

TR-3802 Transcription

Ben-Gurion Birthday, David. Birthday. 18 October 1966.

**M:** [00:00] [*Chach taim shalosh?*]. [*Chach taim ne shalosh?*].  
[*Nisayona?*]. [*Chach taim shalo?*]-- [break in audio]

**M:** Mr. Ben-Gurion will be here in a moment. [tapping] Would you  
all please take chairs and could I have you...?  
[break in audio, applause]  
[break in audio]

**Max Fisher:** Mr. Ben-Gurion, we are deeply honored and inspired  
by the occasion of your visit to us tonight. So many of us that  
have known you and have worked with you... It is a real  
privilege and inspiration to have you with us on the occasion  
[01:00] of your eightieth birthday. You know many of us who  
worked with you and worked for you, and all these causes that  
were so dear to all of us. And, to us, you have been the symbol  
of the Jewish people and the beginning of the Jewish state. And  
it is a great, great moment for us all to have you with us here  
tonight. During this evening, we are going to take the occasion  
to have a few of your old friends pay greetings to you, in honor  
of your birthday and for the many things that you've done and

you've inspired us to do. The first one will be a man... Here he is here -- Lou Broido. Wait just... [pause] [02:00] [applause] We thought it'd be fitting that the first speaker this evening would be the chairman of the JDC. You have worked with the JDC for the 50 years it has been in existence and helping Jewish refugees and bringing them to the state of Israel, and from many of the camps and places that they've come from. And we appreciate the opportunity to call upon Mr. Louis Broido, the chairman of the JDC, to say a few words. [applause; break in audio]

**Louis Broido:** --tlemen. I'm glad I just made it, Mr. Chairman. I wish to say to you, sir, that I am here to bring to you the greetings and felicitations of the Joint Distribution Committee, [03:00] its 10,000 members across the United States, it's board of 200-and-some members, its Administrative Committee, and all of its officers and employees, of whom we have 1,000 in the state of Israel -- we have a big payroll here -- and to say to you, sir, that we wish you many, many, many more years of happy and fruitful life. You have [applause; break in audio] -- place in history as fixed... You were not only the Washington of Israel but the Jefferson too -- and the others who gave it sense and direction. And we are constantly mindful of those great days

in '48 when what you and your associates did, in creating this state, brought a thrill of pride and accomplishment to every Jew in [04:00] the United States, whether he was a Zionist or whether he wasn't. And then when, in 1956 and -57, sir, with your great genius, you took another step, which gave us Elath and got rid of the troubles on the Gaza border, you made another very great accomplishment. And so I don't have to say what you've done. Everybody knows it. I only merely say to you, sir, the Joint Distribution Committee, which has spent hundreds of millions of dollars all over the world, in 50 years, before the state of Israel and since the state of Israel, and is spending a great deal today in the state of Israel, in its own MALBEN program, we get our money from these men and women here and the men and women all over the United States whom they represent, tens of thousands of people who, by their deep felt generosity and a very kindly tax structure of the United States laws, makes this possible. [05:00] And so I say to you, sir, that we bring you our warmest, warmest greetings and our heartfelt congratulations that you have seen this day. And we hope, when we come back for further, many, many missions, we'll be here for the ninetieth birthday and the hundredth birthday. And we wish you very, very great happiness. [applause; break in audio]

**Max Fisher:** --ter Ben-Gurion, you've had the privilege, pleasure -- we've had the pleasure of being received by you, and many occasions. And I wanted to tell you this. On this mission that we have here, we have over 200 representatives of communities throughout the United States. Among them, there are representatives of over 40 cities. I think it's as fine a group of American Jewish leaders has ever had the pleasure of coming to the state of Israel. Many of these people have the opportunity to spend time -- [06:00] and be inspired by you. One of the men I'm going to call on has been a national chairman of the United Jewish Appeal for many years. I know that you've known him for over a quarter of a century. And we feel it's befitting that we call upon Mr. Jack Weiler, the national chairman of the UJA, to pay his felicitation to you. [applause; break in audio]

**Jack Weiler:** I wish I could be as brief as Lou Broido. You're out of luck. You know, Max Fisher said, "I knew the prime minister." And as he said, a minute -- "I'm no longer prime minister." He made it very emphatic. "I knew Mr. Ben-Gurion for 25 years." That is not so, Max. I wish I did. I haven't had that privilege. I have had the privilege of knowing Mr. Ben-Gurion since he was -- I wouldn't say fortunate enough -- we were

fortunate enough to be presented to him -- I think it was in 1948. [07:00] And then, with the first, unofficial mission, national mission, if you'll remember, Mr. Ben-Gurion... In 1949, October, was the first, unofficial mission, nationally, of the United Jewish Appeal. We had exactly ten members, at that time. I won't take the -- re-- time to recall each name. Henry Bernstein, the executive director of the New York United Jewish Appeal is here in this room. He was one of the first. Mrs. Weiler and myself. Joe [Mazur?] part of this mission for a while, a very brief while, too short -- was also part of that mission. But there were ten of us. Today, Mr. Ben-Gurion, in this mission, there is over 200. Quite a change.

And I just want to... I'm not prepared but I am prepared. I carry this in my pocketbook, Mr. Ben-Gurion, and not for this occasion only. I read this without -- being present, on many an occasion, [08:00] when speaking about you. You are the leader, not only of this country but of world Jewry. We look up to you as the world leader of Jewry. And this is what I carry in my pocket. And this is what I say about Mr. Ben-Gurion. "He speaks ten languages --" how many of you knew that? -- "Hebrew, Yiddish, English, German, French, Greek, Russian, Turkish, Spanish, and Italian." And when... Italian, not, he says to me. But I say it says here Italian! [laughter] Don't tell me!

You know, today I ca-- I can contradict [inaudible] qualms. He is not the prime minister. But in 1951, I had the nerve to contradict him, [09:00] when he was prime minister. And we had quite an argument, did-- we, B-G, if you'll recall? He wanted me to bring my youngsters to Israel. Can you imagine the chutzpah? [laughter] And that's all he ever said to us, at any time, whenever we met with him, "Give me your youngsters for one year, in this country." Is that correct?

**David Ben-Gurion:** Yeah.

**Jack Weiler:** That's all you've asked of us, at all the meetings. "Give me your youngsters for one year, in this country."

**David Ben-Gurion:** At least for one.

**Jack Weiler:** [laughs] He says, "At least for one year"! To be honest with you, I was afraid to send my youngsters here for one year.

And this is what I say further. By the way, at that time, you got a book in Chinese and you said you were going to read it. Well, I'll correct myself now to nine language, Mr. Ben-Gurion. And this is what this little article said. "If we could

-- 'Welcome' -- if we could say, 'Welcome' in all these tongues to this great spokesman of Israel, [10:00] we would." But like we, all of us here together -- surely it's enough to raise our voices in a -- in a rousing *shalom*, on this great man's birthday. And Victor Hugo said -- and this I wasn't prepared with, Max -- "Fifty is the old age of youth. After 50 is the youth of old age." Correct? Certainly it holds true for this great man of spirit -- young of spirit, young in thoughts, and certainly young in body. I watched him standing on his head at the -- what was that? -- the Sharon Hotel. That's where you visit, most often. And believe me, this is greatness, in every aspect of the word.

And finally, I want to end up with this reminiscence, after all these years and all these missions. [11:00] And I just showed Mr. B-G one of the pictures of a great sculptor. We were invited to this by the prime minister, to his home. We were in Jerusalem, on this mission. Mr. Bartley Crum... How many of you remember Mr. Bartley Crum, with the Palestine Commission? Mr. and Mrs. Joe Davidson -- the great sculptor... And [will be -- *wil klamich?*] -- I don't know -- I was invited too, with my son, who was here at the time, 16, and my wife. He invited us for eight o'clock, to be present at his home in Tel Aviv. We had just come from the home of the Chief Rabbi Herzog, in Jerusalem.

And I don't know if some of you remember 1951. It was an age in Israel -- well, there was not too much food. It was not a country of plenty. And when we saw those sweets that was being served by [12:00] the chief rabbi, at five o'clock on Shabbat... And my son and my wife was ready to get out those sweets when Bartley Crum grabbed us both. "Please. We're going to the prime minister's home -- eight o'clock. Don't eat now!" I'll sum up by saying we didn't eat until midnight. We really didn't.

I'll tell you what happened. And you'll excuse me, Max, if I just take this one minute. Will remain with me forever. We arrived at the prime minister's home promptly at eight o'clock. Because an invitation is a demand. We came there, Crum, the Davidsons, ourselves -- received by the prime minister, Mrs. Ben-Gurion. The prime minister took my son aside, who was then about graduating high school, and took him in a corner and had him for about 30, 40 minutes, [13:00] discussing American history. And we five were left to ourselves, and talking about American and Israel. [laughs] At nine o'clock, Mr. Davidson, who had finished sculpting the heads of Golda Meir, Sharett, and one other party -- I forget the name now -- one of the leaders of Israel at that time, turned around to the then prime minister and he said, "Mr. Ben-Gurion, I'm looking at you and I'm inspired. I'm in the mood to sculpt. But I don't have my



material." And the prime minister said, "Well, I'm ready to sit, if you're ready to work." So he says, "Well, I have a friend here who has all the material --" in Tel Aviv -- he says, "and I'd like to call him." The prime minister says, "No, you're not going to call. I'm going to call." He called this party. He called for a taxi. The prime minister called for a taxi. Because his chauffeur was not [14:00] around. Davidson got in the taxi, came back with all the material, began to work.

Mrs. Ben-Gurion put out a box of candy. By ten o'clock, we devoured it. I don't know he would have even know it. We were -- we were starved. [laughter] That box of candy disappeared as if you -- [snaps his fingers] bing bang -- especially my son. By midnight -- I have a picture now -- they just showed him -- the head was almost complete, the most magnificent piece of sculpture work you ever saw. It was the most -- the most fascinating experience, to watch the prime minister sitting still, Davidson doing the sculpting, and we all around watching this performance. By midnight, Mr. Davidson was tired. By the way, he died not too many months later. He was extremely tired. And he said, "Mr. Prime Minister, I have another hour, to finish." And Mr. Ben-Gurion said to him, "But I haven't got the time! My morning -- [15:00] my morning work begins before eight o'clock." He says, "I'll come at any time." He says, "Come at

6:00" or 6:30 "in the morning." I don't remember what time you said. What time was it? Do you remember now? It was 6:00 or 6:30 in the morning. Mr. Davidson went there at 6:00 and 6:30 and finished this magnificent sculpture.

By twelve o'clock, we were famished. We adjourned. We said our goodbyes to the prime minister. And this was not an oversight, believe me. They had expected us to have had dinner. They really did. The invitation was not for dinner. It was a misunderstanding on our part. I'm just telling the experience we had. We went to the boardwalk to get some food. The shops were closed. The hotels were closed. So until the following morning, for breakfast, Mr. Prime Minister, we knew what it was to go hungry in Israel. [laughter]

So I'll just [16:00] end by saying this. We all wish you, and, of course, Mrs. Ben-Gurion, the best of everything, certainly good health, for many, many long years. And God bless you. [applause; break in audio]

**Max Fisher:** I remember the first official one, which, there were 14 people, in 1954. And as I look around the room, of the 14 I find, two of them, besides myself, they're still here, Jack Kravitz and Henry Bernstein, of Dallas. I remember we were 3 of the 14. It seems just like yesterday. But, you know, one of the

things that I remember so well, we would have the pleasure of being able to call upon the prime minister. And he would sit and talk to us. And then he would tell us some project or something that he would want accomplished. And we'd say, "Well, it's too hard," you know, "We can't do this." And he'd look at you and he'd say, [17:00] "Look. I know the Jewish people better than you do and I know that anything can be accomplished." And, you know, when you think about it, this is true. Because this is what's happened. Only with a man like Ben-Gurion would we have a state of Israel today.

But one of the things that he'd tell us about was the fact -- "Why don't we bring more youth into the UJA?" So for the next speaker, I would like to bring another generation in, a man who has taken his place since that first mission -- who wasn't on that first mission, Mr. Ben-Gurion. He's a national chairman we have who is one of our outstanding leaders in the United Jewish Appeal in the country. I'd like to call upon Mr. Eddie Ginsberg, as the leader of the next generation. Eddie, would you s--?

[break in audio]

**Edward Ginsberg:** Thank you, Max. Ladies and gentlemen, I think I'm at a disadvantage, because Jack Weiler had a head start.

[18:00] I'm very happy that Max asked me to say a few words, for

two reasons. First of all, it's a deep honor for me to be asked to say a few words and, secondly, be classified as young.

I have a vivid recollection of the first time I came to Israel. It was almost ten years ago. And the prime minister looked at me and he said, "My, they're sending them young." And this is ten years later and I think we're both ten years younger. And one of the great things, I think, and one of the great attributes that this man has is his ability to relate to the young people, not only the young people of America, the young Jews of the world but, I think, to the young people of Israel. And this is a man of greatness. To us, he will always be Mr. Israel. And so I would only say to you [19:00] not only happy birthday but let us both grow young together in this work, for many, many years to come. [applause; break in audio]

**Max Fisher:** I'm only sorry that we didn't have the opportunity to have groups of our young leadership here tonight, though there are some representatives, as I look around the room. Because I know this is something that you, particularly, would get pleasure out of. You've talked about it so much. And for your own self, let me say this. There is a tremendous feeling among the youth to continue the work that's been started.

Now for the next speaker, I find it difficult how to start introducing him to him, we know him all so well. But I remember one part in history about the next speaker, my good friend Rabbi Herbert Friedman. I think he met Mr. Ben-Gurion in the days of the -- of the DP camps, right after the war, when Herb was involved in the [20:00] rescue of so many of our fellow Jews. He then came to us, in 1955, as Executive Vice President of the United Jewish Appeal. He's really been a great inspiration to us. He's brought youth to the United Jewish Appeal. And one of the great things that he has contributed is the development of our young leadership. I think is one of the great things that'll be a mark to his credit. In addition to this, in the last two years he's been the architect of our Israel Education Fund, which is going to play such a great part in secondary education in Israel. And it's a great pleasure to me to introduce Rabbi Herbert Friedman as our next speaker. [applause; break in audio]

**Rabbi Herbert Friedman:** Max, thank you, very much. Mr. Ben-Gurion, ladies, and gentlemen, since reference was made to that early period, I would like to tell you that the first time I met Mr. Ben-Gurion [21:00] was in the Royal Monceau hotel in Paris, in 1945, '46. I came into the room at the request of one of his aides, who asked me one question, "Will you work with us?" And I

said, "Yes." The aide went to the door of the adjoining room, called out Mr. Ben-Gurion, and told him that I had agreed to work with them. I then asked what I had agreed to, and found that Mr. Ben-Gurion was sitting in Paris in the very hotel in which the British had their headquarters, actively running and directing the organization which was then called the [Briha?]. He was a man of action. And this was the first time I saw him in action. I worked for two and a half years. And we brought many Jews across many borders, in that great historic period.

[22:00] The second episode I would like to tell is the time that I had the honor to bring him into one of the camps in Germany, a camp called Babenhausen, which was the worst camp of all the DP areas that we had. He stood on that platform, in front of 5,000 people penned into that camp, no hope, no future, a terrible past behind them, and only a strong burning will to come here. He had courage to face them on that stage. Because he said, "I come to you with empty pockets. I have no certificates" -- that was the time when the British were controlling entry in this country by allowing 1,500 Jews a month to come and that was all -- "But I give you hope. [23:00] We will not forget you. You will come to us." This was the expression of that side of the personality of the man in which he gave out faith and

conviction, promise to those who were without any of these things, man of action, man of hope, man of many dreams.

Four years ago, we sat in Sde Boker for many hours, talking about education. There is no end to his capacity to dream. Noble in vision, capable of great comprehension, obsessed with a colossal historic vision, and imbued with eternal simplicity.

[24:00] All of these are the attributes which make for greatness. It is that greatness we honor tonight. It is the privilege of being in that presence for which we thank you.

[applause; break in audio]

**Max Fisher:** --wards. And then we will have the pleasure of hearing from you. But before we do so, I would like to tell a little story about Mr. Ben-Gurion. I've told him this story and he kind of shakes his head about this thing. Couple of years ago, I had the pleasure of visiting with our former President Eisenhower. And we got into a discussion about Israel and the remarkable story of the Jews. And he told me a little story of an incident that happened with Mr. Ben-Gurion at the end of World War II. Mr. Eisenhower, or General Eisenhower, at that time, [25:00] came to a wonderful idea of how to relieve the problem of the Jews. He had figured out -- and this is the way he told me the story -- that they could take the land of Libya,

which had some fertile soil, a great many millions of miles, and it belonged to a defeated nation and there weren't many people living there... And he thought this would be a wonderful solution. And he called Mr. Ben-Gurion and he told Mr. Ben-Gurion about this wonderful idea of his. And General Eisenhower, that told me this, he said, "I was told in no uncertain words that there would be only one place in the world and that would be this land of Israel." And he said, "I knew that this was going to happen." And he said, "The remarkable story, that did take place to me, is something that's -- will go down in history." He told me this story with a great deal of feeling, compassion, and understanding. [26:00] And he has a great, great deal of respect and feeling for Mr. Ben-Gurion. I tell you this story because I think it's so typical. Because he had this intense feeling and this drive that this had to be.

Now before we go on, we felt it appropriate that we, the members of the mission would present Mr. Ben-Gurion with a small token of our love and affection. It's a very difficult thing to decide what to do on occasion like this. And I would like to tell you the story behind this presentation we're going to make. Will you give this to me? This is a piece -- a vessel that came from the soil of Israel. It's probably over 2,000 years old. And the fact that this piece is still intact after 2,000 years is a



miracle in [27:00] itself. But we chose to give it to you, Mr. Ben-Gurion because, to us, it's a symbol of an even greater miracle. You know, the Jews in itself are a very sensitive people and a very fragile people. And the fact that they've been able to exist is a miracle. But the facts are, by all the law of probability, there shouldn't be any more Jews, with all the things that have taken place. But when you think about it, the fact that, for over 2,000 years, they stuck to this purpose and this ideal and now it's a reality is a modern miracle in itself. And we thought that this would be very symbolic of this thing. And besides, it's a symbol to us that you and we and all of us are going to continue this great work. Because the story of the Jew is not finished yet. And we give you this with all our [28:00] love and affection and our hope and our desires for the future and our best wishes that we can be with you for many, many years in the future. And I'd like to present this to you. [pause; break in audio]

[applause] --Gurion, I just can't express in words to you now my feelings on having this rare privilege and pleasure of saying a few words to a man of history. All I can say to you is, for myself and everyone else here, we hope you long life, we hope you many, many years, so that we can come back and visit

with you and work with you and be led by you. God bless you.

Thank you. [applause; break in audio]

**David Ben-Gurion:** --tlemen, I'm going to make two corrections, what my friends [29:00] have spoken so far. I know they did it - good wishes. And they are not obliged to know everything about me. First correction is about my birth date. I was born twice. [laughter] I was born once... I'm not responsible for it. It was the date of my father and my mother, about 80 years ago. But my real birth, for which I'm responsible, was 60 years ago, when I came to this country. [applause] Long before I came to this country, I was a Zionist, from my youth. Because my father, long before the Zionist movement, was, as they called it then, a Lover of Zion. And I told that I'm a Zionist. When I was 14, together with some of my friends, we organized a group of youth to [30:00] speak only Hebrew, which was in nine-- the beginning of the century. Then about three years later, when the revolution in Russia began, I became a revolutionary and a Socialist, and established an organization called *Poalei Tziyon*. But then, when I came to this country and I learned that whatever I thought before had no meaning -- it was merely words. I belonged to an organization, it's called *Poalei Tziyon*. None of us were a [poale?]. *Poale* means a worker. Neither did we live

in Zion. We were living in Plonsk, in Russia. I saw that all my words about socialism is meaningless, absolutely. Because socialism means to create a better society, with more equality, with more human love. We did nothing of that kind in Plonsk, in [31:00] Russia. So I [was new-born and?] [inaudible]. And I learned that Zionism, in general -- and you'll excuse me -- [there are?] some Zionists -- I will say what I believe -- what is Zionism -- had no meaning. Because suppose all the Jews in the world would be Zionists, but Zionist like the Russian Zionist -- and they consider that the best Zionist in the world -- all Jews, 12 million. At that time, there were about 12 million Jews. All they would be Zionist, but Zionist like the Russian Zionist, living there, talking about Zion, but not going to Zion. What would become of that, after 10 years, after 50 years, after 100 years? After all, Jews were speaking about Zion for the last 2,500 years, since the days of the [Second Chaisaya?]. Nothing came out of it. So [32:00] therefore, I consider my birth only since I came here, 60 years ago. So my age is only 60 now. [applause]

And the second thing which I want to say, which I cannot agree with, which a-- which all you expressed, how the state was born. In our time, the last 18 years, in 10 years, many new states have arisen. [The reason?], by simple process. A people

living in their country but subject to foreign rulers, as it was with all the African peoples, as it was with India, as it was Ceylon, with Burma, and many other countries. When the foreign government had to leave, either willingly or unwillingly, the people in their own country became [33:00] a free, independent people. This is not what happened here. Sixty years ago, there were perhaps 50,000 Jews in this country. But there, non-Jews, ten times as many. And this is the only state which is a reason through a return to the land. And that return began nearly 2,000 years ago. There's not a single period in Jewish history, since we lost our second [komovil?], in the Roman war, when Jews did not return to their country. And Jews who didn't return, they were praying three times a day, "Bring us back, our God, to our country and make us a free, independent people." [34:00] But from prayers alone, a state cannot be made.

Then some 100 years ago, a new era began, the era of pioneering, creative work. And I will mention only two or three persons, who, in my view -- this was long before I was born -- did the most difficult and the greatest thing for the creation of Israel. One was a French Jew, called Charles Netter. He came to this country, sent by a young Israeli [inaudible] cell, with the idea of creating a Jewish state. At that time, there were 20,000 Jews in this country, all of them living in, as they were

called, the four holy cities, in Jerusalem, in Hebron, in Safed, and Tiberias. Only a few of them did some work, [35:00] or did some shopping. A great part of them lived on charity, which they received from all the world. It was called, then, [*chulka?*]. And he came from France with the idea of creating a Jewish state. And his idea was, the beginning of a Jewish state must be the Jews should return to the land and work. But not a single Jew was living on the land, at that time. The few Jews who were in the country, about 20,000, were all living in these four cities. So he said, "I will going to build an agricultural school, for Jews, to learn agriculture and become farmers." And he went to Constantinople, the Turkish sultan. And he gave him 5,000 [dunans?]. For the next 99 years, [they didn't get?] [inaudible]. But I'm sure [laughs] you do not return to the sultan anymore. This was the real beginning of the creation of a Jewish state.

[36:00] Then eight years... This was in 1870. Then eight years later, some more important thing happened. A young Jew from Hungary, from a very orthodox family... His father want him to go Berlin. There was a rabbinic school for European Jews there. And he was very orthodox, the young man, and he said, "No! I am going to the land of Israel." Father said, "What are you, mad? What are you going to do there?" "I'm going there to

build a Jewish village." "What? A Jewish village? Where is there a Jewish village in the whole world? No, you must go to the rabbinic school in Berlin." He said, "No, I'm going to the land of Israel." His father said, "Not with my help." So he came to this country [walking?!] -- from Budapest to Saloniki. In Saloniki, the [37:00] rabbi gave him a free ticket for a ship to Smyrna. And he came walking from Smyrna to Jerusalem. It took him four months and a half. With the idea of creating a Jewish village.

The people in Jerusalem said, "Are you mad? Wait until messiah will come. Then he'll bring back all the Jews." He said, "No. This is my duty. I must start building a Jewish village. This will be the beginning of a Jewish state." And discovered in Jerusalem a young Jew, already in third generation here. His name was Yoel Moshe Salomon. And he had also the same idea. And they both [learned?]. And they built the first Jewish village. It's called by the name Petah Tikva, the Gate of Hope. But it was near Yarkon River and was malaria. And after two years, all of them left.

Karl Netter, [38:00] who came, himself, eight years before that... This was in eighteen seven-- in 1878. When he saw that, he was terribly disappointed. And he wrote an article in a French paper that Jewish colonization in this country, in

Palestine, would be a complete failure. "Jews does not work. The land is not good. And the neighbors are our enemies. It's no future." Then he was asked to go back to Mikveh Israel, the school which he founded. This was in 1882. And he saw something which he couldn't believe. He saw young people, former students in Russian universities, young Jews -- left their universities and came to work in Israel -- hard work and getting one franc a day. And he saw that, he felt [39:00] again -- arose in him -- and he said to them, "I'm with you! And I'll help you what you're going to do." But unfortunately, after three months he died.

But the people who came to do that work, they didn't die. And they established the first three Jewish -- [uh?!] -- real villages, Rishon le Zion, Zikhron Ya'akov, and [Roshkina?]. And [they're called askeni?], new villages. And only the collective, creative work of three generations of pioneers, [then?] [inaudible] and hope in the Jewish people -- that we are now living in our own country, in our own state, in our own independence. This couldn't be done by one single person, only a group of persons. It was, a long time, the hope and wish of the Jewish people for the last 2,000 years. And it was the creative work of the last three [40:00] pioneering generation, which

began with the building of first agricultural school, the first Jewish village.

This is their work. And I'm only one of those who did whatever he could do to fulfill his duty, as far as I could, the best of my ability. And I hope I will continue to do that as long as I live -- how long, I don't know. I hope your wishes will be true. Maybe, I don't know, another 60 years or 80 years. I don't know that. This depends on him. But I [am?] here to fulfill my duty as one of the Jews who helped during the last 60 years. It is the best of his ability. And I am not quite sure even that everything I did was to the best of my ability. But only as one of those who did it. This is a collective work, once of the people who believed that we will [41:00] return to our country, for the last 2,000 years, and especially of these three generations who started building Jewish villages, Jewish cities, Jewish industry, revived the Hebrew language -- Jewish science, Jewish technology.

And now we became one of the small country, a small people. Now we number about two million and a half, a little less even than two million and a half. We are capable of helping the new nations, in Asia, especially in Africa, as much as the great world powers of Russia and America. And I know we cannot compare ourself with these two great powers. We haven't got their means.



We haven't got their people. We haven't got, even I must say, their knowledge. But we have something a little more than they have, the feeling that all human beings are equal. And the whole problem with these new peoples in Africa, in [42:00] Asia, they had, for many, many years, some of them even many centuries, a feeling of inferiority, especially the African people. And even when the Russians and Americans and Chinese come to help them, they feel that they regard themselves as superior to them. When our people is going to work, and we have hundreds of the best of our young people who went to work among African people, to educate them in agriculture, in education, in police, in army, and other things, they do it knowing what our prophet has said, our prophet Amos. I will tell it to you in Hebrew and I will translate into bad English. "*[Halo khivney khushiyili atem nisrael atel heleytiy meretz mitzrayim eta plishtimya mikaftor betaram miqiy?]*." [43:00] "You are to me like Negroes, children of Israel. I bought you out from Egypt. I brought the Philistines out from Caphtor. And I brought Aram out of Kir." They are all the same people.

But that feeling that all human beings are equal, there's not one superior to the other... Our best pioneers are doing the work in Africa and several countries in Asia and also in Latin America. And the people there feel that we don't feel ourselves

superior, that what we are doing we are doing from love of human beings, because we were told in our Torah... The greatest command of the Jewish Torah is [*vihaftha lareh hachamah?*], you should love that fellow man like yourself. German who engaged in critiques of the Bible, they said this applies only to Jews. But they forgot that, in the same chapter... [44:00] This is Chapter 19 of [*Vayikra?*]. They call it Leviticus, you know, like... It is said later, "And then a stranger will come to your land. You should love him like yourself, because you were all strangers in Egypt." One of the greatest command in our Torah, to love a human being like yourself, applies not only among Jews but every humankind. And with that feeling, our people are working [down with?] Africans and with Latin Americans and with Asians. And they trust us and they love us. And if you happen to go to those countries, you go here, what name is this tiny country, as one among those people? And it is because we are true to a tradition of our Torah, of our Bible.

And the last thing that I want to tell you -- and to ask you... [45:00] I know not all of you will come to this country, or you will send your youngsters, although this is the best thing that I would wish to -- and not only for a year, to stay with us. But I know very few will do that. But one thing you ought to do and you can do... And this will raise your prestige

among your neighbors. We created one of the greatest book, if not the greatest in the whole world, which is translated into more than 1,000 languages. And it's hailed by almost all peoples in the world, whether Christians or Muslims. And this is the Bible. The minimum you are required to do to preserve your Jewishness, to preserve your [Jewne?]- and your contact with us, that [46:00] every boy and every girl of yours should know the Bible, not in translation. [Yarika?] said, our great poet, reading the Bible in translation is like kissing a sheet after a handkerchief. But teach the Bible in Hebrew, in the original language. They will know what he had created, one of the greatest things in the world, which made a great impress-- on many other peoples. You'll win the respect of your neighbors. And this will strengthen the unity of our people. And this, perhaps, when they will know the Bible, many of them will bring over here. And this will make American Jewry richer and healthier and stronger than they are and you will enjoy it. And I hope that you may have [applause] -- [break in audio]

**Everyone:** -- you. [47:00] Happy birthday to you. Happy birthday, Ben-Gurion. Happy birthday to you. [break in audio, applause; break in audio]

**Max Fisher:** --[fifty?]. So -- [break in audio]

-- shalom and a welcome for... Please stand in your places!

[applause]

END OF AUDIO FILE [47:30]

