Nahavos?] or somewhere, where the son of the mayor of Jerusalem, Gershon Agron -- who I think had a business of spraying crops -- was riding in a jeep or something, and was blown up by a landmine. Do you know anything about that story?

Chaim:

Yes. In the early hours of the morning, he was reconnoitering an area where the aircraft was supposed to spray, and he stepped on a mine about a yard or two from the door. This was a new mine, because on the day before, we patrolled that area and nothing happened. And apparently that mine was laid out during the night, and it was not far from the UN post. As a matter of fact, the first people to be on the scene and give first aid were the Finns who were there.

M2:

I heard in Jerusalem the other day that they amputated [32:00] a leg. Although they thought the boy was doing well, nevertheless, apparently they had to amputate in order to save his life.

Well all right, now aside from the question of the infiltrators and the stealing of equipment that goes on, you and your colleagues have contact, I'm sure, with the new *olim* who are coming into Be'er Sheba, which is where your headquarters is located. Be'er Sheba is growing rapidly and there are thousands coming down there. What can you tell me about what you have observed yourself as far as the adjustment to live in Israel of the new *olim*? How do they feel? What do they do? What do they say? How do the people in Be'er Sheba accept them? Anything you can tell me about the life of the new immigrants coming into your town.

Chaim:

People from two kinds of origin [33:00] came to Be'er Sheba. The people from Egypt and people from Poland. They had difficulties in settling. Housing was a bit short, but now some housing units -- not very large ones -- were opened up for them. I believe they got 700 housing units. And they settled. The technical personnel and the people of academic educations

got settled very quickly. It's the non-skilled who find difficulty in settling, especially because of lack of jobs for all. And I know of plans being just about to begin in Be'er Sheba and Dimona to give them more work.

I saw a settlement near [Niftahim?] called [Yesha?], where Egyptian Jews have settled. [34:00] Now, there were townspeople

-- traders and middlemen, that sort of thing -- and their first month was very difficult. Until the instructors there on the spot somehow managed to convince the intellectual elite in that place of the necessity and the new values of life which this settlement demands, especially that work -- or menial work -- is not the thing that is greatest. Now, another strong influence came to these people. It's their kids that divides them -- school -- who constantly, when they have their vacation, come home, and pray on their parents to stay in Niftahim and make the land work. I've visited them last week and saw great [35:00] improvements. People were happy. I saw the efficiency in guarding their own place. I saw the kids. I saw the quarters which --

CHARLIE: The other difficulty in Bathsheba, of course, is the heat from Poland. And it'll take some time before they'll

be able to work throughout the day without losing their vitality. At the same settlement of [Michtachim?], called [Yesha?], I met an Egyptian agent for pharmacy products, who worked in Egypt, very good income, and he came to [Michtachim?], and he told me that he didn't feel like staying in a place, he thought that he'll stay there for a couple of weeks, until he'll hunt for a better job. But then, he stayed for some -- for a longer time, and when I met him last week, he said well, [01:00] I don't know why I really did want to get away from this Yesha, because I feel entirely different man now, I feel better in the morning.

And I really intend to stay here, and he's now the intellectual leader of that community.

Q: Now look, you know that there's a serious problem with this migration, it's very large, 100,000 people in a year is a tremendous number of people. Houses and jobs are only the beginning of what you have to find. You have schools, you have health problems, you have 1,001 problems. Therefore, let me ask you frankly, what is the attitude, first your own personal attitude, and secondly, the attitude of friends and colleagues of yours, about cutting this thing down? Taking fewer people, spreading it over more years, do you feel, or your friends feel, that the country should

go on, taking in so many [02:00] olim? Or you should begin to cut down? As a policy.

CHARLIE: People I discuss these things with are mainly army people, and we seem to laugh off any idea of reducing the number of newcomers. We rather feel that whatever we have should be shared out to those that come in. We feel that there is a way where things work, pay could be shared out to mo people, if only for one sole purpose, to bring as many and as quickly as one can. This is army circles, and generally people who tend to view the country as a whole, and I take it as their average opinion, it's also my own opinion.

Q: Following the evening with [Lasko?], which was [03:00] a very joyful and pleasant experience, although it went too late. We spent the next day down at Eilat, now this thing in Eilat has become just absolutely fantastic. The last time I was there was in 1950 or '51, there was practically nothing there, a couple of houses. Now there are something like 3,000 people living there. The oil tanks are being built in a crevice into the hills so that you can hardly see them, and yet they're very much there. Very skillfully camouflaged. The navy has got a concrete pier and a couple of frigates tied up there. The British have left Aqaba, the

Jordanian town across the bay, so that there are no more British boats out in that harbor. The baiting has become [04:00] quite an important part of life, all the soldiers find their only possible relaxation down at the beach, everybody swims with a snorkel tube, and they pick up coral pieces, and it's quite exciting. The amount of sweat that's been expended to get every single item down there is quite incredible. Everything is flown down or brought down in heavy trucks after a laborious ride through the whole Negev. And yet, there has sprung up, in the midst of that crater-like desert, which looks like the surface of the moon, this fantastic copper processing plant, with huge steel girders and great vats, and tremendous buildings with generators. It's just an incredible sight, you -- there's no relationship to reality, almost as though it's a painting, [05:00] and because you don't see how this modern equipment could ever be brought to this place. But it's there, and they expect to be digging some copper out inside of a year. The whole thing is very, very impressive, you just wonder whether it's economically viable or not. The point of the mayor is that if the Gulf of Aqaba remains open, and trade keeps flowing in and out to Asia and Africa, why then the town can support a population of 30,000 people. That's his position. If that

turns out to be the case, it'll be one of the great spots for settling adventurous people, and it could easily become one of the showplaces in the pioneering sense. It's a very important army point, there's a fortress there, opposite the Egyptian point called Ras El Nakb, N-A-K-B, and that's really the defense point of the lowest possible road by which the Egyptians could penetrate into the Negev. The army fortress is an impressive place, duty down there is tough. The naval unit is not so impressive, duty is also very tough. The construction workers are a tough looking bunch of people.

They're the guys who are working down there for overtime and putting up all of the heavy labor. But it's quite a place, the air strip is half sand and half asphalt, and there's a new [07:00] hotel going up, which would make the second one in town, and you can get cold beer, and it's something. After coming back from Eilat, I spent a long evening with [Gira?] and also interviewing several people for various speaking assignments. [Gira?] didn't want to use the machine, so I have some notes from him down on paper. Then the next day after that, we went up to Haifa and I saw the arms exhibition, which is a perfectly striking thing. Particularly from the point of view of the

internal production here in the country, it's incredible what they are capable of producing themselves. They can do everything right up through heavy mortars, and heavy bombs, they stopped short of [08:00] artillery pieces, from that point on upward they don't have anything that is not artillery, or tanks, or planes. But below that, they really have everything. Machine guns and mortars, and an incredible number of small detail paraphernalia. And it's a source of great pride, [Abahushi?] tells me that a quarter of a million people have seen it in Haifa, and I know that Peres said that a quarter of a million people saw it at the first point at which it was set up, a place called [Beit Dagon?]. The conversation with [Abahushi?], by the way, was a very interesting one. He said that the human material of this present aliyah was excellent, [09:00] that it was the kind of people they'd always dream about having, and here they were, and he was certain that they would make a very splendid eventual contribution to the country. As a matter of fact, he thinks that the country can take in 150,000 people a year, he made quite a point of comparing the present situation with 1948, '49, and '49/'50, when the country took in as many as a quarter of a million people in one year. And they swallowed them, and somehow or other

found places for them. Of course, he slid easily over the fact that most of those first people went into Arab housing, I didn't want to challenge him on it, that is empty Arab housing, or Arabs who had fled. And he admitted, of course, that the housing problem is the most important thing. He even put it in one sentence, he said look, a shikun, or a dwelling for a person, is more important than a job. Because all of the Polish immigrants [10:00] have brought something with them so that they can manage to hold out for the first few weeks or maybe even a month, and then they get the 15 days unemployment -- well not unemployment, employment in public works, which the ministry of labor puts up, if they can't find other jobs. So that they're not really going to starve, but the big complaint is always on the housing, and therefore, he said that a shikun was more important than a job. But even believing this as he does, his point is that the country can take in 150,000 people a year. He also made the interesting comment that unemployment figures have not risen, at least in Haifa.

Mainly, that the immigrants which the city of Haifa has obtained have been able to find jobs in the economy, and the unemployment figures have not gone up. No, he sounded quite optimistic, and insisted, [11:00] as a matter of

fact, that he was much more worried about the spiritual integration of these people into the land of Israel and the life of Israel, than he was about their material integration. And spiritual integration meant to him learning the language, coming to feel at home, getting over the long experience of having lived as goyim and among goyim in Russia for 15 years, and coming home to themselves as Jews, in language, in thought, in patterns of life, observance, conduct, and adjustment. All of this, which he meant by the term spiritual integration, he said, worried him more than their material or physical problems, which he thought could be solved. It's an interesting point, and he made it because again, he was addressing the difference between this kind of an immigration, namely European, and the North African immigration [12:00] where you were dealing with masses of people for whom you had to supply basic things like food and shelter, but who were not educated, and whose further integration you couldn't hasten by worrying about it. They had to come to the eventual -- the North Africans have to come to their own eventual integration through the process of time. These Europeans can be speeded along very much more quickly, and conversely, may become disillusioned and disappointed much

more quickly. So that it's a much deeper and serious problem with them than it is with the immigration of last year. Well, that was about the substance of the conversation with [Abahushi?], which I have fleshed out because I'm summing up all these observances about the difference between the Poles, Hungarians, [13:00] and Russians, and the previous North Africans and Iraqis. It's a startling difference, it's something which everyone who deals with the 1957 aliyah must take into account.

Q: The batteries start spinning. You can see the spinning, see? For instance, if you -- well, see you can look at this through the window. Now the point is this, let's get the light on here so that you can see where you're at. You can see --

CHARLIE: It's moving, (inaudible).

Q: Well first of all, that it's moving, and secondly, you can see if you look in here, that it's about at this point where that tape is, do you see it?

CHARLIE: Yeah.

Q: Look at it carefully; see if you'd be sure to see it. She's -- and she's -- so that means at about 10 minutes, 5, 10, it means you've got 15, 20 more minutes left, she winds up down on this end, right? It means she will spin all the

way from this side of the spool all the way to this side of the spool. [14:00] When it all comes onto this side of the spool, it will stop. It's got no more to unwind, that's how you'll know your half hour is up. So when you're recording, you keep an eye not on the dots, that's hard to see, keep an eye to see if the thing is spinning.

CHARLIE: Yeah.

Q: All right. Now let's see, that's --

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END OF AUDIO FILE

