



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES
A DIVISION OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE – JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION

MS-630: Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler Digital Collection, 1961-1996.
Series C: Speeches and Eulogies, 1967-1996.

Box
24

Folder
2b

Speeches, 1976-1978.

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

Address at Mount Scopus, Bublick Prize, Hebrew University: Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
July 1978,

It is with no small measure of awe that I approach the rostrum today.

This very setting is awe-inspiring in its grandeur and its meaning. Who does not tremble standing on this mount? Its space is filled with the voices of the past. Its stones are the frozen echoes of eternity. The soil on which we stand is sanctified by the blood of Israel's kedosheem. This mount is also the source of our hope. It is the place where "waiting for God" was born, where the expectation for ever-lasting peace came into being.

I am awed also by the award with which you have honored me, and by the lofty companionship which I now join because of it. In all justice--and even allowing for that chutzpah, that supreme self-confidence which is the badge of our rabbinic tribe--I must protest! I do not merit to be rubriced in a roster which contains such names as Ben-Gurion, Sukenik and Truman. Their towering achievements of a life-time dwarf my own modest efforts by far.

I really accomplished very little. And I received far more than I gave. I simply merged my life with the life of my people and in doing so, my life attained to a completeness, to an authenticity.

As Jews, we have no choice but to do precisely that. Our life forever demands involvement with a larger fate--the fate of Israel. The individual Jew is a lie and a fraud when he is more an individual than he is a Jew. He emerges whole, authentic, only when he surrenders himself to the cause of his people.

I realize full well that awards such as this are really more symbolic than they are personal. And it is as a symbol that I accept it.

I accept the Bublick prize in behalf of American Jewry, and American Jewry is altogether worthy of it. We are a proud community, a self-confident community, and this above all: we are a united community.

Rabbi Alexander Schindler--July, 1978

Solomon Bublick, I have learned, was a simple Jew, a proster Yisroel, but also an Ohev Israel. There is no higher madregah on the scale of our values. Solomon's brother, Gedaliah, was a Yiddish journalist, a member of the Mizrachi and a right-winger at that. I don't know how kindly he would have taken to having a Reform rabbi designated as the recipient of the prize which bears his family's name. But we American Jews have changed in this regard. We have learned that that which unites us is infinitely greater and weightier than that which divides us, that those adjectives by which we categorize ourselves--"Orthodox," "Conservative," "Reform," "Secular," "Zionist," "Non-Zionist,"--are precisely that: qualifying adjectives and not nouns. The noun is "Jew." Woz mir zennen zennen mir ober yiden zennen mir.

Of course, not every American Jew agrees with every policy of the Israeli government, present or past. The pluralistic nature of our community precludes so homogeneous a reaction. We are not servants of a particular party. We are not the instruments of any governmental coalition. But we are united by a sacred mission: the security, the safety of Israel. And we are impelled by a common love: an abounding love for the people of Israel.

We American Jews mean to uphold Israel's hands, not only by preserving our unity, but also by giving voice--strong, unfettered voice--to our convictions. Of course, we are still plagued by a few mahjofesdicks, by those who love to bask in the reflected glory of malchus. There are still a few in our midst who urge us to keep a low profile, who want us to be heard and seen as little as possible, lest we incur the wrath of the mighty. But American Jewry--in its preponderant majority--rejects this counsel, this caution of cowardice. "Shtadlanut" has seen the end of its day. Quiet personal diplomacy has brought us nothing but grief--look at the Thirties and see! No longer will we allow ourselves to be beguiled by the blandishments of those who sit in places of power.

Nor will we be intimidated by them. We will not commit the sin of silence a second time in the same generation.

We will serve Israel in one more way still: we will come here to this land and to our people.

Jerusalem, so Heschel wrote, is not divine. Her life depends on our presence. Alone, she is silent. When we are here, she is a proclamation. Alone, she is a widow. When we are here, she is a bride.

And so we will come here and bring our children here--some will be here for a time and some for always. Here we will build our institutions: our synagogues and schools, our kibbutzim and our camps. Many of our children hopefully will study right here, at this superb institution of learning, and they will stand on this beautiful, hallowed mount.

Then Jerusalem will live. All Israel will live. Ken Yehi Ratzon.



ה'תש"ב
אשר אלהינו
י' 131

SCHINDLER
p. 1

No small measure

It is with awe that I approach the rostrum ~~this day~~ ^{today}

This very ~~place~~ ^{setting} is awe inspiring in its ~~beauty~~ ^{grandeur} and its meaning.

Who ~~will~~ ^{does} not tremble standing on this mount.

~~The~~ ^{its} space ~~about us~~ is filled with the voices of the past

~~These~~ ^{its} stones are the frozen echoes of eternity.

The soil on which we stand is sanctified by the blood of Israel's kadosheem

This mount is also the source of our hope.

It is the place where "waiting for God" was born

Where the expectation for everlasting peace came into being.

I am awed also by the ^{ward} with which you have honored me
and by the lofty companionship which I now join because of it.

I ~~am~~ ^{have} justice — and even allowing for ^{that} supreme self-confidence, that chutzpah
which is the badge of our rabbinic tribe — I must protest

I do not merit to be rubriced in a roster which contains such names as
as BenGurion Sukenik and Truman ^{- BenGurion}

Their ~~towering~~ achievements of a life-time, dwarfs my ^{own} ~~far more~~ modest efforts ^{by far}

I really ~~really~~ accomplished very little

And I received far more than I gave

I ^{simply} ~~merely~~ merged by life with the life of my people
and in so doing, my life attained to a ^{complexity} ~~wholeness~~, to an authenticity.

As Jews we have no choice but to do precisely that

Our life forever demands involvement with a larger fate — the fate of Israel

The individual Jew is ~~alie~~ ^{lie} and a fraud when he is more an individual than he is a Jew
He emerges whole, authentic only when he surrenders himself to the cause of his people

2 words such as this are really
 I realize full well that ~~this words are~~, in the final analysis, more symbolic ~~than they are~~
 than they are personal.

And it is ^{as a symbol} ~~in this spirit~~ that I ~~never~~ accept it.

I ^{in behalf} accept the Bublick prize ^{although} for American Jewry
 And American Jewry is worthy of it.

We are a proud community

a self-confident community

And this above all: we are a united community.

^{on} Solom Bublick I have learned was a simple Jew, a proster Yisroel, but ^{also an} ~~and~~ Ohev Israel
 there is no higher madregah ~~than that~~ on the scale of our values,
 Solomon's brother Gedaliah was a yiddish journalist
 a member of the mizrachi and a right-winger at that
 I don't know how kindly he would have taken to having a Reform Rabbi designated as
 the recipient of the prize which bears his family's name.

But ^{we} American Jeww have changed in this regard.

We have learned that that which unites us is infinitely greater and weightier ~~than that~~
 that which divides us

that those adjectives by which we categorize ourselves

— "orthodox," "conservative," reform," "seclar," "Zinist" "non-Zionist," —
 are precisely that: ~~ad~~ qualifying adjectives and not nouns

The noun is Jew

Woz mir zennen zennen mir ober yiden zenen mir.

Of course not every American Jew agrees with every policy of the Israeli government
 present or past

the pluralistic nature of our community precludes so homogeneous a reaction

We are not the servant of a particulat party

We are not the instruments of any governmental coalition

But we are united by a sacred mission: the secure the safety of Israel

And we are impelled by a common love: ^{an abundance} ~~of~~ love for the people of Israel.

b4 b7c

by those

who want us to be heard and seems as little as possible lest we incur the wrath of the

Paul of the mighty

1. the creation
of co-workers

Quiet personal diplomacy has brought us nothing but grief - look at the 30s and see!

ents of those who sit in places of power
intimidated by them
the sin of silence a second time in the
world in one more way still:
to this land and to our people.
Israel wrote, is not divine
in our presence
there is a proclamation

We will not comit the sin of silence a second time in the same egenration.

We will serve Israel in one more way still:

We will come here to this land and to our people.

Jerusalem, so Heschel wrote, is not divine

Her life depends on our presence

Alne she is silent

When we are here she is a proclamation

Alone she is a widow

When we are here, she is a bride

And so we will come here and bring our children here —

many of the studies reviewed in this book have been

Here we will build our institutions:

our synagogues and schools, our kibbutzim and our camps
to our children hopefully

Many will study right here

at this superb institution of learning

and they will stand on this beautiful, hallowed mount

Theⁿ Jerusalem will live. All Israel will live. Ken Yehi Ratzon.

5
Repentance makes still another demand upon us:

It bids us ~~xxx~~ assume responsibility for our actions.

It asks us not only to confess our wrong, but to bear the blame for what we do.

We are not too ~~well~~ ^{even} disposed to ~~be~~ ^{keep} this mandate.

We do not like to take on the burden of ~~responsibility~~ ^{our guilt},

Grudgingly we may advance the first step to repentance

-- we may admit that we did wrong --

but then we quickly add, and thereby fail to take the necessary second step,

that we were caught ~~not~~ ^{not} in a web of our own spinning

but that others are responsible for what we did.

OMER ATZEL ARI BACHUTZ

"A sluggard ^{always} says 'there is a lion in the streets...if I go out I will be slain!'"

The author of the book of proverbs well recognized our ~~tendency to scapegoat~~ ^{repentant for blaming others}.

His ~~by-word~~ ^{word} finds never-ending proof in our lives.

And yet we moderns sneer at our ~~fathers~~ ^{forebears} who offered a sacrificial lamb for their sins.

We call their way uncivilized, primitive, repugnant

and yet we look with equal eagerness for ~~someone to bear the burden~~ ^{someone to accept the blame} or for someone to bear the ~~burden~~ ^{burden} of our guilt.

~~For someone else or for something~~ ^{For someone else or for something}
We emphasize the "something" ~~for~~ ^{for} our favorite scapegoats are impersonal:

the environment to which we were and are exposed,

both psychological and sociological,

the homes we live in

our economic circumstance

the social circle in which we move, the social system under which we live

and, beyond ~~these~~ all these, the experiences of our youth and infancy

yea even the factor of natural selection,

the kind of parents who conceived and reared us, and their parents before them.

On these and the like we shift the blame for all that we have done or left undone.

Some years ago, I chanced on a cartoon which -- with wry humor --

encapsuled our weakness in this regard:

A highschooler just presented ~~what was obviously~~ his father with what was obviously a shameful poor report card from school. The caption put the following challenge into the boy's mouth:

"Tell me, dad, to what should I ^{attribute my failure} ~~ascribe all this~~...to heredity or my environment?"

Well yes

Is not this precisely what we do, so much of the time...we find our scapegoats!

And the cumulative effect of all ^{our blaming} ~~this~~ scapegoating leads to the ultimate sin:

a denial of the self...

a refusal to recognize any autonomous power within ^{us} ~~man~~,

Everything is said to come from without and nothing from within..

And so the sinner, we say can find his atonement

not in a House of God and through the act of confronting his conscience with the ideal

but rather on a psychiatrist's couch where the evil of his past experience can be uncovered

where he can be re-educated, re-conditioned or, ^{appropriately come to terms with that evil} ~~mostly adjusted to live with that evil~~
above / resigned to live with himself

Please don't misunderstand me.

I do not mean to denigrate a ^{science} ~~sense~~ ^{which has} ~~nor~~ its practitioners who ~~have~~ ^{have} wrought

healing and peace of mind to many...

But too often alas ~~this~~ science is abused...

when it does not extirpate the evil but enjoins us to live with it

when it seeks to adjust us to the norm ^{-- to the 12 rather results the one} of the world and thus impedes the process

of inner transformation.

pm

Certainly it would be wonderful if we could solve all our problems

by stretching out on the psychiatrist's couch

and while a patient father substitute is listening

we pour out the doleful story of our woes.

Alas for our all too tender egos! Alas for our neurotic world!

Alas for our faded dreams and disillusioned, wishful thinking!

Als for the whole wretched business and, especially, alas for us!

Is this the picture? Is this the final story?

Or can we break out from our plush-lined prison of self-pity?

Can we say quite simply and plainly that we ~~are~~ keep on doing wrong while we know the right and that, therefore, we are sinners.

Shall we allow our conscience to take its proper place?

And this above all, shall we expect something from the will and its potential power within us?

Surely it is time that we made such a reckoning.

For when we deny the existence of the independent ^{will} ~~will~~ we detract from our humanity we ~~obliterate~~ obliterate that very quality which lifts us above the ^{things} ~~dumb~~ brute world.

When we deny the existence of the independent will we ^{deny ourselves} ~~close the door~~ forever on some of life's most precious moments - of glory ^{hours of triumph} (in achievement) --

for how dare we claim credit for the beauty and the goodness that we fashion if everything which we create comes from without and nothing from ~~xxx~~ within.

When we deny the existence of the independent will, we deny also the possibility of progress we choke all hope for human betterment

for how can we improve the world if we are helpless to improve the single self.

This at any rate is Judaism's conviction:

that man has the will, if he but use it, and the power... ^{will + the}

IM CHATOECHEM CASHANIM KASHELEG YALBINU

Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be whiter than snow

Every sinner can be a saint, every Jacob can become an Israel

if only he wrestle with his God.

In a word that we can lead those lives we sream to live"

lives large and generour

bold and adventurous

lives great in the scope of their ~~imagination~~ desire

Warm with imagination...magnanimous in forgiveness

smilingly triumphant over set-backs and over disasters.

This, at any rate, is Judaism's conviction

that man has the will, if he but use it, the will and the power

Of course Judaism is not blind to the evil of the world

nor is it oblivious to all those forces which act upon man and constrain him

But ~~that~~ at the same time Judaism refuses to see man as a sinner who must sin,

whose sin is existential, whose transgression is inevitable

it sees within him rather the seeds of self-improvement, it invests in

IM CHATOEICHEM KASHONIM KASHELEG YALBINU

Though your ~~skx~~ sins be as scarlet they shall be whiter than snow

Every sinner can be a saint

every Jacob can become an Israel if only he wrestle with his God.

Michaelangelo had an intriguing conception of his art.

When he was asked just how he could fashion such sculptures of deathless beauty out

of massive ^{inert} stone, he replied...

I did not fashion that beauty...

it was always there within the stone

I merely perceived it through the stone and then patiently chiselled away

at those rocks which imprisoned ~~the form~~ ^{it}

~~I merely set it free... this form in all its beauty which was there~~

This is Judaism's conception of man

In the unhewn rock of our lives there is great goodness.

Its call is unmistakeable within us

the call to live from the fullness of the heart

We can hear it

we can heed it

and having done so once we can do so over and again

In a word, we can lead those lives we dream to live...

lives large and generous, bold and adventurous

lives great in the scope of their desire, warm with imagination

magnanimous ~~xxxxxxx~~ in forgiveness, courageous as an act of faith

smilingly triumphant even over setback and sin and disaster.

9

Oh how we yearn for such lives

and we can live them if we meet the demands of repentance.

self-recognition

the willingness to carry the burden of responsibility for our deeds

and not in the least a determined exercise of that will with which we are

assuredly endowed

And so we pray on this Atonement Day

-chotanu...ovinu....poshanu...

we have sinned, , we, and no one else

we have transgressed - willfully, nothing else compelled us

we ourselves have dealt perversly



And so we pray on this Repentance Day ~

---chotonu---ovinu---poshanu

we have sinned, we and no one else

we have transgressed - willfully, nothing else compelled us

we ourselves have dealt perversely.

In a few brief moments now ^{many} some of us will leave this house, some will remain
most of us will return ^{later} for more hours of prayer and of meditation

As part of our afternoon service we will be reading from the Book of Jonah

We know this story well

how he was sent by God to Niniveh to warn its citizens of the inevitable

consequence of their evil.

But Jonah revolted against God...

he refused to be the bearer of his tidings, lest Niniveh's men and women repent and live

for they were the sworn enemies of the Jewish people

and ^{Jonah} he desired their destruction.

And therefore ^{he} ~~Jonah~~ was punished,

He was punished because he denied the conditional nature of God's decree

because he confused God's hatred of the evil in man with hatred of the evil man

as if the ~~man~~ evil man is evil in his essence

condemned forever to be wicked

beyond all hope of redemption.

This is precisely why the Book of Jonah fits so well into our Yom Kippur service

and it encapsules all that we have been saying:

The very essence of the Day of Atonement is faith

^{human} faith in providence but a denial of fate

faith in redemption and a rejection of doom

faith in man + his capacity for ~~transformation~~ ^{redemption} but faith in his capacity to conquer

in his power to choose between evil
life & death.

Such a faith ^{impels our worthy today.} is the quintessence of our prayers

For on this Day of Days we pray for Niniveh -- FOR ALL THE NINIVITES OF THE WORLD

FOR THE NINIVITES OF EACH OF US

4K

[Handwritten signature]

Our God and God of our Fathers
Let our prayers come before Thee.
Turn not away from our supplication,
FOR WE ARE NOT SO PRESUMPTUOUS AND STIFFNECKED AS TO SAY THAT WE ARE WHOLLY RIGHTEOUS
AND HAVE NOT SINNED

For verily we have sinned, —

...chotanu...ovinu...poshano...

we have sinnned...we have transgressed...we have dealt perversely

These words of contrition

taken from the pages of our prayerbook

constitute the supreme confession of the Jew.

The VIDUI these lines are called

and the rabbis of old ordained that they be spoken in the the last hour of life
by the dying person

or, if he can no longer speak,

^{relative}
~~that they be spoken by a rabbi, or a friend~~ in his behalf.

The VIDUI was included in the liturgy of Yom Kippur, as we

and our fathers recited it on ^{that} ~~this day~~ ^{Yom Kippur} as if ~~this day were~~ ^{indeed} their last ^{on earth.}

^{as they did}
~~standing~~ in their synagogues,

wrapped in their talesim,

and beneath them garbed in long white tunics made of linnen,

the kittel, their shrouds, their robes of death.

We of our generation approach this prayer and the Day of Atonement in like spirit

and though our outer garment no longer conforms to the custom of the past

our inner being nonetheless responds to this day as did our fathers.

We too hear its summons to judgment,

We too affirm ~~an~~ its dread and majesty and, tremblingly, obey its call:

to pass beneath the shepherds staff

^{walk}
~~aye, to pass~~ before God ^{who counts his flock,} ~~who sets the span of life and seals its destiny.~~

WHO COUNTS IT'S ~~FLOCK~~ SHEEP

WHO SETS THE SPAN OF LIFE + SEALS ITS DESTINY.

2-
Rosh Hashon^{ah} and Yom Kippur are Days of Awe and awesome is the mood which fills us
~~as we contemplate our lives, our past,~~

as we heed the mandate which bids ~~us~~ search the soul.

Is there anyone here who approaches the throne of judgment with assurance?

Is there anyone here so righteous that he sinneth not?

God knows the secrets of the soul...nought is hidden ~~from~~ ^{from} his sight.

Somber ~~though~~ our sentiments might be

the fundamental force impelling our worship is really one of hope

for Yom Kippur ^{reminds} ~~speaks to~~ us not only of man's evil,
~~as it reminds us of his capacity for good,~~
^{as it focuses our attention on}
~~it reminds us also of his capacity for good.~~

~~This is the central theme~~ Whatever there is of darkness in our contemplation of the past
^{is meant primarily}
~~serves~~ only to enhance the light of our hope for the future.

We are reminded of our failings not to debase us, not to cast us into gloom
but to inspire us to higher and to nobler striving.

We confess our sins not so much out of a sense of our own unworthiness

but rather with full faith that ^{by our} ~~faith~~ of feebleness new strength can come.

That we can, if we will, turn every tear of disappointment into a pearl of virtue,
every defeat of yesterday into the laughter ~~the~~ ^{of} the triumph of tomorrow.

The gates of repentance are opened on this day

and beyond them ^{we find the} ~~there is~~ healing balm for hearts bruised by the knowledge of sin:
atonement —

reconciliation —

peace.

God's pardon and with it the pardon that comes harder still:

the forgiveness ^{where with} ~~for which~~ we forgive ourselves

the renewal of our self-esteem.

"REBIRTH" "respect."

The rewards^{of} repentance ^{is} good, but its road is toilsome to traverse.

Exactng demands are made of those who seek its way:

scrupulous self-judgment

a cognition of responsibility ^{for ones actions,}

a determined assertion of the will.

Without such disciplines, atonement ~~xxxxx~~ cannot be attained;

their ~~exerce~~ alone can help us enter its gates.

Honest self judgment is the first demand of repentance:

the ability to acknowledge transgression,

the willingness to say when we have sinned that we have sinned,

the strength to speak this truth

not only ~~in communion with others~~ in conformance to a rite by rote, ~~in service~~

not only in communion with others and to God, ~~in service of the lips~~

^{Speak the truth}
but to the self as well.

^{How did the prophet put it?}

"Deceitful is the heart above all things and it is desperately weak."

Jeremiah spoke these words and he knew man well.

He knew his weakness for deception.

Long before psychiatry, he knew that men will lie to make the wrong seem right,

lie to one another,

more tragic still, lie to themselves....

Lies spoken to the self are fraught with ~~graver~~ graver consequence by far

than are lies spoken to another.

To begin with no one else can challenge ^{them} ~~their truth~~

for no one else can know what minds speaks to heart in solitude,

Moreover, so long as a person continues to lie to himself

so long as he refuses to know the truth about himself

so long will he ^{CONTINUE TO DO} ~~be doing~~ anything and everything except what needs to be done:

the task of inner transformation.

4
Thus it is that the way to repentance begins with self-recognition.'

When a man cheats he should call it cheating.

When he does shoddy and shabby things for shoddy and for shabby reasons, he should say so.

When he is greedy, he should call it greed.

When he is burning with the fever of ambition, he should say that ambition's fever
is burning within him.

Whatever it is he should call it by its honest name
and not try to justify it on the basis that it is something else.

He should see the wrong as in him, as a part of him
in all respects, make an honest reckoning with himself.

When he gets ready to sell out his idealism, he should say to himself:

I'm about to sell out my idealism.

And if you say that a man who speaks thus to himself is not likely to sell out his idealism
that is precisely why he should say it.

Call a wrong a wrong and you are half way to resisting it.

Call evil and evil, ~~and it ceases to burn within you~~ and its intensity wanes...

passion consume you
It ceases to burn within you.

Thus ^{it is that} self-recognition is something more than the resolving of an inner conflict.

It is the beginning of a transformation.

the conception of a new heart & a new self
And this is why we pray on this Repentance Day:

...chotnonu....ovinu....poshanu...

...we have sinned....we have transgressed...we have dealt perversely.

(Hebrew)

These words of the awesome _____ prayer strike responses as we assemble in the courtyards of the Almighty heeding His summons to judgment. Again, the shrill, sharp sounds of the shofar shake us from our complacency with their demand for a chesbon hanefesh, for a self-reckoning of the soul. Again this most fervent supplication surges from the soul. Inscribe us and those we love, inscribe us for blessing in the book of life.

How quickly the year has passed! It seems only yesterday that we were gathered here, a full year before us then, each of its months a meadow of hope, each day a lovely flower blossoming on the field. But leaves fall and flowers fade. The months glide silently by, reckoning but little of our clocks and calendars with their petty markings of times and of seasons. Our days are as a shadow that passeth away, They are speedily gone, they fly, like the shadow of a bird in flight.

We say that time flies, but does time really fly? Is it really time which passes as a shadow? Is not time an aspect of infinity? It was, a million years ago, and will remain a million years hence

~~(cont.)~~

← unending and unchanging as space,
↳ Humanity may sink into nothingness, the stars in their heavens may
← cease to be. Mighty massive mountains may crumble in the dust.
But time will remain in its proud majesty, ^{the} symbol of eternity.

No, time does not pass. We pass, We who are born of dust are destined to
— return to dust in time--and in a world which will lament us a
— day and forget us forever.

Mortals in immortal time are we...finite atoms of infinity. And though
← we live to be our three score years and ten, or even by reasons of
← strength, four score years, what are all these in contrast with
← infinity? Are not a thousand years in God's sight but as yester-
← day when it is past, as a watch in the night, as grains of sand
← along the shore, or tiny droplets in oceans vast?

Thus does the Day of Remembrance teach us to know life's brevity. In the
— stillness of this awesome hour, we hear the rushing of the waves of
— time, their relentless pounding against eternity's shores. We
— sense the sinking of the flood of past existence into the gaping
— abyss of ever-lastingness.

Now the shortness of life confronts us with a contradictory task: on
the one hand, the speed of life's forward motion compels us to hold
fast lest it elude us. On the other hand, the inexorability of
this very forward thrust requires that we reconcile ourselves to
life's inevitable end. A great poet of the American rabbinate,
the late M. St. ^{Elton} Steinberg, pointed to this paradox in one of his most

beautiful creations. We are asked to embrace the world,"he wrote, -
even while we must surrender it. We are enjoined to greet each mom-
ent of existence with full awareness, even while we are compelled
to return life's every gifts.

The rabbis of the Talmud put the matter tersely--and in the starkness of
its brutal reality:

ADAM BA BA-OLAM BEYODAYIM KEFUTZOT
A MAN COMES INTO THIS WORLD WITH HIS FIST CLENCHED
WHEN HE DIES HIS HAND IS OPEN

We begin by grasping. Ultimately, we must surrender, and the art of
living is to know when to hold fast and when to let go. Surely
we ought to _____ for it is beauty full of wonder and worth...
_____ know this is so...passing wonderful...
recognize truth once

Cling to life...that is life's first commandment, and most men heed it
only in the last when life threatens to elude them. Then they
cling to it--go to any hospital and see. Then they scratch for it
with their very fingertips until the nails crack and the skin breaks
and bleeds, all in the effort to halt the ravagings of dread
disease.

But until then, until then most of us are blind. We walk about on a
cloud of ignorance. We trample on the feelings of those about
us. We spend and waste time as though we had a million years to
live, always at the mercy of one self-centered passion after another.

Is this not the real reason of the remorse which fills us at this parting hour of the year? We remember a beauty that faded, a love which is no more. We remember, also, and with far greater pain, that we did not see that beauty when it flowered, that we failed to respond with love to love when it was tendered.

Wasted opportunities...neglected endowments...unappreciated blessings. Beauty which found us blind, heavenly harmonies unheard by our ears, because our ears were filled with the din and clatter of our petty discords. These are the remembrances which bring us to remorse.

It is a poignant thing especially to realize how careless we often are of life's lost, precious gift: the love of our loved ones. Parents disregarding their children, children their parents, friends their friends, husband and wife indifferent to each other, until calamity strikes and then we beat our breasts and cry: "Chotonou, we have sinned. We did not mean to say this to you. We did not mean to deal falsely. We did not mean to speak harshly...we do love thee---but there is none to hear and there is none to heed.

Your rabbi speaks not just to those before him, but to himself as well. He, too, runs blindly. He runs when he works, he runs when he plays. He runs incessantly, he knows not where. He does not even know whence, most likely from himself, afraid to face the self, fearful to find the ———.

And so, he, too, is filled with remorse of gifts neglected, the

laughter of children, the tender (love) of a wife, unseen, unanswered.

Where are they? Where is the wine of life and the soft voice of its yearning? The song of day and the silent wonder of the night? The petals on the grass and wings in the air? Where are they? They were there but we did not see. We had ears but we did not hear. We do not know...we do not understand...we walk in darkness. How wantonly careless we are of life's gifts until it is too late. Like birds whose beauty is concealed until their plumes are spread against the sky, our blessings brighten only as they take their flight.

Here surely is a needful lesson brought by our meditation. Life is precious. It is ineffably dear. Never be too busy for the wonder and the awe of it. Be reverent before each dawning day, greet each hour, seize each golden minute. Cling to life with all your heart and might and soul. Hold fast to life while yet ye may.

Hold fast to life, but not so fast that you cannot let go. Here is the second side of life's coin, the opposite pole of its paradox. We have to learn how to let go, how to surrender.

Life means growth. To grow involves not merely the acquisition of new qualities, of new characteristics, it means also the surrender of older qualities, their casting off. We are not eager to learn this lesson, especially when we are young, for when we are young we think that the world is ours to command, that whatever we desire with the full force of our passionate being can actually be achieved. But sooner or later

Lullaby for Miriam

Richard Beer-Hofmann

Sleep, my child - sleep now and rest!
See there the sun, how it wanes in the west,
Reddening hills as it breathes its last breath.
You - you know nothing of suns and of death,
Turning your eyes to the glare and the light.
Sleep, there are so many suns for your sight,
Sleep, my child - my child, sleep on!

Sleep, my child - the evening wind blows,
Know we from where it comes? Whither it goes?
Dark are all ways, deep hidden and wild,
Yours and mine too and all others, my child!
Blindly we go, all alone do we go,
None can to none be a mate here below -
Sleep, my child - my child, sleep on!

Sleep, my child, and heed not my song!
Meaning for me does it carry along,
You hear but echo of wind and of sea,
Words - the whole harvest of life may be!
What I have gained, down my grave it will go,
None can to none be an heir here below -
Sleep, my child, my child, sleep on!

Asleep, my Miriam? - Miriam, my child,
We are but banks of a river, and wild
Flows through us blood of our past, rushing loud
On to the morrow, unresting and proud.
In us are all - none, none is alone.
You are their life and their life is your own -
Miriam - my life, my child - sleep on!

Translated by Sol Liptzin

SCHLAFLIED FÜR MIRJAM

Schlaf mein Kind — schlaf es ist spät!
 Sieh, wie die Sonne zur Ruhe dort geht,
 Hinter den Bergen stirbt sie im Rot.*
 Du — du weißt nichts von Sonne und Tod,
 Wendest die Augen zum Licht und zum Schein:
 Schlaf, — es sind so viel Sonnen noch dein,
 Schlaf mein Kind, — mein Kind schlaf ein!

Schlaf mein Kind — der Abendwind weht;
 Weiß man woher er kommt, wohin er geht?
 Dunkel, verborgen die Wege hier sind,
 Dir, und auch mir, und uns Allen, mein Kind!
 Blinde — so gehn wir, und gehen allein,
 Keiner kann Keinem Gefährte hier sein, —
 Schlaf mein Kind, — mein Kind schlaf ein!

Schlaf mein Kind — und horch nicht auf nicht!
 Sinn hat's für mich nur, und Schall ist's für dich:
 Schall nur, wie Windeswehn, Wassergerinn,
 Worte — vielleicht eines Lebens Gewinn!
 Was ich gewonnen gräbt mit mir man ein,
 Keiner kann Keinem ein Erbe hier sein —
 Schlaf mein Kind, — mein Kind schlaf ein!

Schläfst du Mirjam? — Mirjam, mein Kind,
 Ufer nur sind wir, und tief in uns rührt
 Blut von Gewesenen, — zu Kommenden rollt's,
 Blut unsrer Väter, voll Unruh und Stolz.
 In uns sind Alle. Wer fühlt sich allein?
 Du bist ihr Leben, — ihr Leben ist dein, —
 Mirjam, mein Leben, — mein Kind, schlaf ein!

RICHARD BEER-HOFMANN



Beer-Hofmann's poem as it first appeared in PAN in 1898.
 (From the LBI Collections)

Among the early admirers of the *Schlaflied* was Rainer Maria Rilke. In a letter to Ilse Blumenthal-Weiss (now a staff member of the LBI), dated April, 1922, he wrote: "I have admired the *Schlaflied* beyond measure since I became acquainted with it (when it was published so magnificently in the pages of "Pan"). In later years I was privileged to gain boundless admirers for the poem which I knew by heart. When I lived in Sweden for half a year it went so far that people from other farm houses sent their car to ours, as one would call for a doctor, so that I might recite the verses to virtual strangers who had heard of the extraordinary beauty of the poem."

PERIODICALS COLLECTION EXPANDED

Important acquisitions of microfilm reproductions have been made as part of the LBI project to complete its collection of more than 700 periodicals, published by or for Jews during the 19th and 20th centuries. The project, which continues to progress well, is funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Among the latest items to which additions were made are numerous volumes of the publications of various German-Jewish youth movements. Several of these publications are now complete, and the Institute is probably the only library in the United States today that houses complete sets, in original print supplemented by microfilm, of at least nine youth movement publications, including: *Blau-Weiss Blätter*, *Der Bund Kameraden*, *Jung Israel*, *Führerschaftsblätter des Esra* and *Kameraden*. Many other publications in this group, which totals forty, have been greatly augmented although not yet completed.

The latest progress in the LBI Periodicals Project was made possible through the cooperation of the Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem; The Central Archives of the History of the Jewish People, Jerusalem; and The Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem, which enabled the Institute to obtain microfilms of missing volumes.

Upon completion of the government-funded project, this collection of research material, accessible in one central location, will greatly facilitate scholarly work in German-Jewish history and related fields. The LBI has recently been notified that the National Endowment for the Humanities has extended its funding of this project for an additional year.

life confronts us with its dread realities: with illness, with poverty, with death, with the voice of duty. And then we realize that no matter how beautiful may be the things we crave, fate may nonetheless forbid them; and no matter how wonderful may be life's gifts, destiny may nonetheless ordain their ultimate return.

Few of life's blessings escape this harsh decree, none, in fact,... none excepting one's memory and love. Ultimately we must surrender everything...everything we have...everything we are.

We must surrender our loved ones. Here is a portion of reality which is not too remote from us on this day of judgment as we look about us and see in our mind's eye the many loved ones who sat near us once and are no more. Ed Elman. They have reached their horizon and are gone out of sight. That is our mortal lot in life; we must surrender our loved ones.

And we must surrender our very selves. Life is never a being, it is always a becoming, a relentless flowing on. We move through every stage of life, each with its entrances and its exits--the infant becomes the boy, the boy the man, and there is simply no turning back.

Pity those among us who will not heed life's call for renunciation. Their lives are all the darker for their refusal to face the undeniable. We all know such people: men who outgrow the dreams of their childhood days, women who cling too desperately to a youth which is escaping them,

parents who cannot let their children go, who will not let them free to live their own lives. Or think of those poor souls who hold too fast to the love and memory of someone who has been taken from them, leading their lives in melancholy, cloistered behind the walls of an ill-controlled grief. For there must be a surrender even to this, an end to mourning and a return to the tasks and responsibilities of life.

When Rabbi Bunam, renowned Chassidic master, was lying on his death bed, his wife wept bitterly, whereupon he reproached her saying: "Don't you know that all my life was given me, merely that I might learn how to die." Life is the great teacher in the art of renouncing. To deny its mandate is to deny the inevitable. To heed it is not only just and right/ It is the very gate of wisdom.

Our meditation has confronted us with a two-fold demand of existence and it is puzzling in its paradox; on the one hand we are told to cling to life---on the other hand we are enjoined: learn how to renounce. How can we do both and at the very same time; More important, why should we do it? Why should we fashion things of beauty when what we fashion will ultimately be destroyed: Why should we give our hearts in love when those we love will ultimately be torn from our grasp?

Rosh Hashanah, which confronts us with life's paradox, also offers its resolution, for on this day we see our lives as through windows that open on eternity, and then we know that though our flesh is finite, our spirit born of flesh is infinite, that though our days may end, our deeds on earth do weave a pattern that is timeless.

The good we do on earth is not interred with our bones. The

beauty that we fashion cannot be dimmed by death, The love we give in life lives on, long after we are gone, to warm the loves of others. When Chanayo ben Teradyon, noblest of Jewish martyrs, was burnt at the stake, wrapped in a scroll of the Law, his pupils, who witnessed his terrible agony, cried out: "Our master, our teacher, what seest Thou?" ...and he replied: "I see the parchment burning, but the letters of the Law, they soar on high." Even so it is with us. Our flesh may perish... our hands may wither...but that which they create, in beauty, and in goodness, and in love, lives on forever.

And so we turn to Him who is enthroned above our praises. Many prayers pour from our lips, many supplications surge from our soul, but none, surely, is more earnest and more incessant than our prayer for life... life mysterious and marvelous...life warm and wonderful...this daily victory over illness and over death...this breath in the lungs... this dance in the limbs...this song of blood in the veins...life to which we cling with all our might while yet we may.

(Hebrew) On Rosh Hashanah it is decreed, ⁴ and on Yom Kippur it is sealed. May we and all our loved ones be inscribed for another year of life and health, and may our lives be filled with much that is beautiful, and good, and true, Amen. Thus may it be.

Amen.

212

ON ROSH HASHANA IT IS WRITTEN ON FOR KIPPAH IT IS
 QVINU MALKENU KITVENUE BESEFER CHAYIM TOVIN
 OUR FATHER OUR KING INSCRIBE US FOR BLESSING IN HT EBOOK OF LIFE ^{SETHEN}
 THESE WORDS OF THE ANSWER ^{AS WE} PRAYER STRIKE RESPOND
 Once again, my friends, we are assembled in the courtyards of the almighty

heeding his summons to judgment

Again the shrill sharp sounds of the shofar shake us from our complacency

with their demand for a cheshbon hanefesh, for a self-reckoning of the soul

Again this most ferevent supplication surges from the soul

inscribe us and those we love

inscribe us for blessing in the book of life.

How qu ickly the year has passed

It seems only yesterday that we were gathered here

a full year before us then

each of its months a meadow of hope

each day a lovely flower blossoming on that field...

But leaves fall and flowers fade

The months glide silently by

reckoning but little of our clocks and calendars with their petty marks^{ings} of times

and of seasons

Our days are as a shafow that passeth away

they are speedily gone

they fly ~~away~~ like the shadow of a bird in flight...

WE SAY THAT TIME FLIES.

But does time really fly? ^{while passes} Is it really time ~~that passes~~ as a shadow?

Is not time an aspect of infinity?

It was --- a million years ago -- and will remain a million years hence
unending and unchanging as space.

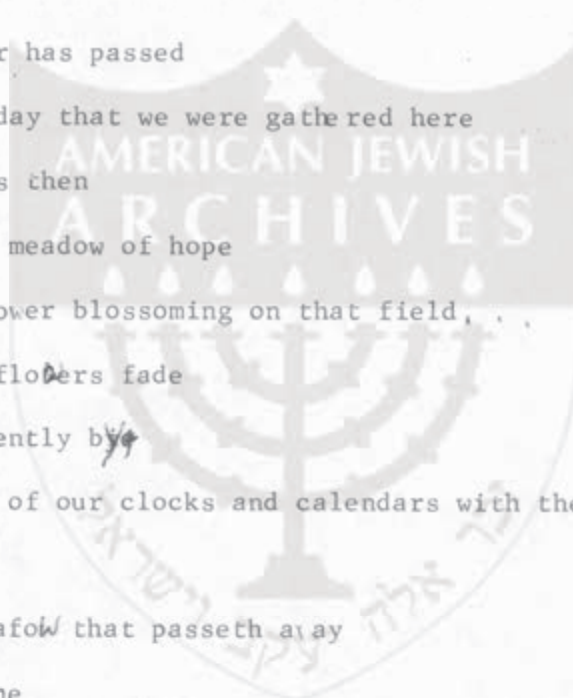
Humanity may sink into nothingness

the stars in their heavens may cease to be

Mighty massive mountains may crumble in the dust

but time will remain in its proud majesty

~~the embodiment~~
symbol of eternity.



[Handwritten signatures and scribbles on the right margin]

No, Time does not pass...WE pass.

WE who are born of dust are destined to return to dust

IN time and in a world which will lament us a day and forget us forever.

Mortals in immortal time are we...finite atoms of infinity.

And though we live to be our three score years and ten

or ~~or~~ even by reasons of strength ~~one~~ ^{four score years} hundred and ~~twenty~~ ^{infinity}
what are these ~~years~~ ^{all} in contrast with ~~eternity~~.

Are not a thousand years in God's sight but as yesterday when it is past

as a watch in the night

as grain of sand along the shore

as tiny droplets in oceans vast.

Thus does the Day of Remembrance teach us to know life's brevity.

In the stillness of this awesome hour,

we hear the rushing of the waves of time, ^{their relentless pounding against eternity's}

we sense the sinking of the flood of past existence into the gaping abyss of ~~eternity~~ ^{everlastingness}.

The shortness of life confronts us with a contradictory task:

the speed of life's forward motion compels us to hold fast lest it elude us...

and yet the inexorability of this very forward thrust requires our reconciliation ^{that we} ~~with~~ ^{our} ~~ourselves~~

to ~~the~~ ^{life's} inevitable ~~loss~~ ^{end}.

One of the great poets of the American rabbinate pointed to this paradox in one of his most beautiful creations...

We are asked to embrace the world -- he wrote -- even while we must surrender it.

we are enjoined to greet each moment of existence with full awareness

even while we are compelled to return life's ^{every} gifts.

The rabbis of the Talmud put the matter tersely — *in the starkness of its brutal reality,*

ADAM BA BA-OLAM BEYODAYIM KEFUTZOT
A MAN COMES INTO THIS WORLD WITH HIS FIST CLENCHED
WHEN HE DIES HIS HAND IS OPEN

We begin by grasping

ultimately we must surrender

and the art of living is to know when to hold fast and when to let go.

*SURELY WE OUGHT TO HOLD FAST FOR IT IS BEAUTY
FULL OF WONDER & JOY... GANDHEE SAYS
KNOW THIS IS 'SO... PASSING WONDERFUL... RECOGNIZE TRUTH ONLY*

Cling to life...that is life's first commandment

most and ~~most~~ men heed it ~~sooner or later~~ *ONLY IN THE LAST*

~~More often later on,~~
~~but they heed it only~~ when life threatens to elude them...

then they cling to it — *go to any hospital & see* —

then they scratch for it with their very fingertips

all until the nails crack and ~~bleed~~ *the* skin breaks & bleeds
in the effort struggling to halt the ravagings of ~~disease~~ *dread*

But until then — —

until then most of us are blind

we walk about on a cloud of ignorance

we trample on the feelings of those about us

we spend and waste time as though we had a million years to live

always at the mercy of one self-centered passion after another.

Is not this the real reason of the remorse which fills us at this parting hour of the year?

We remember a beauty that faded, a love which is no more.

We remember *we also* — — *also* had with far greater pain,

that we ~~xxx~~ did not see that beauty when it flowered,

that we failed to respond with love to love when it was tendered/

Wasted opportunities...neglected endowments...unappreciated blessings...

Beauty which found us blind...heavenly harmonies unheard by our ears...

because our ears were filled with the din and clatter of our petty discords...

THESE are the remembrances which bring us to remorse.

It is a poignant thing especially to realize how careless we often are of life's ,ost
precious gift: the love of our loved ones. :

parents disregarding their children, children their parents
friends their friends, husband and wife indififerent to each other
until calamity strikes and then we ~~EXXXAND~~ beat our breats and cry:

chotonu(we have sinned

we did not mean to say this to you

we did not mean to deal falsely ~~WE~~

we did not want to speak harshly...

we do love thee ----

but there is none to hear and there is none to heed...

~~He~~ ^{Yook} the rabbi speaks not just to those before him but to himself as well

He too runs blindly

he runs when he works ^{KS} he runs when he plays

he runs incessantly, he ~~KNOW~~ knows not where . . .

he does not even know whence...

most likely from himself....afraid to face the self... ^{feared to find the self.}

and so he too is filled with the remorse of gifts neglected

^{laughter}
the ~~smile~~ of the child,^{ren}
^{tender} ~~mother's~~ ^{wife}
the ~~need~~ of the ~~mate~~...

unseen, unanswered...

~~Where are they all...where did they go?~~

~~Where~~ where are they...~~they were there and~~

^{WHERE IS}

the wine of life and the soft voice of its yearning
the song of day and the silent wonder off the night
the petals on the grass and wings in the air

~~theyx~~ where are they? they were there but we did not see.

We had ears but we did no hear

we do not know ...we do not understand ... we walk in darkness...

How wantonly careless we are of life's gifts until it is too late
Like birds whose beauty is concealed until their plumes are spread against the sky
our beessings brighten only as they take their flight

Here surely is a needful lesson brought by our meditation

Life is precious

it is ineffably dear

Never be too busy for the wonder and the awe of it

Be reverent before each dawning day

greet each hour

seize each golden minute

Cling to life with all you heart and might and soul

Hold fast to life

while yet ye may....



6
Hold fast to life...but not so fast that you cannot let go. Here is the second side of life's coin, the opposite pole of its paradox. We have to learn how to let go, how to surrender.

Life means growth. To grow involves not merely the acquisition of new qualities, of new characteristic, it means also the surrender of older qualities, their casting off. We are not eager to learn this lesson, especially when we are young, for when we are young we think that the world is ours to command; that whatever we desire with the full force of our passionate being can actually be achieved. But sooner or later life confronts us ^{with its dread realities} with illness, with poverty, with death, with the voice of duty. And then we realize that no matter how beautiful may be the things we crave, fate may nonetheless forbid them; and no matter how wonderful may be life's gifts, ^{destroy} fate may nonetheless ordain their ultimate return.

^{NOT IN FACT... NOT EXCEPTING OUR MEMORY & LOVE}
Few of life's blessings escape this harsh decree. Ultimately we must surrender everything...everything we have...everything we are.

We must surrender our loved ones. Here is a portion of reality which is not too remote from us on this day of judgment as we look about us ^{see} and in our mind's eye the many loved ones who sat near us once and are no more. ^{ED ELMAN} They have reached their horizon and are gone out of sight. That is our ^{lot} lot in life; we must surrender our loved ones.

And we must surrender our very selves. Life is never a being, it is always a becoming, a relentless flowing on. We move through every stage of life, each with its entrances and its exits - the infant becomes the boy, the boy the man, -and there simply is no turning back.

Pity those among us who will not heed life's call for renunciation. Their lives are all the darker for their refusal to face the undeniable. We all know such people: men who never outgrow the dreams of their childhood days....women who cling too desperately to a youth which is escaping them...parents who cannot let their children go, who will not let them free to live their own lives.

Or think of those poor souls who hold too fast to the love and memory of someone who has been taken from them, leading their lives in melancholy, ^{cloistered} ~~hidden~~ behind the walls of an ill-controlled grief. For there must be ^{a surrender} ~~an end~~ even to this, ^{an end to} ~~a surrender~~ of mourning and a return to the tasks and responsibilities of life.

When Rabbi Bunam, renowned Chassidic master, was lying on his death bed his wife wept bitterly, whereupon he reproached her saying: "Don't you know that all my life was given me, merely that I might learn how to ~~renounce~~ die." Life is the great teacher in the art of renouncing. To deny its mandate is to deny the inevitable. To heed it is not only just and right. It is the very gate of wisdom.

Our meditation has confronted us with a two-fold demand of existence and it is puzzling in its paradox: on the one hand we are told to cling to life...on the other hand we are enjoined: learn how to renounce. How can we do both, and at the very same time? More important...why should we do it? We should we fashion things of beauty when what we fashion will ultimately be destroyed? Why should we give our hearts in love when those we love will ultimately be torn from our grasp.

Rosh Hashono, which confronts us with life's paradox, also offers its resolution, for on this day we see our lives as through windows that open on eternity, and then we know that though our flesh is finite, our spirit born of flesh is infinite, that though our days may end, our deeds on earth do weave a pattern that is timeless.

The good we do on earth is not interred with our bones. The beauty that we fashion cannot be dimmed by death. The love we give in life lives on, long after we are gone, to warm the lives of others. When Chanayio ben Teradyon, noblest of Jewish martyrs, was burnt at the stake, wrapped in a scroll of the Law, his pupils, who witnessed his terrible agony cried out: "Our master, our teacher, what seest Thou?...and he replied: "I see the parchment burning, but the letters of the law, they soar on high." Even so it is with us. Our flesh may perish...our hands may wither...but that which they create...in beauty...and in goodness....and in love...^{forever} ~~that lives on for all time to come~~

And so we turn to Him who is enthroned above our praises. Many prayers pour from our lips...many supplications surge from our soul, but none, surely, is more earnest and more incessant than our prayer for life...life mysterious and marvelous...life warm and wonderful...this daily victory over illness and over death...this breath in the lungs...this dance in the limbs...this song of blood in the veins...life to which we cling with all our ~~heart~~ might while yet we may.

אמן / ויהי כבודך כבודך / אמן On Rosh Hashono it is decreed, and on Yom Kippur it is sealed. May we and all our loved ones be inscribed for another year of life and health, and may our lives be filled with much that is beautiful, and good, and true. Amen. Thus may it be.

Amen.



OUTREACH: THE CASE FOR A MISSIONARY JUDAISM

Address of

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler

President

Union of American Hebrew Congregations

to the

Board of Trustees

HOUSTON, TEXAS

DECEMBER 2, 1978

It is good to be here, my friends, good to be re-united with the leaders of Reform Jewry, with men and women from many congregations and communities but of one faith, bound together by a common sacred cause. Your presence here gives us much strength as does your work throughout the year. We are what we are because of you, a product of those rich gifts of mind and heart you bring to our tasks.

It is good to have our number enlarged by the presence of leaders and members of our Southwest congregations. We are grateful for your hospitality. You are true sons and daughters of Abraham whose tent, so the Midrash informs us, has an opening on each of its sides so that whencesoever a stranger might near he would have no difficulty in entering Abraham and Sarah's home.

We are grateful for the sustaining help which you have given us over the years, your material help, and the time and talents and energies of your leaders who have always played an indispensable role in our regional and national councils.

It is not my intention this night to give you a comprehensive report of the Union's activities -- as I do at these Board meetings from time to time -- but rather to offer a resolution which recommends the creation of an agency within our movement involving its every arm which will earnestly and urgently confront the problem of intermarriage in specified areas and in an effort to turn the tide which threatens to sweep us away into directions which might enable us to recover our numbers and, more important, to recharge our inner strength.

I begin with the recognition of a reality: the tide of intermarriage is running against us. The statistics on the subject confirm what our own experience teaches us:

intermarriage is on the rise. Between 1966 and 1972, 31.7 percent of all marriages involving a Jew were marriages between a Jew and a person born a non-Jew. And a recent survey shows that the acceptance of such marriages among Americans in general is on the rise, most dramatically, as we might expect, among Jews.

We may deplore it, we may lament it, we may struggle against it, but these are the facts. The tide is running against us, and we must deal with this threatening reality. Dealing with it does not, however, mean that we must learn to accept it. It does not mean that we should prepare to sit shiva for the American Jewish community. On the contrary, facing and dealing with reality means confronting it, coming to grips with it, determining to reshape it.

Most often, Jewish education - more of it, and better - is put forward as the surest remedy to intermarriage. And, indeed, there is some evidence that suggests that the more the Jewish education, the less the likelihood of intermarriage. But alas, it is not always so. As the Mishnah long ago averred, "Not every knowledgeable Jew is pious", not every educated Jew is a committed Jew.

Nonetheless, we believe in Jewish education, for its own sake as well as because we believe it a powerful defense against the erosion of our people. The bulk of the resources and the energies of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations is invested in programs of formal and informal education of which we are justly proud. We operate summer camps and Israel tours and youth retreats, college weekends and kallahs and teacher training institutes. We generate curricula and texts and educational aids. And some 45,000 youngsters participate each and every year in the programs which we sponsor.

We know that such programs are our first line of defense in the battle against intermarriage. We know as well, however, that they are an imperfect defense, that even among those who are exposed to our most ambitious efforts, there are hundreds, if not thousands, who will intermarry. There is a sting to the honey of freedom.

But we know also that Jewish education is not "wasted" even on those who do intermarry. Study after study informs us that is the Jewish partner of an intermarried couple who is most likely to determine whether or not there will be a conversion to Judaism, and whether or not the children of the couple will be raised as Jews. The richer the background and the stronger the commitment of the Jewish partner, the less likely is the absolute loss.

Most simply stated, the fact of intermarriage does not in and of itself lead to a decline in the Jewish population. As Fred

Massarik, one of our leading demographers, has observed (MOMENT, June 1978), "That decline - if a decline there be - depends on what the Jews who are involved in the intermarriage actually do."

As important as Jewish education is, in this context, I believe that there are other steps we can - and must - take if we are to deal realistically with the threat which intermarriage presents to our survival. And it is on three such steps that I want to focus my attention.

The first of these has to do with the conversion of the non-Jewish partner-to-be. It is time for us to reform our behavior towards those who become Jews-by-Choice, to increase our sensitivity towards them and, thereby, to encourage growth in their numbers.

In most communities, the UAHC offers "Introduction to Judaism" courses, and congregational rabbis spend countless hours providing instruction in Judaism. History and Hebrew are taught, ideas explored, ceremonies described. But there, by and large, our efforts ends. Immediately after the marriage ceremony, we drop the couple and leave them to fend for themselves. We do not offer them help in establishing a Jewish home, in raising their children Jewishly, in grappling with their peculiar problems, in dealing with their special conflicts. More important still, we do not really embrace them, enable them to feel a close kinship with our people.

On the contrary: If the truth be told, we often alienate them. We question their motivations (since only a madman would choose to be a Jew, the convert is either neurotic or hypocritical). We think them less Jewish (ignoring that they often know more about Judaism than born Jews). Unto the end of their days, we refer to them as converts.

A colleague of mine recently received a letter from one who elected to become a Jew:

Dear _____:

I know that I personally resent being referred to as a convert - a word that by now is alien to my heart. My conversion process was nearly ten years ago - I have been a Jew for a long time now. I think, eat and breathe Judaism. My soul is a Jewish soul though I am distinctly aware of my original background and birthright. This does not alter my identity as a Jew. If one is curious about whence I come or if indeed "am I really Jewish," the answer is categorically "Yes, I'm really Jewish - a Jew-by-Choice." I shall continue to grow and to search as a Jew. My "conversion process" was just that - a process which ended with the ceremony. From then on I was a Jew.

Such Jews-by-Choice have special needs and we need special guidance on how to meet those needs. What, for example, is to be done where a convert is more enthusiastic than his/her Jewish-born partner? And what of the past of the new Jew? He may have broken with the past, but in human terms he cannot forget, nor should he be expected to, his non-Jewish parents or family, and, at special times of the year, say Christmas or Easter, he may well feel some ambivalence. And what of the difficult process through which one learns that the adoption of Judaism implies the adoption of a people as well as a faith, of a history as well as a religion of a way of life as well as a doctrine? May this not sometimes seem overwhelming to the new Jew?

It is time for us to stop relating to the new Jews as if they were curiosities, or as if they were superficial people whose conversion to Judaism reflects a lack of principles on their part, a way of accommodating to their partners-to-be. We should do that for their sake, and also for our own. For we need them to be part of our people. They add strength to us only if they are more than a scattering of individuals who happen to share our faith. Newcomers to Judaism, in short, must embark on a long-term naturalization process, and they require knowledgeable and sympathetic guides along the way, that they may feel themselves fully equal members of the synagogue family.

Let there be no holding back. It was Maimonides himself, answering a convert's query, who wrote:

You ask whether you, being a proselyte, may speak the prayers: "God an God of our Fathers" and "Guardian of Israel who has brought us out of the land of Egypt," and the like.

Pronounce all the prayers as they are written and do not change a word. Your prayers and your blessings should be the same as any other Jew...This above all: do not think little of your origin. We may be descended from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but your descent is from the Almighty Himself.

* * *

But we must look beyond conversion. Most of the non-Jewish partners to intermarriage do not convert to Judaism. Such data as we have suggest that two out of every three intermarriages involve a Jewish husband and a non-Jewish wife, and in these cases, one out of four wives converts to Judaism. In the one third of intermarriages which involve a Jewish wife and a non-Jewish husband, the incidence of conversion is much, much lower. But we also know that in very many cases of intermarriage without conversion, there is a "Jewish drift"; Massarik informs us, for example, that "nearly fifty percent of non-Jewish husbands, although they do not formally embrace Judaism by their own

description nonetheless regard themselves as Jews."

I believe that we must do everything possible to draw the non-Jewish spouse of mixed marriage into Jewish life. The phenomenon of Jewish drift teaches us that we ought to be undertaking more intensive Jewish programs which will build on and build up these existing ties, this fledgling sense of Jewish identification. If non-Jewish partners can be brought more actively into Jewish communal life, perhaps they themselves will initiate the process of conversion. At the very least, we will dramatically increase the probability that the children of such marriages will be reared as Jews.

Nor can we neglect to pay attention to the Jewish partners of such marriages. Frequently, they have felt the sting of rejection by the Jewish community, even by their own parents. They may feel guilty, they may feel resentful, they are almost sure to feel some confusion and ambivalence toward active involvement in the community. They may feel inhibited out of a sense of regard for their partner's sensibilities, or out of embarrassment in the face of a community they think will be hostile to their partners.

We must remove the "not wanted" signs from our hearts. We are opposed to intermarriage, but we cannot reject the intermarried. And we cannot but be aware that in our current behavior, we communicate rejection. If Jews-by-Choice often feel alienated by our attitudes and behavior, how much more alienated do the non-Jewish spouses of our children feel?

We can also remove those impediments to a fuller participation which still obtain in all too many of our congregations. Even the strictest halachic approach offers more than ample room to allow the non-Jewish partner to join in most of our ceremonial and life cycle events. The halachah permits non-Jews to be in the synagogue, to sing in the choir, to recite the blessing over the Sabbath and festival candles, and even to handle the Torah. There is no law which forbids a non-Jew to be buried in a Jewish cemetery.

And as for the children born of such a marriage; if the mother is Jewish then the child is regarded as fully Jewish. But if she is not, even Orthodox Judaism, provided the consent of the mother is obtained, permits the circumcision of the boy, his enrollment in religious school and his right to be called to the Torah on the occasion of his bar mitzvah - and everlastingly thereafter, to be considered a full Jew.

All this is possible under Orthodoxy. How much the more so within Reform, which has insisted on the creative unfolding of halachah.

As a case in point, why should a movement which from its very birth-hour insisted on a full equality of men and women in religious life unquestioningly accept the principle that Jewish lineage is valid through the maternal line alone? In fact, a case can be made that there is substantial support within our tradition for the validity of Jewish lineage through the paternal line, and it is this kind of possibility which we should begin energetically to explore. I am not scholar enough to propose an instant revision in our standard practice; but I do think it is important that we seek ways to harmonize our tradition with our needs.

It may well be that when we have done that, our collective wisdom and our concern for Jewish unity will lead us to conclude that there are certain privileges which simply cannot be extended to non-Jews. If that proves to be the case, then I am confident that the thoughtful non-Jew who is favorably disposed to Judaism will recognize and respect what we have concluded, and will understand that conversion remains the path of entry to the totality of what Judaism has to offer.

Let no one misinterpret and infer that I am here endorsing intermarriage. I deplore intermarriage, and I discourage it. I struggle against it, as a rabbi and as the father of five children. But if all our efforts do not suffice - and, manifestly, they do not do we really to banish our children, to sit shiva over them? No. Our task then is to draw them even closer to our hearts, to do everything we can to make certain that our grandchildren will nonetheless be Jews, that they will be part of our community and share the destiny of our people.

* * *

I now come to the third and likely the most controversial aspect of the matter. I believe that the time has come for the Reform movement - and others, if they are so disposed - to launch a carefully conceived Outreach program aimed at all Americans who are unchurched and who are seeking religious meaning.

It would be easy to tip-toe here, to use obfuscatory language and be satisfied to hint at my purpose. But I will not. Unabashedly and urgently, I propose that we resume our vocation as champions of Judaism, that we move from passive acceptance to affirmative action.

No, I do not have in mind some kind of traveling religious circus. I envisage instead the development of a dignified and responsible approach. Let us establish information centers in many places, well-publicized courses in our synagogues, and the development of suitable publications to serve these facilities and purposes. In short, I propose that we response openly and positively to those God-seekers whose search leads them to our

door, who voluntarily ask for our knowledge.

I do not suggest that we strive to wean people from the religions of their choice, with or without the boast that ours is the only true and valid faith; I do not suggest that we enter into rivalry with all established churches. I want to reach a different audience entirely. I want to reach the unchurched, those reared in non-religious homes or those who have become disillusioned with their taught beliefs. I want to reach those seekers after truth who require a religion which tolerates - more than tolerates, encourages - all questions. I want especially to reach the rootless and the alienated who need the warmth and comfort of a people known for its close family ties, a people of ancient and noble lineage.

The notion that Judaism is not a propagating faith is far from the truth. It has been a practiced truth for the last four centuries, but it was not true for the forty centuries before. Abraham was a convert, and our tradition lauds his missionary zeal. Isaiah enjoined us to be a "light unto the nations" and insisted that God's house be a "house of prayer for all peoples." Ruth of Moab, a heathen by birth, became the ancestress of King David. Zechariah foresaw the time when men of every tongue would grasp a Jew by the corner of his garment and say, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."

During the Maccabean period, Jewish proselytizing activity reached its zenith: schools for missionaries were established, and by the beginning of the Christian era they had succeeded in converting ten percent of the population of the Roman Empire - roughly four million people.

It is true that the Talmud insists that we test the sincerity of the convert's motivations by discouraging him, by warning him of the hardships he will have to endure as a Jew. But the Talmud also says that while we are "to push converts away with the left hand" we ought to "draw them near with the right."

After Christianity became the established religion of the Roman Empire, and later, again, when Islam conquered the world, Jews were forbidden to seek converts or to accept them. The death penalty was fixed for the gentile who became a Jew and also for the Jew who welcomed him. Many were actually burned at the stake, and the heat of the flames cooled our conversionist ardor. Even so, it was not until the 16th century that we abandoned all proselytizing efforts; only then did our rabbis begin their systematic rejection of those who sought to join us.

But this is America and it is 1979. No repressive laws restrain us. The fear of persecution no longer inhibits us. There is no earthly - and surely no heavenly - reason why we cannot reassume our ancient vocation and open our arms to all newcomers.

Why are we so hesitant? Are we ashamed? Do we really believe that one must be a madman to embrace Judaism? Let us shuck our insecurities; let us recapture our self esteem; let us, by all means, demonstrate our confidence in the value of our faith.

For we live in a time when millions of our fellow-Americans are in search of meaning. Tragically, many of the seekers go astray, and some fall prey to cultic enslavement. Searching for meaning, they find madness instead.

Well, Judaism offers life, not death. It teaches free will, not the surrender of body and soul to another human being. The Jew prays directly to God, not through an intermediary who stands between him and his God. Judaism is a religion of hope, not despair. Judaism insists that man and society are perfectible. Judaism has an enormous wealth of wisdom and experience to offer in and to this anguished world, and we Jews ought to be proud to speak about it, to speak frankly and freely, with enthusiasm and with dignity.

AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

There is tension in the air; there is trouble in our hearts. Men and women are restless, in quest. But the restlessness is not born of despair, the quest is not the child of hopelessness. People want meaning; they want to find a way that makes sense, and matters, and they are determined to succeed. Properly addressed, responded to with sensitivity, the quest becomes an adventure of the spirit, the discovery a nourishment to a hunger that is growing day by day. The prophet Amos spoke of such a hunger when he said,

Behold, the Day cometh, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine into the land. Not a famine of bread nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord.

Has the spirit of our age ever been more vividly captured? Is there anywhere a more striking metaphor for our time?

And have we not, we Jews, water to slake the thirst and bread to sate the great hunger? And having it, are we not obliged - for our own sake as well as for those who seek that which we have - to offer it freely and proudly?

*

*

*

RESOLUTION

Rapid demographic change is doing much to affect the future of American Jewry. Among the significant and critical demographic trends are: the growth of mixed-marriage, the decline of the Jewish birth-rate relative to the general population, and an increase in the numbers of non-Jews converting to Judaism. These trends require our profound, serious and continuing attention. They call for creative leadership so that we reach out to shape our future and do not become passive products of forces beyond our own control.

Accordingly, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, at its Board meeting in Houston on December 2, 1978, resolves:

- 1) To intensify our formal and informal Jewish educational programs within the Reform synagogue and the Reform Jewish movement to stimulate positive and knowledgeable Jewish identification.
- 2) To develop a sensitive program of welcoming and involving converts to Judaism, recognizing that those who choose Judaism in good faith are as authentic in their Jewish identity as those who are born Jewish.
- 3) To develop an effective Outreach program by which the Reform synagogue can seek out mixed married couples in order to respond to the particular emotional and social stresses in their situations and to make the congregations, the rabbi, and Judaism itself available to them and their families.
- 4) To plan a special program to bring the message of Judaism to any and all who wish to examine or embrace it. Judaism is not an exclusive club of born Jews; it is a universal faith with an ancient tradition which has deep resonance for people alive today.
- 5) To implement these principles, we call upon the Chairman of the Board to appoint a special task force of members of the Board, to examine these recommendations for implementation in all program departments of the UAHC and to report back to the Spring 1979 meetings of the Board.

November 6, 1978

Leonard Fein, Editor
MOMENT
462 Boylston Street
Boston, Mass. 02216

Dear Len:

Enclosed is an article I did for MA'ARIV. It was translated into Hebrew for publication in Israel. I thought you might find it to be of interest for the readers of MOMENT.

With fondest regards and looking forward to having you with us in Houston, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

A JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM
REMINISCENCES AND REFLECTIONS

by

ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER

Although my official term as Chairman of the Presidents' Conference ended last July, from a substantive point of view the Camp David agreements really brought the years of my service to their full cycle.

This is a proper time for the backward glance, and I am grateful for the opportunity provided by Maariv to set my impressions pen to paper. It will be impossible, though, to offer anything comprehensive in the framework of a single article. My experiences were too diverse for that. They encompassed a change of administration in America and Israel alike, and that emotion-laden roller-coaster ride of events which began with the peace initiatives of last Fall and culminated in the full vindication of Israel's negotiating stance in the Maryland summit a month ago.

Let me focus, then, in this initial essay, on my journey to Israel immediately following her national elections. This trip gave me my first chance for serious conversations with Menachem Begin and set the course of our future relationship.

* * * *

The Likud victory stunned the American Jewish community, especially her establishment. Most of our national organizational presidents had spent a life-time working with the leaders of Israel's Labor Alignment, so much so that they had come to identify them with the State; Labor was Israel and Israel Labor. Now, suddenly, all the familiar landmarks were gone.

Many had met Begin, to be sure, but they really didn't know him. And the little they knew, they didn't like. He was a man from the right, a radical, an extremist in word and deed. They were afraid of the unknown, afraid of those direction for the future which his past pre-saged, afraid of how the American people would react to this new leadership.

I, too, was taken aback. I had accepted the conventional wisdom which predicted a diminution of Labor's plurality but still left the Alignment in power. Yehuda Hellman, the Conference's devoted Executive, called me late on election day to confirm the final count; and I spent the remainder of the night adjusting to the new reality and weighing the options which were open before us.

I had but little choice. As Conference Chairman it was my overriding task to maintain the unity of American Jewry in support of Israel, and there clearly was no way

to summon support for a nation without also calling for the support of her democratically elected government. In any event, I felt it only just and right to give the newly elected Prime Minister an opportunity to form his government, to refine his program, and to present it to his nation, to America and the world.

On the morrow, I sent the Prime Minister designate a congratulatory cable pledging our community's support, and I called on America's Jews to provide this support.

I reminded them that we were never "the servants of a particular party or the instruments of a governmental coalition" but rather that we are "impelled by love for the people of Israel" and by the "sacred obligation to secure their safety." The Israel Bond Organization was especially helpful in making certain that this message reached every city, town, and hamlet of our country.

The media was not at all receptive to the voice of patience. To be sure, the New York Times adopted a 'wait and see' attitude, perhaps reflecting Washington's still uncertain reaction -- when it comes to Israel the New York Times almost always dances to the tune which the oval office plays. But most other columnists and editorial writers had a field day in invective. They sharpened their talons and feasted on Begin. He was held personally responsible for all acts of terror in the Middle East, those which were committed in the past and those which would yet be committed in that war which

was now imminent because of his election. "Begin (pronounced like Feigen)^a" screeched TIME Magazine, limning the level of the day's editorial discourse.

For 48 hours I sat by the phone, calling reporters, answering their calls -- to no avail. I sensed that some dramatic gesture was needed to gain attention, and I conceived of a quick trip to Israel following which, perhaps, someone would listen. ~~Follow me.~~

By curious coincidence, Begin's son, then studying at an American university in the West, called me up to bemoan the media's tone and to ask what I, what he could do to alter things. I suggested the Israel journey and asked him to ascertain his father's reaction.

On Friday, May 24th, the Presidents' Conference met with Stuart Eizenstat in Washington to be briefed concerning the Carter administration's unfolding domestic program. Privately, I told Stuart of my projected journey; he thought it a good idea and asked me to come to The White House immediately on my return to the States. Officials at the State Department had a like reaction.

Not so the Israel Embassy! I had asked Yehuda to cover that base while I was en route to see Habib at State.

And when Hellman finally caught up with me at the National Airport, he told me that Simcha Dinitz had earnestly urged him to restrain me from going to Israel. "Why should Alex commit himself so soon," he said, "it is unseemly for him to do so. Why so great a hurry? Begin may not even be able to form a government. Besides, he is not well."

Dinitz had always counselled me wisely. He was and is a superb spokesman for his nation; indeed, I subsequently urged Begin to keep him in Washington as long as possible. This time, however, I felt that Simcha's view was distorted, that he saw things through partisan rather than patriotic lenses. And so I disregarded him.

In curious contrast, Chaim Herzog's instincts had been sounder. He was on television fending Begin's rights within an hour after the election results were announced. As usual, directives of the Foreign Ministry were slow in coming; each man was on his own. Be that as it may, while still at National Airport, I dropped some coins into a pay phone, reached Begin at the Sharon Hotel in Herzliyah, wished him a "shabbat shalom" and set the hour of our meetings.

As matters transpired, we delayed our journey for a day, because of Begin's sudden hospitalization. There were some further endeavors to dissuade us from going. Zalman Abramov counselled: "I've known Begin the better part of my life. He is rigid and will never change. I agree that he may not be able to form a government. But even if he does, he won't last long." Still, I persisted in my judgment and on motze Shevuot -- as soon as Kaddishai assured us that Begin would be strong enough to see us -- Yehuda and I enplaned.

Derech Eretz demanded that we visit Rabin first. He had re-seized the reins of the prime-ministership for the transition period and held office. But Moshe Raviv, who met us at Lod, as was his wont, whisked us off to see his minister first.

Allon, while dismayed by the election results, seemed not dejected. He is, by nature, a cheerful, optimistic man.

In fact, when we entered his office he sat pencil in hand carefully counting the Knesset votes to show how Begin might just miss in his efforts to gain majority support -- assuming, of course, no Labor defections and a holding-of-the-line by Dash.

But he, too, must have realized all this was wistful, wishful thinking, for in our conversations -- just as soon as I had given him a brief report on reaction in America -- he addressed me not so much as Chairman of the Presidents' Conference but rather as the head of America's Reform Jewish community. He spoke of the World Zionist Organization and his desire for increasing involvement in its work. He felt that this forum could provide the Labor Party an opportunity to regroup its forces and to develop new leadership. And he wondered whether the Reform movement and Labor might not find common ground for cooperative endeavor here. I readily agreed that while no permanent alliance was likely, given our ideological affinity as manifested by many past joint ventures with the Kibbutz movement and in particular with its Ichud faction, ground for common work would indeed be found.

Early next morning we met with the Prime Minister. Rabin was in a mellow mood, loose, loquacious, most gracious in his reception.

This was a refreshing departure from past pattern. Our earlier meetings had always been most formal, cold in fact, a quick in and out, a mumbled word or tow, ^(w) no give-and- take to speak of, scarcely a contact of the eye. It was difficult to escape the conclusion that the Presidents' Conference and those organizations of which it is comprised did not rank very high on the scale of the Prime Minister's worths. At times, I even harbored the suspicion that the Presidents' Conference was deemed not so much an instrument to marshal support of America's Jews but rather to "manage" them, to keep them out from under foot.

Be that as it may, at our final meeting, Rabin was most kind. He analyzed the then-present problems confronting Israel in the foreign policy arena, evincing his considerable grasp pf the geo-political factors at play.

The only other member of the "old guard" with whom we had a lengthy meeting on this journey was Shimon Peres. We met with him late one afternoon in the misrad sar habitachon. The Defense Minister was dejected. He felt spent. He likened his burden in leading the election campaign to that of a pilot compelled to "fly a plane with two of its wings sheared off." He did confess, though, to some "lightness of spirit" which came with the easing of ultimate responsibility to other shoulders.

Navon was present at this meeting and joined our conversations which took on something of a nostalgic tone what with its remembrances of things past. Turning to the future, I urged Navon seriously to consider the presidency of the World Zionist Organization, for which his name had already been informally proposed. It seemed so natural a course, given that affection and esteem in which Navon is held by Jews of every kind in every corner of the world. Little did I know then that he was destined for far higher office. His gifts of mind and spirit are rich. He will bring further honor to that already highly honored post of Israel's presidency.

One of my purposes in coming to Israel was to do what little I could to enlarge the coalition of the emerging government. Political considerations were not at all at play in my thinking. I was moved solely by my desire to maintain American Jewish unity: the broader the representation of Israel's administration the larger the number of American Jews who will identify with it. Josef Burg, the genial, statesmanlike leader of the Mavdal -- in whose company I always delight for I always learn from him -- understood our problem at once. "What you don't need," he said, "is a government which is narrowly clerical-fascist in its make-up," using these terms not in their ordinary meaning but rather metaphorically, to dramatize the issue in all of its stark reality.

Dash was the natural first target. Levenson of Bank Hapoalim, who was on our flight, shared my concerns and conclusions and urged me to see Yadin as soon as possible. While still on the plane, then, I radioed ahead to make arrangements. With that chutzpah to which I am frequently prone, my message -- relayed courtesy of the El Al pilot via Eli Eyal, my very good friend and one of Yadin's lieutenants -- read something like this: "The issue no longer is electoral reform. The issue is foreign policy. Urge you to join the government as quickly as possible." Yadin was good enough to give us a good deal of his time. We met at least twice, the first time for two full hours. Our conversations revealed my ignorance of Israel's political system and the wide gap obtaining between its mode of operation and politics on the American scene. As a case in point, when I enjoined Yadin to move quickly, to approach Begin at once to offer his support and to set his party's counter requests, he replied something to the effect that "Dash has 15 seats, let him come to me." About all I could do was lamely to reply that the American pattern is different. When Kennedy won the presidency by a fraction of one per-cent, but little over 100,000 votes out of the tens of millions cast, nonetheless he was the President and everyone came to him. "In America, late-comers don't catch the bus or when they do get only a back seat. He who gets there first ends up with the best. Sometimes he even becomes Secretary of State."

Yadin impressed me as a man who cannot easily make up his mind or else was so constrained by the divergent forces within his own party that he could not move. This may not be a fair assessment, I was only an interested spectator as it were and this is how I saw the play. I was not in, on the actual negotiations and the other side may well not have been willing to deal.

At midnight, after our first Yadin session, we received a call from Dan Pat^{ir}'s wife, Yael, to tell us that Dayan had just been proposed as the Foreign Minister of the new government.

Dayan's designation pleased me. Here, at last, was one familiar landmark which American Jews would recognize, a leader with whom they could readily identify. His abilities were rightly-recognized, and in America the events of 1973 left none of those deep wounds which still were bleeding on the Israel scene; Dayan's reputation remained virtually untarnished. His familiarity with the mindset of the Arab world was well known and he was perceived to be^a/flexible, skilled negotiator. On more than one occasion Kissinger had told me: "I could not have successfully concluded Sinai II without Dayan's imaginative projections and I say this even though Dayan has frequently taken issue and belittled me."

I called the Foreign Minister-designate to congratulate him and offered to arrange a meeting with Sam Lewis. Wisely, Dayan declined, deeming such a meeting prior to

his confirmation premature.

Subsequent events, I fully believe, vindicated Begin's choice. Once the fuller story is told and heard, we will learn just how significant a role Dayan played in those events which culminated in a separate agreement between Egypt and Israel.

* * *

Our breakfast session with Weizman merits mention. Ezer was understandably exuberant and took just pride in his role spearheading the Likud election victory. Chosen to be the Minister of Defense, he had already been briefed concerning the state of Israel's forces and resources and was most pleased with what he learned. He was especially impressed with that quantity and quality of weaponry with which the United States had resupplied Israel since '73.

I found Weizman much more even tempered and serious than on previous occasions. I first met him some months earlier, at a social gathering in the home of mutual friends, Zvi and Rolly Efron, where I adjudged him a man of volatile temperament -- impulsive, impetuous, volcanic, ever ready to burst forth. It is this irrepressible quality, I believe, which gives him so much of his charm but which also keeps many from according him that complete confidence for highest office to which his endowments and leadership qualities may well entitle him.

Even during our pre-election meeting and now again at our breakfast -- all this long before the Sadat Jerusalem journey -- Weizman expressed his conviction that a Likud government could and would achieve a separate peace agree-

ment with Egypt and even Syria. It is an assurance which did not waiver until his Salzburg meetings with Sadat.

When five American Jewish leaders, I among them, sat with Begin, Dayan and Weizman on the day before Camp David, Begin was supremely confident; Dayan more cautiously so ("I am not at all pessimistic; I see many openings");

Weizman felt that the opportunity had slipped through Israel's fingers and despaired of the summit's success. His wit had not dampened as had his confidence, for when Begin introduced him as "our Sadatolog," Weizman quickly rejoined "I am glad you did not call me your Sadatist, Mr. Prime Minister."

* * *

My ultimate purpose in coming to Israel, of course, was to meet with Begin, to get to know him and his program so that on my return to America I could help reshape his image which the media had so grossly distorted.

I met Begin twice and at some length, first in the hospital and the second time in his modest ground-level, two room Tel-Aviv apartment. Our conversations were somewhat constrained by the circumstances of our meeting. In their substance they were not memorable by any manner of means. A hospital room with its inevitable flow of doctors scanning the chest and nurses administering pills does not exactly lend itself to that intellectual probing which such an occasion ordinarily demands. Yet I honestly feel that I got to know the man. For ofttimes when you observe a man's reaction in moments of stress or when you see him in the setting of his home, surrounded by friends, responding to his wife and she to him, why then you can learn a great deal more about him than you can when he wears the

mask of the ideolog engaged in debate. You get to know him with a knowledge of his heart, to feel him, as I felt Begin - and I responded to what I felt.

I felt him to be a man of integrity, moved by the highest ideals of our people, in whose pattern of worths the quest for peace is a predominant design.

I sensed his abounding love for the Jewish people, which makes everything else, even the machinery of the State, but an instrument of that peoples will and need.

The mystic within me, though other directed, responded to Begin's mystical love for the land.

But I also felt his respect for the integrity of every Jewish community, not just for those communities built on holy soil.

I don't mean to suggest that Begin "can't do wrong by me." He has pursued policies with which I disagree, said things which made me shudder with dismay. In a word, "by me" Begin is no saint, nor angel, just a man - but what a man.

I always felt free to give expression to my disagreements when I deemed them of sufficient worth; he always listened with respect. When he rejected some counsel I offered he always took the trouble patiently to explain just why he could not do as I hoped. He was the first Israeli leader, sometimes I think even the only Israeli, who ever said to me, "I think you've got a point."

The candor of our relationship was set even at the hospital when I told Begin that his Kadoum appearance did not exactly serve to soften his image. He mumbled something about "what's wrong with holding a Torah, rabbi?" I replied, "there is

indeed nothing wrong with holding a Torah, it's what you said when you held that Torah that was troublesome." He grumbled some more and I added, "do you want me to tell you what I think you want to hear or rather what I believe to be true?" Of course, he wanted the truth, he said, what else could he say. But he always accepted it no matter how unpleasant and always he listened.

This, then, was the making of what an Israeli journalist called "the oddcouple." Yet given our common commitments, which are far more fundamental than our differences (right vs. left, traditional vs. reform, etc) our relationship is not so odd after all. It is fed by the fire of the nekuda yehudit, of the pintele yid.

I returned to America to say what in all candor I had planned to say no matter what, but could now say with deepfelt conviction: that Begin is a patriot; that he desires above all to bring peace to his people; that I deem him capable of making the transition from candidacy to incumbency; and that while he is an ideolog from one end of the political spectrum, he would undoubtedly be "sucked in by the center," as Walter Lippman put it; compelled to respond to the consensus of the nation. I said all this at The White House. I reported it to Secretary of State Vance. I said it again at the press conferences which followed these visits. I repeated it to the entire American Jewish community which, I strongly suspect, would have remained united in its support of Israel even without me and my journey - but perhaps I helped a little.

RETHINKING THE INTER- MARRIAGE CRISIS

81

FRED MASSARIK

"MOMENT"

JUNE 1978

"Intermarriage is the preeminent threat to Jewish survival."

Obvious, isn't it? Year after year, as the statistics become more and more grim, the panic increases. Especially since the late 1960's, when estimates placed the intermarriage rate for Jews at near forty percent, the widespread assumption has been that America's Jews are marrying themselves out of existence.

But that which is obvious is not always true, and while there is some merit to the assumed link between intermarriage and population decline, this link deserves very careful examination. And when it is examined in all its complexity, we learn that many current articles overstate considerably the danger we face. They follow a long-

Fred Massarik is Professor of Behavioral Science at the Graduate School of Management, UCLA. His books include Leadership and Organization—Mathematical Explorations in Behavioral Science as well as many articles on population and the American Jewish community. He has served as Scientific Director, National Jewish Population Study, and as President of the Association for Humanistic Psychology.

standing tradition of panic-sowing which, on the basis of inadequate and complex data, has predicted the destruction of American Jewry through its own devices. My own perspective is very different.

The very first thing we need to notice about intermarriage studies—and let us, for the time being, define intermarriage as most people understand it, simply as a formal marital union between a person who is Jewish, by one definition or another, to a person who, before the marriage, is not Jewish—is that if a Jewish man and a Jewish woman who might have married each other, instead both marry non-Jews, we now have two marriages where there would have been one.

Now, if we have two marriages where there would have been one, if only half the children are raised as Jews, there will be as many Jewish children as there would have been if the two Jews had married each other. So, too, if both raise their children as Jews, then there will be even more Jewish children than there would have been without the two intermarriages.

In short, the fact of intermarriage does not necessarily lead to a decline in the Jewish population. That decline—if decline there be—depends on what the Jews who are

involved in intermarriage do.

And the research findings show that it is by no means the case that all, or nearly all, children of intermarriage leave the Jewish fold. On the contrary—if the female parent is Jewish, chances that the children will be raised as Jews are extremely high, nor are they insignificant, even though they are lower, when it is the father who is Jewish.

By and large, it appears that the net loss in Jewish upbringing of about one half of all "potential" Jewish children is counterbalanced (other things being equal) by the doubling of the number of marriages. Long-term, it is even conceivable that the fact of intermarriage might lead to some Jewish population growth, rather than the decline which is widely assumed or the stand-off which is more nearly the actual present case.

(Indeed, there are other nascent social trends which may have a much larger impact on Jewish population in this country than intermarriage has. The number of people, Jewish included, who now opt for the single life appears to be increasing. Some of the "permanent" singles may, of course, adopt or raise children out of wedlock, but the net impact of the growing tendency to reject marriage will, if

Pattern I
In marriage

	husband	wife
when meeting	J	J
at wedding	J	J
later in life	J	J

(P. 2)

Pattern II
Inter marriage

	husband	wife
when meeting	J	Non-J
at wedding	J	converts to J
later in life	J	converts to J

(wife converts)

Pattern III
Inter marriage

	husband	wife
when meeting	Non-J	J
at wedding	Non-J	J
later in life	Non-J	J

(husband does not convert)

Pattern IV
Inter marriage

	husband	wife
when meeting	Non-J	J
at wedding	Non-J	J
later in life	J?	J

(Non-Jewish husband drifts to Jewishness)

it continues, act as a brake on Jewish population growth—or even as an accelerator to Jewish population decline. Nor can we be sure that the new legitimacy attached to the “gay life” will not have a similar effect.)

If only it were quite that simple. It isn't. Intermarriage is not only a problem for the community, it is a problem for those who study it. And for them, the problem starts with the very definition of the term itself. The first question is, for each husband and each wife, whether the person is Jewish, not Jewish, or is of some ambiguous religious-ideological status (part Jewish, etc.) at three different time periods—when meeting the prospective spouse, then again at the time of the wedding (since there may have been a premarital conversion), and then still again later in life (that is, after the wedding ceremony).

Homing in still further, we have two kinds of formal conversions—one in, the other out of Judaism—and we have also to take into consideration a “drift” towards or away from Jewish self-description. This additional element produces a bewildering range of possibilities and patterns, as can be seen in the first diagram.

The first pattern is simple enough: a marriage between two Jews (in-marriage). The second pattern describes a Jewish husband who chooses a prospective spouse who is not Jewish at the time of their meeting, but who converts to Judaism before the wedding and is now, therefore, part of a Jewish marriage. The third refers to a situation in which the non-Jewish husband remains non-Jewish, while the wife continues in her Jewishness, resulting in a “typical” intermarriage: husband non-Jewish, wife Jewish. In the fourth pattern, the non-Jewish husband “drifts” into Jewishness, without benefit of conversion, thus creating a quasi-Jewish family setting. (Other patterns can be readily inferred from these examples.)

It is apparent, in short, that there are many different family situations which are described by the

term “intermarriage.” When rates of intermarriage are cited, it is important to know what kinds of marriages are included and what kinds are excluded.

The impact of conversion on intermarriage is considerable. Available data suggest that among non-Jewish wives, nearly forty percent claim conversion to Judaism. Actual percentages may be somewhat smaller, probably a shade below thirty percent. Conversely, among non-Jewish husbands, the rate of conversion to Judaism is probably not more than three percent. But here is where we see the phenomenon of “Jewish drift:” between forty and fifty percent, by their own description, regard themselves as Jewish.

This is, obviously, a very important phenomenon. Just as there are different degrees of Jewish commitment among people who were born Jews, so, too, are there different degrees of commitment to their non-Jewish religion by non-Jewish marriage partners. When such commitment is slight, as seems often to be the case, there is considerable readiness to embrace Jewish values or selected ritual aspects of Jewish life—the more so, of course, when this pleases the Jewish spouse. In other words, there are degrees of non-Jewishness; the non-Jewishness of the non-Jewish partner may be absolute in a halachic legal sense, but it is variable in the life and behavior of the couple.

Similarly, there is, for some Jews involved in intermarriage, a drift away from Judaism. The interesting question here is whether such a drift is greater among the intermarried than it is among in-married Jews. And the intriguing possibility, which surely violates most of our preconceptions, is that precisely because there is a drift towards Jewishness among some intermarried non-Jews, and a drift away from Jewishness among some in-married Jews, the quality of Jewish life may be as rich among some intermarried families as among many of the in-married.

The central point, then, is that knowing the rate of intermarriage

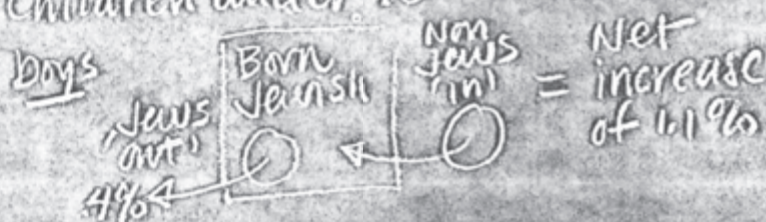
does not tell us nearly enough. What we are really after is data on the effects of intermarriage that is directly relevant to an understanding of the quality of Jewish life. Let us, therefore, turn to the data.

The National Jewish Population Study (NJPS), conducted in 1970–71 under the auspices of the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, is the only comprehensive country-wide inquiry focused exclusively on the Jewish population of the United States. The NJPS philosophy was to “cast the broadest possible net” in defining Jewishness, an approach which differs from the traditional by including a much wider variety of Jewish “styles.” While the rapidity and volatility of social change mean that the data of the NJPS study are somewhat dated, reviewing those data is still useful.

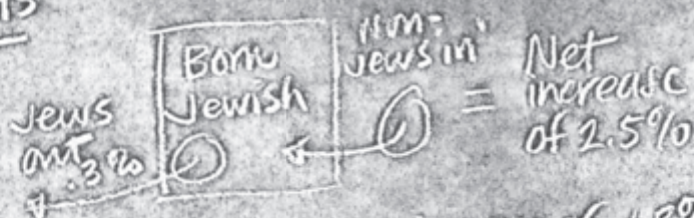
In the diagram (p. 32) two groups of particular concern for Jewish survival can be examined: children under ten, and adults in the most critical reproductive age, twenty to twenty-nine. (In view of the burgeoning intermarriage rate in the late 1960's, the adults included in this group are of special relevance, since they are more likely than other groups to be involved in intermarriage.) Now suppose that we start with all those who report that they were born Jewish, and use that as our base line—100 percent. The question we want to ask is whether this 100 percent is increased or diminished by the process of intermarriage. We can work our way towards the answer by comparing the number of “Jews out”—those who overtly leave Judaism, by conversion or by other explicit disaffiliation—to “Jews in”—the non-Jews who convert to Judaism or who abandon their non-Jewish identities for some kind of commitment to Jewish life. (Here we can see the virtue of the all-inclusive approach of the NJPS. It excludes only those who explicitly deny all Jewish antecedents, such as their parents' Jewishness. Because of that, the study reflects reasonably well the outflow from Judaism, which most such studies

Inflow and Outflow

Children under 10



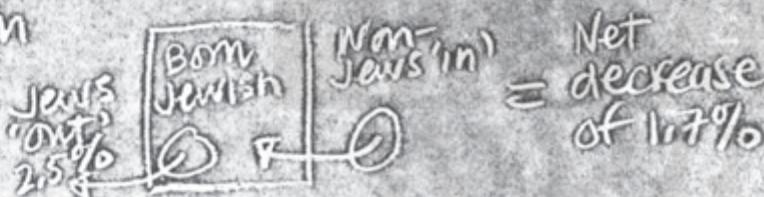
girls



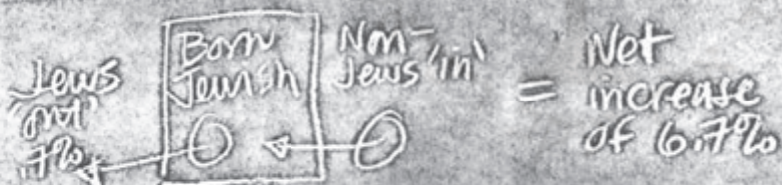
All children show a net increase of 1.8%

Adults, 20-29 years old

men

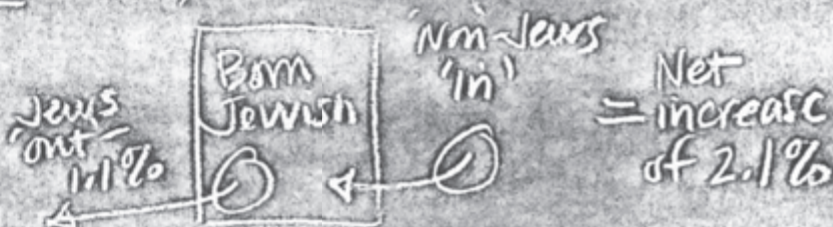


women



Adults show a net increase of 2.3%

All people, under 10 and 20-29 years old



do not pick up.)

When we examine the data, we see that for both children under 10 and for adults in the 20-29 category, inflow into Jewish population exceeds outflow from Jewish population. With the "born Jewish" as the 100 percent base, we find a net increase of 1.8 percent for the children and of 2.3 percent for the adults. The combined net increase for the two age-groups is just about 2 percent.

There are, however, some interesting exceptions and variations among the several age and sex categories. The loss to the Jewish population is greatest for male adults, where a 2.5 percent outflow is not fully counterbalanced by a compensating inflow, leading to a net decline of 1.7 percent below the original level of the Jewish born. But for adult females, the picture is sharply different. Here, primarily as a result of conversions to Judaism associated with marriage of initially non-Jewish women to Jewish men, a net increase of 6.7 percent above the "born Jewish" base is registered; inflow exceeds outflow by a nearly 11 to 1 margin.

This form of analysis focuses on relative change in Jewish population, beyond levels provided by Jewish birth. Therefore, it does not address the issue of total 'raw' numbers. In the example we have been dealing with, we note that adults who were in their early twenties at the time of the study were born during the post-World War II baby boom, while the children under ten were born during period of declining birth rates. As we can see in the next diagram, the actual number of adults in the ten year span 20-29 significantly exceeds the number of children in the ten year span from birth to ten. This contrast holds for both the born-Jewish and the non-Jewish groups. There are nearly one-quarter more adults than there are children. Since mortality and immigration are of minor consequence for the two age groups we are looking at, it is evident that having children has greater impact on the size of Jewish population than inter-

marriage has. In the language of the demographer, fertility is a more critical factor in determining Jewish population size than identity change or intermarriage.

If fertility is more important than intermarriage, and if, in any case, the net effect of intermarriage may be an increase in Jewish population rather than a decrease, why the panic about intermarriage? What has captured the attention of people, evidently, is the growth in the rate of intermarriage, independent of its effects. The fact is that in the mid-1960's, the Jewish intermarriage rate rose from its prior level (typically less than 10 percent) to more than twice that level, and then doubled again in the late 1960's, moving to some 40 percent.

We must be very cautious here. The figures cited refer to the intermarriage rates for marriages established within specified five-year intervals. A significant increase in the intermarriage rate for one five-year grouping is then superimposed on an "inventory" of already existing marriages, many of them formed years ago when the intermarriage rate was very much lower. Accordingly, while the trends of the 1960's appear to be continuing, they are adding intermarriages on top of an older base constituted mostly by in-marriages. That is why it is important to distinguish between the proportion of all existing marriages that are intermarriages and the proportion of intermarriages among marriages formed within a specific time period. Given current trends, the proportion will be considerably higher for marriages formed within more recent periods than for the entire population of the married.

I cannot here address at length the issue of the quality of Jewish life as it is affected by intermarriage. No one conclusion describes the complex data. Rather, we need to separate consideration of various marriage types. The data confirm the logic discussed earlier: Jewish life patterns differ between marriages in which the Jewish partner is a man and those where the

Jewish partner is a woman. Further, important differences appear when the non-Jewish spouse has converted to Judaism. Here, quite clearly, the result is a Jewish marriage in every sense of the word, with heightened commitment to Jewish life, including synagogue membership and attendance, as well as activity in Jewish community organizations. Yet the line of cause is not clear: Jews who end up in marriages involving conversion by non-Jews may in fact come from more positive Jewish backgrounds to begin with. Once again, we can see that we are not dealing here with absolute categories. The prospect of conversion to Judaism may well be contingent not only on the degree of commitment to his non-Jewish religion of the non-Jewish spouse, but also on the degree of commitment to Judaism of the Jewish spouse. (We may assume, indeed, that the higher the commitment of the Jew to Judaism, the greater the likelihood that a romantic attachment to a non-Jew will be to a "weak" non-Jew, one with a relatively low commitment to his non-Jewish faith—and, therefore, a "riper" candidate for conversion.)

The evidence does, in fact, show that there is a strong relationship between the nature of Jewish upbringing and both the likelihood and kind of eventual intermarriage. Those who are in-married are, as we would expect, more likely to describe their upbringing as "strongly Jewish." And Jewish husbands with non-Jewish wives are less likely to report a "strongly Jewish" upbringing than Jewish wives with non-Jewish husbands. (Unfortunately, from the standpoint of Jewish population, there are a good many more intermarriages where the husband is Jewish than where the wife is Jewish.)

There is little doubt that the Jews of the United States will continue to experience a high rate of intermarriage. Since the NJPS study of 1970-71, several additional studies, all more limited, have been conducted. These tend to substantiate the assertion that the rate will continue to be high. It is worth noting

here that studies of Jewish intermarriage are almost never comprehensive enough to provide us with genuinely representative intermarriage statistics. Most intermarriage studies, in order to provide enough "cases," are based on a search for intermarried families. This leads the researcher to look for visible intermarriages, those in which the Jewishness of the Jewish partner is openly acknowledged—intermarriages involving conversion to Judaism, or those known to the rabbinate, or those still connected in some way to Jewish life. Obviously, such high visibility presents a distorted picture. It tends to exclude from consideration those who truly seek to escape from their Jewishness. Hence the studies we have, and the portrait of the intermarried that emerges from them, cannot be taken as accurate representations of all the intermarried.

What can we learn from all this? Above all, we must avoid the temptation, ingrained though it be, to leap to doomsday conclusions.

Intermarriage in its widest sense need not imply Jewish population loss nor even inevitable decline in the quality of Jewish life. Intermarriage is a variable, not a constant; intermarriage creates risks, but it creates opportunities as well. Given the prospect of a continuing high incidence of intermarriage, it may be that more resources should be invested in maximizing the opportunity that intermarriage presents, rather than in focusing all our effort on affecting the rate itself. This "heresy" is not a backdoor way of saying that intermarriage is "good" for the Jews, or that efforts to affect the rate of intermarriage are necessarily doomed. It is a way of saying that intermarriage is considerably more complex a phenomenon than we have generally assumed, and that the intelligent investment of communal resources—among other things, in updated studies of the phenomenon and its effects—may provide startling benefits to a community for which survival remains a pressing problem. *

Remarks of
Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler

March 23, 1978
New York, N.Y.

COMMUNITY MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER BEGIN

This is a most appropriate day for our gathering, for today is Purim, that bitter-sweet festival of agonizing memory and vindicated hope. It is a day which bespeaks our mood of the moment: once again we are beset; seething waters threaten to carry us away. But we will not let them. The torrents will not sweep over us, for the Eternal Himself is our help.

Somehow, we Jews have always found that inner strength which enables us to transform troubled memory into sustaining hope. The Jew hopes. He remembers and he hopes. He hopes not just when hope comes easy, but also when earthly reason defies all hope. Then especially does the Jew hope. He hopes until hope creates from its own wreckage the good which it contemplates.

And so, no matter how grim the atmosphere, we will continue to hope and to work for peace, assured that no matter how grave the difficulties in the way we will overcome them and attain that peace for which we yearn.

On Purim we remember Haman, his cruel descendants and those who preceded him, especially Amalek and his tribe who attacked our wandering fathers most cowardly, assaulting not the warriors but the innocents: women and children, the feeble and the old. You remember the story: How Moses and Aaron and Hur ascended a mountain and only so long as Moses was able to hold his hands high did the tide of the battle turn in favor of his people. When his hands grew weary, Aaron and Hur stayed them up, the one to the right and the other to the left, holding them steady until the going down of the sun. Thus did Israel prevail and the evil decree was averted.

In like manner do we pledge to uphold the hands of Israel's leader. And in like manner, we will prevail.

We fulfill this mandate by maintaining our unity, which we manifestly have. Let those who speak of its weakening come here and see. Let them come here, and hear and feel. Their delusions will quickly be dispelled.

Of course, not every American Jew agrees with every policy of the Israeli government, the pluralistic nature of our community precludes so homogeneous a reaction. We are not the servants of a particular party, nor are we the instruments of any governmental coalition. But we are united by a sacred mission: to secure the safety of Israel. And we are impelled by a common love; an abounding love for the people of Israel.

We are all of us Jews -- and as we proclaimed to the world in 1975 -- whether we use the small "z" or the large "Z" we are all of us Zionists. The land of Israel which is Zion and the children of Israel who constitute the Jewish people and the God of Israel are all bound together in a triple covenant. At no time in our history have we ever stopped praying or longing or working for Zion. And we shall continue to do so unto the rest of eternity.

We uphold the hands of Israel's leadership not only by preserving our unity but also by giving voice -- strong, unfettered voice -- to our convictions.

There are those in our midst who urge us to keep a low profile, who enjoin us to be heard and seen as little as possible lest we incur the wrath of the mighty. We reject this counsel. Shtadlanut has seen the end of its day; quiet, personal diplomacy has brought us nothing but grief and betrayal. Look at the thirties and see! No longer will we allow ourselves to be beguiled by the blandishments of those who sit in places of power.

Nor will we be intimidated by them. We will not commit the sin of silence a second time in the same generation. As Americans we have the right to speak. We have earned that right a thousand fold and more -- by giving rich gifts of heart and mind and substance to this land and the blood of our brothers and our sisters who fought and died for America in many a war of freedom.

How strange a change! Yesterday they mocked us for behaving like lambs allowing ourselves to be led to the slaughter. Today they want us to be lambs. Well, these lambs are going to do a little bleating along the way! In fact, we won't be lambs we will be lions.... roaring lions of Judah.

And so we will speak the truth as we see it:

when promises are broken we will say so...

when we see a wrong we will call it a wrong wherever it is committed...

when pressures are exerted on Israel we will say that pressures are exerted on Israel...

when we sense that our country is selling out its idealism for petrodollars, we will say that our country is selling out its idealism for petrodollars...

Whatever the evil is, we will call it by its real name and not justify it on the basis that it is something else.

Away then with the counsel of timidity!

Away with the caution of cowardice!

Away with those who would flatter themselves into the good graces of the powerful!

Away with those who have no convictions!

Away with those who would beg for good-will and toady for favor!

Who are we? We are Americans with our roots deep in the soil of this land.

We are also Jews.

We reject, most utterly do we reject the concept of protective mimicry.

We shall stand for the right as God gives us to see that right, stand for it when it is popular and pray for the strength to stand for it when it is not.

We are not chameleons who constantly change color to suit majority opinion.

We hold great truths and we champion great principles,

And we shall stand by them resolutely pledged to attain them, with the boldness of truth, with the courage of our conviction, and with the heroism of soldiers on the field of battle!

Only in such a way will we serve America...

And in this way, too, we will uphold the hands of Israel's leader and her people.

And with our heads and hands held high,

All Israel will prevail.



R/S

Some time ago, an Israeli journalist published an article in ~~Israel's~~
leading daily, the Maariv, in which he spoke of the relationship between Israel's
these lines
Prime Minister and the author of ~~this xxxxxx~~, then the Chariman of the
Presidents Conference. Stressing the wide divergences of these paths which
brought us together (- the Prime Minister a traditionalist, I a Reform Rabbi;
the Prime Minister the leader of Israel's ~~extreme~~ right, I ~~was~~ someone who had always
espoused causes left of center in the approach to Israel's domestic and foreign policies) -
thr Maariv journalist expressed his wonderment that we were able to make common
cause, indeed that our relationship flowered beyond the functional to develop strong
bonds of personal affection, and so he labelled us "an odd couple."

His puzzlement ~~is~~ understandable. I certainly did not anticipate ~~xxx~~ such a turn of
had known -- even before his election --
events. I ~~knew~~ Mr. Begin, of course, by reputation and through his writings. We
met sporadically

His puzzlement was understandable. I certainly did not anticipate such a turn
of events. I had met Mr. Begin, of course, even before his election and our
mutual approach had always been most courteous. I even fedded for him once or twice --
at Brussels II Steering Committee when I seconded some motion which he ~~had~~ proposed,
and during a Prsidents Conference visit ~~for~~ to Israel when I insisted ~~along with~~
~~xxxxxxx~~ on his right to appear before us and on our need to hear from him
and from other ~~xxxx~~ opposition leaders. In the main, however, I knew ^{Begin} ~~him~~ only
by reputation and through his writings and what I knew did not presage our close
companionship of later years. His message was too alien to my ears.

The turning point came with his election victory and my journey to Jerusalem which
provided
came in its wake. This journey ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ -- which is interesting for its *many*
other *circumstances* aspects ~~it~~ gave me my first chance for serious conversations with Menachem
Begin and set the course of our future relationship.

*

*

*



K'vod Rosh Hamemshala

honored guests...companions...precious friends.

I am deeply moved by this occasion
by the words which have been spoken
by your presence which bespeaks your care.

^{even}
I cannot give voice to my feelings...they are too deep for that.
My response can only be a silence.

^I
~~They~~ must be that and always will be that - a silence.
for the stirrings of the soul within me are of a kind which knows no tongue.

Let me say at once that this is NOT a 'farewell,'
not if God grants me health and strength.

I simply cannot withdraw from the service of my people.
The burden of Jewish leadership may weigh heavy.
But it has been passed on to me, and now I have to carry it.
I have rolled up my sleeves and taken it on my back,
- - and nothing will ever make me set it down again.

You best put that into your next report to Washington, Sam.
They haven't heard the last of Schindler yet!

I am glad that you are here, of course, Ambassador Lewis, Sally, (Dick + Marina)
for it gives me the chance to tell you publicly
how very much I admire you and your work and the foreign service
and how devoted I am to that land which we both call our own.

America is a noble land, a bounteous land, a land of infinite endowment.
Her animating spirit is lofty...

her vision, at its finest, ^{is} as high as the Rockies and as sweeping as the Texas plains.
America opened her doors wide to the Jewish people over ^{years} the centuries
and ^{gave} ~~afforded~~ us freedom and opportunity unparalleled in our history.

^{Moreover,} The United States remains Israel's ^{true} ~~one~~ ally
offering life-sustaining aid ⁱⁿ in abounding measure
These things we will never forget!

I am indebted to many who are here tonight:

to my colleagues of the President's Conference who supported me in every way

To Yehuda Hellman, the Conference's able and articulate executive
a fiercely loyal son of Israel
who has become my close companion and valued friend

to my mother who gave me life twice
when she bore me
and when she rescued me from that whirlwind of destruction in which
one third of our people was consumed

and to my wife who loves me and whom I love for what she is
not only beautiful in countenance but also beautiful in deed
~~my soul's far better part, my truer, dearer half.~~
^{eyes}
In her ~~countenance~~ have I seen the eternal.

And last but not in the least I am indebted to our host,
to the Prime Minister of Israel
to my friend Menachem Begin.

A local newspaper once described us as the 'odd couple,'
and on the surface ~~of it~~, it is odd, this friendship of ours
I, a man from the left and a reform rabbi to boot
he from the right and a traditional Jew

And yet, my friends, we do speak a common language ~~where heart touches heart~~
We both affirm one passionate conviction:

that the Jews of the world are one — one and indivisible!

We are one because there is a reality of which both this state and our world
communities are but modes of manifestation.

That undergirding reality is AM YISRAEL.

The machinery of the state and the structures of the dispersion alike are its extensions;
they both are but instruments of the people's will and need.

This is the conviction which binds us into a relationship
which is not so odd after all.

And this is why I feel bound to ~~love~~ Menachem Begin
Soul touching soul

As David was bound to Jonathan.

I will let you in on a secret.

When I came here last May, immediately after the elections

I had pretty well made up my mind what I was going to say on my return even
before ~~my departure~~ ^{I left the U.S.}

After all, I needed to unify the American Jewish community.

There was a danger of its fragmentation.

And I knew of no way to retain support ^{for} of a nation and its people

without at the same time ~~seeking~~ ^{demanding} support for its democratically elected government.

Moreover, I was incensed by the rantings of the media

who denounced this man as a terrorist, ~~sight-unseen~~, unfit for office

even before he had the chance to form his government

to evolve its program

and to present it to his people and the world.

And so I had determined to return to America with words of reassurance no matter what.

But when I came here and met the man

When I sensed his intelligence, his integrity,

his manifest devotion to our mutual sacred cause

Why, then, I was able to say what I said with ~~the~~ full, unqualified conviction:

that I deem Menachem Begin to be a true patriot - not just a partisan ideologue

that I see him fully capable of making the transition between candidacy and

incumbency

in a word, that he is a statesman with but one passion:

to bring peace to his people

peace with security

peace with dignity and honor.

I do not feel my trust in any sense betrayed.

Israel has had firm leadership these past twelve months

And Israel is stronger because of it.

Her bargaining position has certainly improved *over the year*
 Just think of some of those nightmares which are behind us:

The Joint Russo-American Declaration of Oct 1, 77...

That maddening Geneva scenario with its maze of multitudinous task-forces.

The demand to make the PLO a negotiating partner

and to create an independent Palestinian State

All these appear to have been dropped from Washington's agenda

— at least for the time being.

THESE GAINS HAVE THEIR
~~All this has~~ *had its* cost in public opinion and even in Congressional good will.
 (At times unnecessarily so — Israel's stagecraft is not as astute as her statecraft)
nothing in life is free.
 But in the final analysis ~~there is no such thing as a free lunch~~.
 National security simply must take precedence over good public relations.

Don't misunderstand me!

I do not advocate the blind pursuit of a hard-nosed foreign policy.

THE *(drawn)* *they*
~~its~~ strings can be ~~drawn~~ too tightly and there is always the danger that ~~it~~ will snap.

Leadership requires not only strength but forbearance,

the wisdom to know when to hold fast and when to let go.

The ability to determine that *precise* *will* moment provides the ultimate test of Menachem Begin's statecraft.

There is no reason to doubt that he will meet this test

for his flexibility has also been demonstrated.

Contrast, if you will, his peace plan with that proposed by Cairo yesterday.

How saddened I was to read it.

These were not the words of the man I met in Aswan six months ago, *President Sadat*,
 who spoke to me of his yearning for peace

EGYPTIAN *and of his full understanding for Israel's security needs.*
~~They~~ *these* represent a hardening of *her* ~~Egypt's~~ diplomatic arteries!

I hope that Washington will notice that this plan represents *also* a regression
 from President Carter's *own* Aswan formulation ~~he~~ *well*

which the Israeli government has fully accepted,

and that at long last there will be an end to libel that Israel is the sole and
 solitary obstacle to peace.

~~Maximalism~~
 She manifestly is not.

We all know the real reasons, *why there is no peace + for the relentless one-sided pressure on Israel*
~~They~~ *these* are rooted in the realm whose coinage is the petro-dollar.

Gam Zu Yaavor...this obstacle too will be overcome.

We refuse to yield to despair.

We continue to cling to hope, *yea even the hope for peace.*

It is our duty as Jews to do so.

When I was a little boy, my father, zichrono livracha, took me to Warsaw where we visited the shtibel of the Umaner Chassidim,

the devotees of Reb Nachman, the Bratslaver Rebbe.

It was a shtibel like other such shtibels with but one remarkable exception Carved into the wood of the synagogue's sacred ark was not the usual inscription

da lifne me atta omed...know before whom ye stand but rather a yiddish phrase

yidn zait sich nisht misyaesh...Jews do not despair

Remember, if you will, the setting in which I read this affirmation.

This was the Warsaw of the middle thirties, the days of the gathering storm

The ax was already lifted

its blade well sharpened

the pyres piled high ready for the burning...

Still, this summons to hope.

I later learned that this had been the rebbe's favorite saying,

his constant, life-long admonition to his followers.

"Jews do not despair...*never*...never despair."

This experience made its lasting impression

The Bratslaver's saying is seared into my soul.

Words like despair and gloom, hopelessness and doom simply are not a part of my life's ^{vocabulary} ~~philosophy~~.

And what if reason dictates otherwise?

Well, then, reason must be transcended

For when the philosopher postulates "I think, therefore I am"

The Jew within me emphatically replies, "I believe, therefore I live!"

And so I believe...

I believe in peace and the possibility of its attainment

I believe that when the final page is turned, America will be true to her loftier vision and not forsake her friends

I believe in the unity of the Jewish people and the strength which flows from it.

And this above all, I believe, in Netzach Yisrael...in the invincibility of Israel.

we will overcome the perils of the present, prevail against them.

God has promised us this land and that our seed will multiply

And so we will remain here *bring our children to*

we will and deepen our stake *here in Israel*

We will not yield.

We will stay and we will build.



NY 8

My message of reassurance ^{initially} received almost universal acceptance, at ~~first skepticism~~
~~asserted itself and prevailed in many~~ But as the months passed and especially
during the Sturm und Drang of the ^{US} Post Sadat ~~xxxxxxx~~ American visit,
doubts sprang up and skepticism prevailed in many quarters.

Then a high ranking American official (President in Israel) counselled me & Henry
~~I well remember a pleasant afternoon spent at the pool-side of Sam Lewis's~~
~~palatial Ambassadorial residence in which he counselled me, and through me~~

the Presidents Conference to restrict our activities to pressures for
US Economic and military aid ^{for} Israel ^{but} and to ~~stay away from~~ be silent on all
^{matters} ~~xxxxxxx~~ political issues affecting the negotiations. "I don't believe that stuff
you have been peddling at the State Department and White House. ^{'less a} I don't
believe that Begin's present hard stance is merely a negotiating posture.
I very much fear that his
~~That~~ final card will not be the ~~xxxxxxx~~ one you expect and ^{peace demands} for which we hope."

Especially painful was the diasaffection of my erstwhile companions
of the left and many of my close friends who felt that I had been had,
that I had allowed personal feeling to blind me to reality and that my personal
support ^{for Begin} ~~had~~ was actually a hindrance to ^{the} peace in that it encouraged
Begin in his obduracy. There was ^a ~~one~~ heated session of the UAHC's
Executive Committee when ^{One of my good friends, a leader of Reform Judaism} ~~the Chairman of Reform Judaism's Religious Action Commission~~
accused me of "betraying" him and those causes for which we had always stood.

Anguished as I was, I nonetheless understood ~~this xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~
my friends' reactions. And though I ~~xxx~~ made certain that their views ^{were} be given a
full and fair hearing within the American Jewish community and ^{faithful} ~~also~~ undertook to ^{relaying} ~~relay~~
^{just} relay them to Israel's leadership, ~~I~~ nonetheless ^I clung to my fundamental
conviction that in the end Begin would be a statesman and not an idologue,
responding to the consensus of his nation and ~~xxxxxx~~ and guiding ^{his people} ~~them~~ to make those
hard choices which peace required.

Anguishes as I was, I understood my friends. I even shared some of their specific reservations. I made certain that their views were given a ^{voice} ~~fair hearing~~ within the American Jewish community and faithfully undertook the task of ~~xxx~~ relaying them -- not through the front pages of the NY Times, ~~xxxxxx~~ but privately -- to Israel's leadership. There they were given a full and fair hearing ^{by Ben Gurion} ~~which~~ ^{which} reinforced my own conviction that in the end Begin would be a statesman and not an ideologue, responding to the consensus of his nation and guiding his people to make those ~~xxxxxxxx~~ ^{hard} choices which peace required.



I believe that in the end my faith was requited. To be sure mistakes were made, especially in the realm of Israel's stagecraft which was never quite as effective as her statecraft.

The toughness of her negotiating position yielded ^{rich} ~~its~~ fruit. Think of some of those snares which are no longer under foot because of it: the involvement of the Russians as guarantors of the peace, the cleansing of the PLO as a fit partner for the negotiations, the demand for an independent Palestinian State now, the Geneva scenario which had assigned ⁱⁿ a veto power to ~~the~~ hardliners ^{as well} and the ~~xxx~~ rejectionists -- all these have been dropped from Washington's agenda, at least for the time being.

~~When it is necessary, Begin was flexible, and he has become a~~
Begin's final card was a statesmanlike flexibility. He led his country to take ^{serious} risks for peace: the return of all of the Sinai to Egyptian sovereignty; the dismantling of the Rafiah salient settlements, the recognition of Palestinian Arab claims and ~~xxx~~ much, much more. Indeed, if there is ^{an apprehension} ~~an apprehension~~ in Israel today it is that these risks are too great and grave.

My own great fear ~~is that~~ ^{from} suggested by the ill-timed Saunders mission -- is that the American government will not allow either Israel or Egypt ~~to~~ ^{to} sufficient time to ~~adjust~~ ^{adjust} to the new realities which Camp David created ~~and which must be accepted immediately, and which must be accepted~~

^{When he} ~~In resisting~~ these undue pressures, ^{as he must} ~~In resisting~~ them, Prime Minister Begin will find me at his side -- ^{a future} in the next installment of the "odd couple."

The Likud victory stunned the American Jewish community, especially her establishment. Most of our national organizational presidents had spent a life-time working with the leaders of Israel's Labor Alignment, so much so that they had come to identify them with the State; Labor was Israel and Israel Labor. Now, suddenly, all the familiar landmarks were gone.

Many had met Begin, to be sure, but they really didn't know him. And the little they knew, they didn't like. He was a man from the right, a radical, an extremist in word and deed. They were afraid of the unknown, afraid of those direction for the future which his past presaged, afraid of how the American people would react to this new leadership.

I, too, was taken aback. I had accepted the conventional wisdom which predicted a diminution of Labor's plurality but still left the Alignment in power. Yehuda Hellman, the Conference's devoted Executive, called me late on election day to confirm the final count; and I spent the remainder of the night adjusting to the new reality and weighing the options which were open before us.

I had but little choice. As Conference Chairman it was my overriding task to maintain the unity of American Jewry in support of Israel, and there clearly was no way

to summon support for a nation without also calling for the support of her democratically elected government. In any event, I felt it only just and right to give the newly elected Prime Minister an opportunity to form his government, to refine his program, and to present it to his nation, to America and the world.

On the morrow, I sent the Prime Minister designate a congratulatory cable pledging our community's support, and I called on America's Jews to provide this support.

I reminded them that we ^{are} ~~were~~ never "the servants of a particular party or the instruments of a governmental coalition" but rather that we are ^{given} "impelled by love for the people of Israel" and by the "sacred obligation to secure their safety." The Israel Bond Organization was especially helpful in making certain that this message reached every city, town, and hamlet of our country.

The media ^{was} ~~was~~ not at all receptive to the voice of patience. To be sure, the New York Times adopted a 'wait and see' attitude, perhaps reflecting Washington's still uncertain reaction -- when it comes to Israel the New York Times almost always dances to the tune which the oval office plays. But most other columnists and editorial writers had a field day in invective. They sharpened their talons and feasted on Begin. He was held personally responsible for all acts of terror in the Middle East, those which were committed in the past and those which would yet be committed in that war which

was now imminent because of his election. "Begin (pronounced like Feigen)^a" screeched TIME Magazine, limning the level of the day's editorial discourse. 5

For 48 hours I sat by the phone, calling reporters, answering their calls -- to no avail. I sensed that some dramatic gesture was needed to gain attention, and I conceived of a quick trip to Israel following which, perhaps, someone would listen. ~~to me~~

By curious coincidence, Begin's son, then studying at an American university in the West, called me up to bemoan the media's tone and to ask what I, what he could do to alter things. I suggested the Israel journey and asked him to ascertain his father's reaction.

On Friday, May 24th, the Presidents' Conference met with Stuart Eizenstat in Washington to be briefed concerning the Carter administration's unfolding domestic program. Privately, I told Stuart of my projected journey; he thought it a good idea and asked me to come to The White House immediately on my return to the States. Officials at the State Department had a like reaction.

Not so the Israel Embassy! I had asked Yehuda to cover that base while I was en route to see Habib at State.

And when Hellman finally caught up with me at the National Airport, he told me that Simcha Dinitz had earnestly urged him to restrain me from going to Israel. "Why should Alex commit himself so soon," he said, "it is unseemly for him to do so. Why so great a hurry? Begin may not even be able to form a government. Besides, he is not well."

Dinitz had always counselled me wisely. He was and is a superb spokesman for his nation; indeed, I subsequently urged Begin to keep him in Washington as long as possible. This time, however, I felt that Simcha's view was distorted, that he saw things through partisan rather than patriotic lenses. And so I disregarded him.

In curious contrast, Chaim Herzog's instincts ^{were} ~~had been~~ sounder. He was on television fending Begin's rights within an hour after the election results were announced. As usual, directives of the Foreign Ministry ^{had been} ~~were~~ slow in coming; each man was on his own.

Be that as it may, while still at National Airport, I dropped some coins into a pay phone, reached Begin at the Sharon Hotel in Herzliyah, wished him a "shabbat shalom" and set the hour of our meetings.

As matters transpired, we delayed our journey for a day, because of Begin's sudden hospitalization. There were some further endeavors to dissuade us from going. Zalman Abramov counselled: "I've known Begin the better part of my life. He is rigid and will never change. I agree that he may not be able to form a government. But even if he does, he won't last long." Still, I persisted in my judgment and on mötze Shevuot -- as soon as Kaddishai assured us that Begin would be strong enough to see us -- Yehuda and I enplaned.

Derech Eretz demanded that we visit Rabin first. He had re-seized the reins of the prime-ministership for the transition period and held office. But Moshe Raviv, who met us at Lod, as was his wont, whisked us off to see his minister first.

Allon, while dismayed by the election results, seemed not dejected. He is, by nature, a cheerful, optimistic man. In fact, when we entered his office he sat pencil in hand carefully counting the Knesset votes to show how Begin might just miss in his efforts to gain majority support -- assuming, of course, no Labor defections and a holding-of-the-line by Dash.

But he, too, must have realized all this was wistful, wishful thinking, for in our conversations -- just as soon as I had given him a brief report on reaction in America -- he addressed me not so much as Chairman of the Preisdents' Conference but rather as the head of America's Reform Jewish community. He spoke of the World Zionist Organization and his desire for increasing involvement in its work. He felt that this forum could provide the Labor Party an opportunity to regroup its forces and to develop new leadership. And he wondered whether the Reform movement and Labor might not find common ground for cooperative endeavor here. I readily agreed that while no permanent alliance was likely, given our ideological affinity as manifested by many past joint ventures with the Kibbutz movement and in particular with its Ichud faction, ground for common work would indeed be found.

Early next morning we met with the Prime Minister. Rabin was in a mellow mood, loose, loquacious, most gracious in his reception.

This was a refreshing departure from past pattern. Our earlier meetings had always been most formal, cold in fact, a quick in and out, a mumbled word or ^{low} no give-and- take to speak of, scarcely a contact of the eye. It was difficult to escape the conclusion that the Presidents' Conference and those organizations of which it is comprised did not rank very high on the scale of the Prime Minister's worths. At times, I even harbored the suspicion that the Presidents' Conference was deemed not so much an instrument to marshal support of America's Jews but rather to "manage" them, to keep them out from under foot.

Be that as it may, at our final meeting, Rabin was most kind. He analyzed the then-present problems confronting Israel in the foreign policy arena, evincing his considerable grasp of the geo-political factors at play.

The only other member of the "old guard" with whom we had a lengthy meeting on this journey was Shimon Peres. We ^{Sat} ~~met~~ with him late one afternoon in the misrad sar habitachon. ←

The Defense Minister was dejected. He felt spent. He likened his burden in leading the election campaign to that of a pilot compelled to "fly a plane with two of its wings sheared off." He did confess, though, to some "lightness of spirit" which came with the easing of ultimate responsibility to other shoulders.

Navon was present at this meeting and joined our conversations which took on something of a nostalgic tone what with its remembrances of things past. Turning to the future, I urged Navon seriously to consider the presidency of the World Zionist Organization, for which his name had already been informally proposed. It seemed so natural a course, given that affection and esteem in which Navon is held by Jews of every kind in every corner of the world. Little did I know then that he was destined for far higher office. His gifts of mind and spirit are rich. He will bring further honor to that already highly honored post of Israel's presidency.

One of my purposes in coming to Israel was to do what little I could to enlarge the coalition of the emerging government. Political considerations were not at all at play in my thinking. I was moved solely by my desire to maintain American Jewish unity: the broader the representation of Israel's administration the larger the number of American Jews who will identify with it. Josef Burg, the genial, statesmanlike leader of the Mavdal -- in whose company I always delight for I always learn from him -- understood our problem at once. "What you don't need," he said, "is a government which is narrowly clerical-fascist in its make-up," using these terms not in their ordinary meaning but rather metaphorically, to dramatize the issue in all of its stark reality.

Dash was the natural first target. Levenson of Bank Hapoalim, who was on our flight, shared my concerns and conclusions and urged me to see Yadin as soon as possible. While still on the plane, then, I radioed ahead to make arrangements. With that chutzpah to which I am frequently prone, my message -- relayed courtesy of the El Al pilot via Eli Eyal, my very good friend and one of Yadin's lieutenants -- read something like this: "The issue no longer is electoral reform. The issue is foreign policy. Urge you to join the government as quickly as possible."

Yadin was good enough to give us a good deal of his time. We met at least twice, the first time for two full hours. Our conversations revealed my ignorance of Israel's political system and the wide gap obtaining between its mode of operation and politics on the American scene. As a case in point, when I enjoined Yadin to move quickly, to approach Begin at once to offer his support and to set his party's counter requests, he replied something to the effect that "Dash has 15 seats, let him come to me." About all I could do was lamely to reply that the American pattern is different. ¹⁸ When Kennedy won the presidency by a fraction of one per-cent, but little over 100,000 votes out of the tens of millions cast, nonetheless he was the President and everyone came to him. "In America, late-comers don't catch the bus or when they do get only a back seat. He who gets there first ends up with the best. Sometimes he even becomes Secretary of State."

Yadin impressed me as a man who cannot easily make up his mind or else was so constrained by the divergent forces within his own party that he could not move. This may not be a fair assessment, I was only an interested spectator as it were and this is how I saw the play. I was not in on the actual negotiations and the other side may well not have been willing to deal.

At midnight, after our first Yadin session, we received a call from Dan Pat^{ir}'s wife, Yael, to tell us that Dayan had just been proposed as the Foreign Minister of the new government.

Dayan's designation pleased me. Here, at last, was one familiar landmark which American Jews would recognize, a leader with whom they could readily identify. His abilities were rightly-recognized, and in America the events of 1973 left none of those deep wounds which still were bleeding on the Israel scene; Dayan's reputation remained virtually untarnished. His familiarity with the mindset of the Arab world was well known and he was perceived to be ^aflexible, skilled negotiator. On more than one occasion Kissinger had told me: "I could not have successfully concluded Sinai II without Dayan's imaginative projections and I say this even though Dayan has frequently taken issue and belittled me."

I called the Foreign Minister-designate to congratulate him and offered to arrange a meeting with Sam Lewis. Wisely, Dayan declined, deeming such a meeting prior to

his confirmation premature.

Subsequent events, I fully believe, vindicated Begin's choice. Once the fuller story is told and heard, we will learn just how significant a role Dayan played in those events which culminated in a separate agreement between Egypt and Israel.

* * *

Our breakfast session with Weizman merits mention. Ezer was understandably exuberant and took just pride in his role spearheading the Likud election victory. Chosen to be the Minister of Defense, he had already been briefed concerning the state of Israel's forces and resources and was most pleased with what he learned. He was especially impressed with that quantity and quality of weaponry with which the United States had resupplied Israel since '73.

I found Weizman much more even tempered and serious than on previous occasions. I first met him some months earlier, at a social gathering in the home of mutual friends, Zvi and Rolly Efron, where I adjudged him a man of volatile temperament -- impulsive, impetuous, volcanic, ever ready to burst forth. It is this irrepressible quality, I believe, which gives him so much of his charm but which also keeps many from according him that complete confidence for highest office to which his endowments and leadership qualities may well entitle him.

Even during our pre-election meeting and now again at our breakfast -- all this long before the Sadat Jerusalem journey -- Weizman expressed his conviction that a Likud government could and would achieve a separate peace agree-

ment with Egypt and even Syria. . It is an assurance which did not waver until his Salzburg meetings with Sadat. When five American Jewish leaders, I among them, sat with Begin, Dayan and Weizman on the day before Camp David, Begin was supremely confident; Dayan more cautiously so ("I am not at all pessimistic; I see many openings"); Weizman felt that the opportunity had slipped through Israel's fingers and despaired of the summit's success. His wit had not dampened as had his confidence, for when Begin introduced him as "our Sadatolog," Weizman quickly rejoined "I am glad you did not call me your Sadatist, Mr. Prime Minister."

My ultimate purpose in coming to Israel, of course, was to meet with Begin, to get to know him and his program so that on my return to America I could help reshape his image which the media had so grossly distorted. I met Begin twice and at some length, first in the hospital and the second time in his modest ground-level, two room Tel-Aviv apartment. Our conversations were somewhat constrained by the circumstances of our meeting. In their substance they were not memorable by any manner of means. A hospital room with its inevitable flow of doctors scanning the chest and nurses administering pills does not exactly lend itself to that intellectual probing which such an occasion ordinarily demands. Yet I honestly feel that I got to know the man. For ofttimes when you observe a man's reaction in moments of stress or when you see him in the setting of his home, surrounded by friends, responding to his wife and she to him, why then you can learn a great deal more about him than you can when he wears the

mask of the ideolog engaged in debate. You get to know him with a knowledge of ^{the} his heart, to feel him, as I felt Begin - and I responded to what I felt. ←

I felt him to be a man of integrity, moved by the highest ideals of our people, in whose pattern of worths the quest for peace is a predominant design.

I sensed his abounding love for the Jewish people, which makes everything else, even the machinery of the State, but an instrument of that peoples will and need.

The mystic within me, though other directed, responded to Begin's mystical love for the land.

But I also felt his respect for the integrity of every Jewish community, not just for those communities built on holy soil.

I don't mean to suggest that Begin "can't do wrong by me."

He has pursued policies with which I disagree, said things

which ~~made me shudder with dismay~~ ^{brought me filled me with} In a word, "by me" Begin is no saint, nor angel, just a man - but what a man.

^{1/28} I always felt free to give expression to my disagreements when I deemed them of sufficient worth; he always listened with respect. When he rejected some counsel I offered he always took the trouble patiently to explain just why he could not do as I hoped. He was the first Israeli leader, sometimes I think even the only Israeli, who ever said to me, "I think you've got a point."

The candor of our relationship was set even at the hospital when I told Begin that his Kadoum appearance did not exactly serve to soften his image. He mumbled something about "what's wrong with holding a Torah, rabbi?" I replied, "there is

indeed nothing wrong with holding a Torah, it's what you said when you held that Torah that was troublesome." He grumbled some more and I added, "do you want me to tell you what I think you want to hear or rather what I believe to be true?" Of course, he wanted the truth, he said, what else could he say. But he always accepted it no matter how unpleasant and always he listened.

This, then, was the making of what an Israeli journalist called "the oddcouple." Yet given our common commitments, which are far more fundamental than our differences (~~right vs. left, traditional vs. reform, etc~~) our relationship is not so odd after all. It is fed by the fire of the nekuda yehudit, of the pintele yid.

I returned to America to say what in all candor I had planned to say no matter what, but could now say with deepfelt conviction: that Begin is a patriot; that he desires above all to bring peace to his people; that I deem him capable of making the transition from candidacy to incumbency; and that while he is an ideolog from one end of the political spectrum, he would undoubtedly be "sucked in by the center," as Walter Lippman put it; compelled to respond to the consensus of the nation. I said all this at The White House. I reported it to Secretary of State Vance. I said it again at the press conferences which followed these visits. I repeated it to the entire American Jewish community which, I strongly suspect, would have remained united in its support of Israel even without me and my journey - but perhaps I helped a little.

* *