



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
4

Speeches, 1981-1985.

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

June 14, 1981

address at dinner in honor of Leon Gildesgame

Friedns of David Yellin Teachers College, Jerusalem

file

Comments by Rabbi Schindler
World Jewish Congress Assembly
Jerusalem, January, 1981

It is altogether fitting and proper that the subject of world-wide Jewish security be a focal concern of this Assembly.

After all, this is the reason for which the WJC was established:

to fend for Jewish rights everywhere;

to marshall the resources of our people for the never-ending struggle against anti-Semitism.

It is a struggle in which we are required to open some new frontiers, or rather to re-open and re-buttrass frontiers which we once thought secure.

For decades now, since World War II,

we were able to focus our concerns on those totalitarian nations of the left and right

-- The Soviet Union, Argentina, and the like --

where Jewish communities were clearly endangered.

Today, the lens of our concern must be widened to take in the free world as well.

Anti-Semitism is alive and stirring throughout this world of ours.

The number of reported incidents mounts daily..

Synagogues are defaced, cemeteries desecrated, religious schools vandalized,

slandorous leaflets are distributed, threatening telephone calls are made,

and individuals have been pelted with rocks.

In North-America there has been only property damage, thus far,

and some minor injuries, no deaths..

In Europe, alas, fresh blood comeslingles with the old in a soil already ~~over~~ ^{drunk} ~~saturated~~ with the blood of our people.

I, for one, am convinced that the number of attacks on Jews and Jewish institutions is even greater than that which is reported.

Too many Jews write off such incidents as mere pranks or hope that by denying them they will somehow go away. They won't and we might as well face up to it.

Don't misunderstand me.

I do not suggest that we face some kind of holocaust, God forbid.

We manifestly don't.

All that I am saying is that the respite which we have had since World War II has come to its end.

The memory of the holocaust is fading.

The sense of guilt has waned.

Hatred of the Jew is stirring once again, and we had best be ready.

The reasons for the resurgence of present day anti-Semitism are many:

It provides the minions of the radical right, the neo-Nazis and their ilk, with a ready means to let the world know that they are still about.

The cosmetization of the PLO contributes to the burgeoning of bigotry; after all, one cannot legitimize terrorism in one part of the world, without also giving it license everywhere else.

Political considerations came into play, as they did, when Carter pitted the balcks against the Jews in the aftermath of the Andy Young affair.

And when the leaders of the Western World decided to woo the Arabs by condemning Israel at every turn, blackening her name without just cause, why, then, they diminished the stature of Jews everywhere and set them up to be the targets for violent attack.

The predominant causative factor,~~is~~ however, is found where it was always found,
in the economic sphere,

-- the contraction of available resources, unemployment, inflation --
all feeding that massive dissatisfaction which encourages political extremism
and, in turn, breeds hatred of the Jew..

|| This is why it is so critically important for the Jews of the free world nations
to hold and ^{extend} build the political center
and to eschew alliances which encourage extremism on either pole of the
political spectrum.

Neither the radical right nor the radical left ever serve our security.

We are always only their pawns, useful for a time, expendable in the end.

These two opposing forces are nonetheless symbiotically intertwined.
(THE MOSCOW TRAINED ARE TRAINED WITH RECOMMENDATION IN WWII)
dissimilar organisms joining temporarily, and for mutual boon.

This is precisely why I oppose the moral majority on the American scene:

because it spawns a climate of opinion which furthers political polarization
~~constricts the center~~ constricts the center
and tears the fabric of democracy.

I never called the Rev. Mr. Falwell and anti-Semite.

What I said and repeat is that in his exclusivist emphasis on a Christian Bill of Right
and on a Christian America,

he and his associates are creating a temper^{of opinion} hostile to religious tolerance.

Such a climate, in my judgment, is bad for civil liberties, human rights,

social justice, interfaith understanding and mutual respect among Americans.

Therefore, it is bad for Jews.

Listen to their own words and take scant comfort:

"What we need is a return to the McCarthy era, where we register all Communists, stamp it on their forehead and send them back to Rissa."

(Falwell)

"When the Christian majority takes over this country, there will be no more satanic churchess...pluralism will be seen as immoral and evil, and the state will not be permitted by anybody to practice that evil."

(Potter)

"Why did God choose the Jews? I don't know why...I think they got funny looking noses myself. I don't know why He chose the Jews. That's God's business. Amen."

(Bailey)

Thus, do the models of political extremism come into play:

the conspiracy theory

the demand to suspend democratic procedures in order to blunt its effect,

and the identification of the conspirators, notably ethnic groups,

and most notably the Jews.

Are these the kind of people whom Israel should delight to honor, though they say good words about her?

Can one ~~be~~ really be good for Israel when one is injurious to America and its Jews?

Is it honorable and wise to make alliance with those who are sworn to

destroy Israel's true and tested friends?

After all, the moral majority boasts to have consigned Frank Church to political oblivion, and "Zionism" was one of the charges ^{levied} against him.

Kennedy has been marked for a like fate.

Moynihan was threatened by the Christian right.

Senator Henry Jackson has just been placed at the head of their hitlist.

Are we to go to bed with these enemies of our friends?

Have we no sense of honor? Have we lost all self-respect?

We may have to meet with them, talk to them, even deal with them.

But they do not merit our recognition and praise, no matter how sweet their words nor how many the trees they purchase to refurbish Judea's hills.

Be that as it may, we have here still no other reason for the present day
resurgence of world wide anti-Semitism:
religious bigotry in league with political extremism.

And so we turn to our tasks as leaders of the World Jewish Congress:
to fend for Jewish rights everywhere
and to wage this struggle
not with pious protestation
nor with symbolic visits to embattled communities alone
but to marshal every resource of ^{the Jewish} our people
to help our embattled communities to gain and retain their freedom.



On a more personal plane,
there is one quality which I admire most in you
it is your faith in adversity
your determination to persist even in face
of defeat

St
you may have been born with a silver spoon in your mouth
but life has dealt you many a rusty spoon since birth

death of brother, Selma, etc
tragedy heaped upon tragedy, which would have
broken a lesser man.

death of 3 brothers
he
you bore political defeat with dignity
and won the heart and soul of America

We Jews know about this quality of faith in adversity
it is the leitmotif of our history

Pell
~~Surely~~ this is why we respond to you
And what makes me at least say:

Someone, who
By God, Ted Kennedy, whether you know it or not you are
a Jew.

and maybe that's why you did better among Jews in the Prim.
than you did among Catholics...

Well, maybe you are not a Jew, not yet anyway
But by God, you are *an extraordinary* ^{count} ~~a man~~ *man*
and we delight to greet you in our midst.

Delighted to be here,
to have opportunity to present TK to you and you to him.

TITZ REPRESENTED 800 Army in
Senator, these are the leaders of Reform Judaism,
the social scitivists among them

You ought to know that ff there is such a thing as
your natural constituence with the Jewish community
this is it

yuour view and our are most congruent

we share your vision of an America which will be
not just a political but an economic democracy

We also shared your vision of America's proper place
in the world.

Thus for instance in the past several weeks
we officially endorsed your position on El Salvador

~~WEXXWEX~~ And we sustained your demand ~~At~~ ~~Amexxexxx~~
the presnet administration reverse its retreat
on the human rights front and give on ~~of~~ ~~thaxxx~~ those
absurd linguistic gymnastics which would draw a
distinction between totalitarian and authoritarian gvts

g

We too are pledged to make America's center hold
and to resist extremist, be its source
the radical right or the radical lift.

We certainly applaud your stance on ~~Isxxexxx~~ those concerns
which are so close to our hearts
on Isra-1 an on Soviet Jewry

You have been a loyal friend for 18 years and we know it

As for the man we chose to honor
what a MULTIFACED CAREER he has had
and how many SPLENDORED ^{are} his ATTAINMENTS

He was born in Poland of PARENTAGE which had
a PROUD GERMAN-JEWISH STRAIN as well,
He ~~was~~ RECEIVED THE FINEST GROUNDING
in JEWISH STUDIES - BIBLE TALMUD HEBREW
^{and} MANY YEARS LATER HE ROUNDED OUT HIS ~~JEW~~ GENERAL
STUDIES BY EARNING DEGREES FROM
THE FAMED LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS.

He was an ~~ARTILLERY~~ NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICER
in the ROYAL FIELD ARTILLERY
and also a Flying PILOT INSTRUCTOR
for the ROYAL AIR FORCE
TRAINING AMONG OTHERS THE RUSSIAN PILOTS
OF KERENSKY'S REGIME.

But He also fought in the LION MULE CORPS OF THE
BRITISH ARMY & was CITED FOR BRAVERY
in the BATTLE ~~OF~~ GALLI POLI

By combining success in these two sphere: leadership in business
and Jewish life both
Leon Gildesgame follows a noble, tradition ~~of~~

Some of the greatest names in the annals of Jewish history
did precisely that.

I think of Samuel the Prince, for instance
who began as the owner of a grocer's shop

in which he succeeded, even as he continued in his studies.

The King of Granada made him minister of state and commander of his army

But Samuel continued his involvement in Jewish life

he supported scholars and poets
he established and sustained a Talmudic academy
he wrote an introduction to the Talmud and a dictionary of
Biblical Hebrew

In a Modern song entitled "The Battle for Granada,"

the Hebrew poet Nathan Alterman sets a battlefield scene

in which one of the Spanish commanders extols Samuel for

his two-fold function and this is what he says:

(I admire you much)
"for apart from the military campaigns of Granada
you have another war (to wage)

a war of your own...an unending war...

it is the war of your people whose shepherd you are

It is the war of your language whose hosts you command

It is the war of your son whose teacher you are

to teach him the writing of ancient days.'

Even so with Leon

He is a captain of commerce...but at the same time he always
was and remains a commander of the hosts of our people.

~~THE IDENTIFICATION GREAT ISSUES OF OUR DAY~~
~~YET I WILL FOR~~

It is a privilege which I greatly appreciate to be here
and for two reasons:

the cause we celebrate and
the ^{couple} ~~man~~ we meet to honor..

The cause is certainly meritorious.

Jewish education, after all is our summum bonum

tgalmud torah keneged kulam

and the crucial factor of the educative process is the teacher.

YOU CAN HAVE BEST

Students identify their values primarily ~~wi~~ through identification
with the ego ideal,

that is to say they follow the man who is long before the
man who only persuades with his lips...

Barsel b'varsel yochad....iron sharpeneth iron, ~~wxxxxxxixxxixshkxxx~~
a knife can best be honed against the edge of another knife

A modern poet and prophet, Ralph Emerson re-echoes the
sentiments of mishle

'he who teaches as books unable only babbles
not any profane man not any liar not any slave can teach
but only he can give who has
he only can create who is
courage, wisdom, piety love they can teach...

Educa-tion depends upon the teacher...

teacher education, therefore goes to the heart of the educative process
and that is why we do well to lend our hearts and resources
to the support of the David Yellinn Teachers College

We meet to honor a couple, not just a man
and properly so, for the two are really one.
Ruth has been at Leons side these many years
supporting him in his every endeavor.

Together they walked the way of life
drink from its cup
when it ran bitter when it ran sweet, no matter
givng true meaning to the words, husband, wife and marriage

AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

Whta does one give such a couple that really has everything...
Well if their name is Ruth and Leon Gildesgame there is
only one thing....

this Torah scroll which I hold in my hand,
with a neautiful new cover designed by

TORAH - BRESLAV
AT LEAST

COVER - ~~PARCHEMENT~~ EMBROIDERED

~~MayxxxxxxxTorah~~ It is an appropriate gift is it not:

for your life Leon and yours Ruth

W/ AT LEAST
RIPPED
PARCHEMENT BUREAU -

was truly a life of Torah

study and deed, midrash and maaseh, the mind and the heart

CONTRACT -

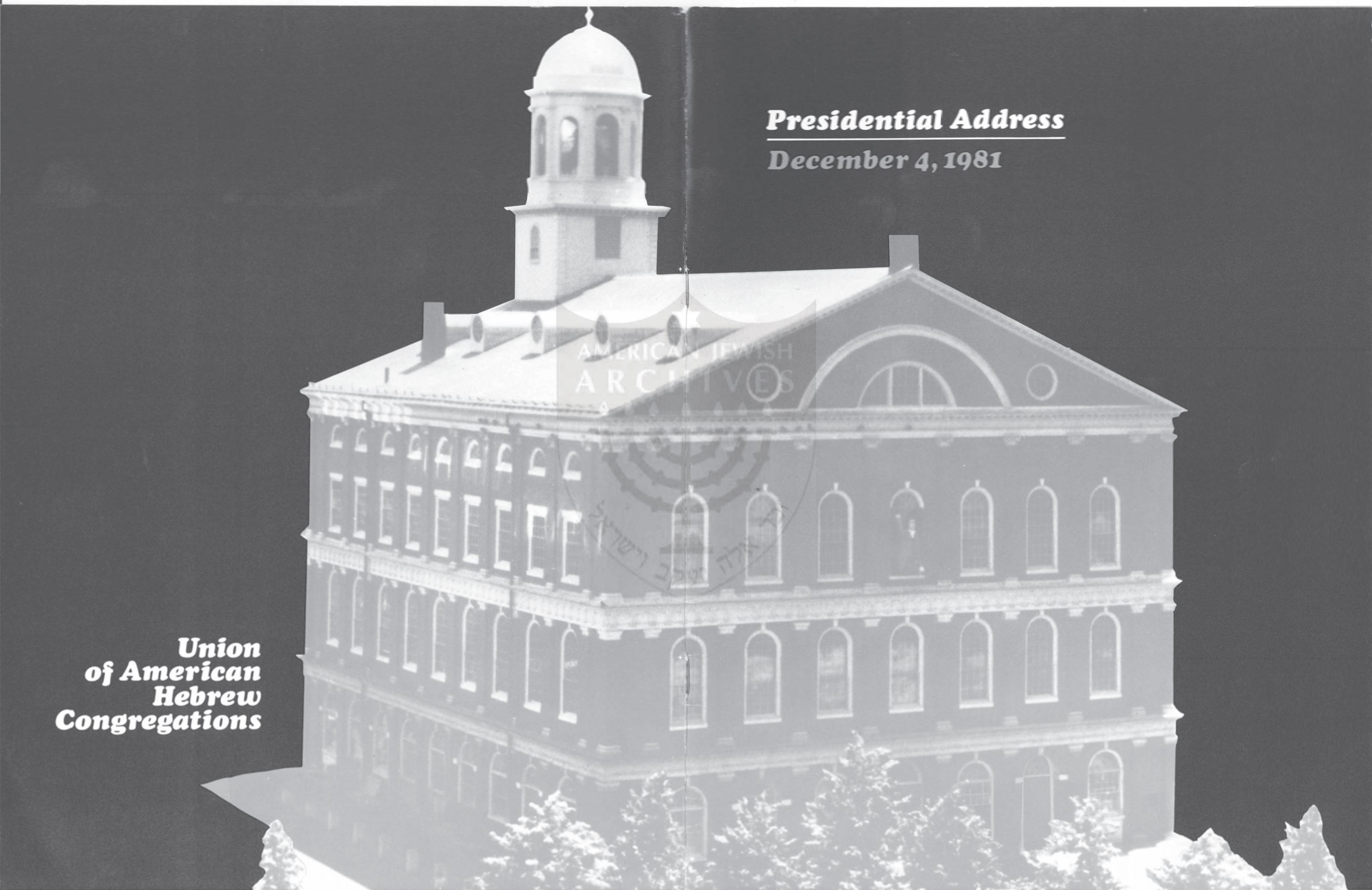
May the blessings of the Torah come to you, for you truly hold fast
to it

May it be a tree of life to you and your loved ones

and may you ^{live not only a life} an good health and much joy

for your sake and for the sake of the Jewosh people

which is in your debt



Presidential Address

December 4, 1981

**Union
of American
Hebrew
Congregations**

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler



I am deeply grateful to Donald Day for his gracious words of introduction. *Katanti mikol hachasadim!* I really do not merit so much praise. I accept his words not as descriptive of my attainments, but rather as a prescription, a setting forth of those directions that I should take.

Donald himself has been an extraordinary Chairman of our board. He is diligent and wise. He is zealously devoted to our work. He articulates our needs and advocates our cause with a stately eloquence. In a word, he is an altogether worthy successor of those remarkable leaders of our movement who preceded him.

One of these leaders, the most senior of our living past chairmen, Emil N. Baar, sits on this *bimah* tonight as our very special guest of honor. He recently reached his ninetieth birthday, with a lucidity and sprightliness that would flatter anyone half his years. *Oif unz alle gezogt!* At the concluding session of our convention, he will receive the Maurice N. Eisendrath Award for service to the Reform Jewish community. We will have a chance then to rehearse the details of his manifold contributions toward the advancement of our mutual sacred cause. Suffice it to say now, that no one has served us more faithfully, more selflessly, more productively. We salute him on this occasion, and we thank him for enabling us to begin and to end our Assembly on so grand and pleasing a note.

This is not the first time that we convene in Boston. We were last assembled here in 1948. Jacob Aronson chaired the proceedings then. Maurice N. Eisendrath was still only in the early years of his remarkable presidency. And Harry Truman sent a message which cheered the delegates.

The mood, understandably, was upbeat. America had attained world leadership and her future seemed limitless. Israel had just survived her Wars of Independence, and Jews everywhere took heart. Reform Judaism was on the advance; congregations were mushrooming, their members were multiplying; and the Union was on the eve of its historic move from Cincinnati to the capital city of Jewish life.

The promise, insofar as our own religious community is concerned, has been fulfilled if not exceeded. In 1948 slightly less than 800 delegates attended, and they represented a total of 370 congregations. Today, we are here 4000 strong, men and women, young and old; this is the largest Jewish assembly on the American scene. We represent 760 congregations now, and their cumulative rolls have long since passed the million member mark. We are a vital, vibrant movement, ever blending the old and the new, on the cutting edge of modern life, yet ever more deeply rooted in the Jewish tradition.

Judaism and the American Creed

How appropriate it is that an assembly such as this should convene in this community. Our presence here symbolizes the linkage between the American idea and the faith of Israel both of which we embrace. Boston, after all, is the cradle of our country's creed. It is the source of so many of the ideas that inspired America--ideas that have much in common with Judaism. It was John Adams who wrote into the original constitution of Massachusetts, "A government of laws, and not of men." And where had the world heard that concept before? Justice for all, human dignity, life, liberty, the rule of law--these ideas live in the souls of all Jews, and all Americans.

At the root of the kinship between Judaism and the American creed is the conception of national purpose--that is to say, that there *is* a purpose, an *idea*, against which the nation measures itself.

Other nations worship and live by their own existence. No one seeks to understand the English or

the French or the Brazilian idea of national selfhood; no one wonders about any *theory* that motivates or inspires those countries, or that gives shape and purpose to their doing. They exist, as facts of life, and that is enough. As Giambattista Vico, the first historian, put it: every nation enshrines itself as its own ideal or absolute principle. Its own national existence becomes the God it worships.

But that is not true for the Jewish people. We do not posit our own collective being as the ultimate absolute. "Israel," Martin Buber tells us, "experiences the absolute as that which Israel itself is *not*, and which it can never become . . . Israel knows only one absolute, God the Eternal."

Nor does America worship its own existence alone. America, like Israel, was founded on an idea--an idea that has animated the nation through every crisis, through two centuries of expansion and growth. America has not always lived up to that idea--but the very fact that we can say that--and that every aware American can understand what we mean--proves that the nation's actions and policies have always been measured against the ideals of its founding fathers.

Indeed, these Founding Fathers saw America as another promised land, a New Israel, planted--with God's providential guidance--in a New World. Like Israel, America can never abandon the search for purpose. Both nations must be measured against moral absolutes, against the ideas and ideals that justify their existence.

So when we look at what is happening in America today we must look beyond the pragmatic and the political, the mundane and the material. It is necessary--as Americans and as Jews--to examine events from a moral perspective and ask how our government measures up to the American idea.

Let me emphasize: it is a moral and not an ideological measure that we take. True enough, many of us are liberals by bent; our history of infliction has made us so. But we are not so hidebound in our ideology that we claim a patent on decency or a monopoly on the truth. We recognize conservatism to be a much needed balancing force. The welfare of the nation requires more than change and innovation. We need restraint as well as daring, the preservation of our values and not just the drastic reform of our flaws. Conservatism, true conservatism, holds and deserves an essential place in our free society alongside genuine liberalism.

Thus, the election of a conservative government as such does not alarm us, nor does that new spirit of patriotism to which it has given birth. A nation that lacks in self respect lacks also the capacity for self-renewal. And so we welcome that sense of national pride that the Reagan administration has rekindled.

But because America *is* founded on the ethical ideal, and because we *do* measure ourselves against it, true patriotism in this land demands something more than Decatur's dictum, "our country right or wrong." It requires us to strive to make our country right--and to ring the alarm when it is wrong.

It is in this spirit that I want to sound a few alarms tonight, because something is wrong in America.

As a nation we are in trouble.

Our economy is tottering--and the architect assigned to repair it confesses his design is flawed.

The war against poverty has become the war against the poor.

Our civil rights are under assault and the balance of power imbedded in our Constitution is threatened.

Our foreign policy makers fail to exert a moral leadership. Instead they look at the world through bomb-sights and frighten our allies with their casual talk about the possibility of a limited nuclear war.

We sell our most sophisticated weapon systems to lands of doubtful loyalty though doubtless wealth -- and in the process we disparage our friends and unleash the demon of bigotry.

What has happened to us? Have we traded principle for petroleum? Is the gas in our tanks more precious than the spirit in our hearts? Have we lowered our eyes from the vision of liberty, equality and justice to the bottom line of corporate profits?

And are we as a nation forgetting that the pilgrims who settled this commonwealth, whose holiday we celebrated last week, and who inspired so much of America, came here essentially to escape religious hatred?

I prefer to think that it is not so. But I *am* concerned.

Economic Injustice

I am concerned--I am more than concerned, I am outraged--by the injustice of President Reagan's economic policies--and by the hypocrisy that foisted them on the American public. For months we heard budget director David Stockman and the other "supply-side" gurus arguing forcefully, brilliantly--and successfully--for their new panaceas. Cut taxes, they said: the tax savings will stimulate the economy and *increase* government revenue. Cut spending and balance the budget, they said: that will control inflation. Only the Pentagon was to be saved from this rigid retrenchment. In fact it must be given more--more money and missiles to save the peace of the world. With a wave of their Laffer magic wand the supply-siders carried the day and the budget slashing began.

Seven hundred thousand families lost all or part of their welfare benefits.

Food stamps were taken from more than a million people.

A million and a half citizens out of work lost 13 weeks of unemployment benefits.

More than 400,000 households receiving aid to families with dependent children have been thrown out of the program entirely; hundreds of thousands more are getting less than they were.

The school lunch program--which eliminated hunger and gross malnutrition in America--was cut by 40 percent--a billion dollars.

In addition, we have seen cuts in Medicaid, in education and student assistance, in preventive medicine programs and legal aid and energy assistance and dozens of others. Who paid the price for Reaganomics? Listen to the Congressional Quarterly: "About \$25 billion in cuts--some 70 percent of the budget savings...--were made in programs affecting the poor."

Now, these programs were not sacred: no economic program is. But they filled human needs--and human beings *are* sacred. To millions of the disadvantaged in our society, the programs that have fallen victim to Reaganomics gave hope, opportunity--and indeed, life; they provided a chance to share in the American dream and in the bounty of God's earth; they ensured survival and betterment and a chance to pursue happiness--and that is what any government, and especially the American government, is supposed to be all about.

While the poor tumble through the holes in the "social safety net" that was supposed to keep them from disaster, something or somebody is protecting the special interests of corporate America: western water projects, subsidies for Boeing and Westinghouse and the tobacco industry, Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker's pet nuclear project in Tennessee. And in the new tax law, which virtually eliminates the corporate income tax, somebody or something provided a bewildering network of loopholes and depletion allowances and special concessions for the wealthy. All pretense of justice vanished, and even David Stockman saw the folly of it: he tried, he says, to include in the tax bill a few provisions to tax the wealthy--"equity ornaments" he called them--but he failed.

No one could look at all this and avoid the suspicion that the whole program was designed specifically to help the rich at the expense of the poor. As a rational policy to stimulate the economy it seemed to have little chance of working. The behavior of Wall Street told us it wasn't working. The administration's call for further budget cuts in September told us it wasn't working. That was when Stockman tried to "zero out" the Job Corps, Medicaid, the Head Start Program. "Zero Out"--what a cold-blooded bookkeeper's phrase for a process that strangles human lives.

And we could not help wondering: Was the Pentagon budget kept intact and enlarged for reasons of state alone, or was the profit motive of the defense contractors at play?

But these were merely suspicions, and, hoping against hope, many of us reserved judgment. Maybe supply side economics *would* work. We hoped it would. Maybe they did know what they were doing. At least, we thought, trying to be fair, the policy and the theory deserved a test.

And then, in the pages of Boston's great magazine, The Atlantic Monthly, we learned the appalling truth from David Stockman himself. Listen to the man: "We didn't think it all the way through . . . We didn't add up all the numbers. . . None of us really understands what's going on with all these numbers." That means, as he admits, that the whole exercise was based on unproved assumptions--

which is another way of saying phony figures. When the computer at the Office of Management and Budget failed to provide helpful predictions, Stockman simply changed the computer. Reaganomics has revised basic arithmetic. Two and two no longer makes four; it adds up to the sum you need for political purposes!

Stockman again: "I've never believed that just cutting taxes alone will cause output and employment to expand." That means, as he admits, that he never had faith in supply-side theory. According to Stockman, the across-the-board tax cuts, supply side, Kemp-Roth--call it what you will--was simply a "Trojan horse" designed to reduce the taxes on the rich. The policy is nothing more than the old plutocratic argument that if you leave more money in the hands of the wealthy it will "trickle down" and help everybody. But the administration could not come right out and say that. "It's kind of hard to sell 'trickle down'," David Stockman told his interviewer, "so the supply side formula was the only way to get a tax policy that was really 'trickle down.'"

Afterwards, when he tried to climb down from his metaphor, Stockman called a Trojan horse merely "a wooden beast without a brain." A wooden beast without a soul would be more like it, but that is not the point. David Stockman was right the first time: a Trojan Horse is a symbol of deceit and betrayal.

Stockman's apostasy shatters all credibility for Reaganomics. Damned by its leading protagonist, stripped of its pretense, the administration's economic policy stands revealed for what it is: a gift to the wealthy, nothing else!

AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES Threat to Civil Liberties

Thus does the government of the rich, by the rich and for the rich go on its merry way, aware that its policies are a sham but determined to take as much from the system as it can before Congress and the rest of the nation wakes up.

And if Congress does wake up and does refuse to go along with the next round of budget cuts, what will President Reagan do? Quite simple--and very ominous. He has threatened to thwart Congress by impounding the moneys that it authorized. Does that sound familiar? Yes; shades of Richard Nixon.

The shades of Richard Nixon also shroud the more sensitive sphere of our rights and liberties, for only seven years after he resigned, the Trojan horsemen of the Reagan administration, have determined to strip away those safeguards against the abuse of presidential power that a post-Watergate Court and Congress so wisely established.

If the Trojan horsemen have their way, the CIA will once more be spying on Americans, tapping our phones and reading our mail without court warrants--with the excuse that this is necessary to catch foreign agents or terrorists.

If the Trojan horsemen have their way FBI agents will again be permitted to infiltrate unpopular political groups and break the law if they find it convenient to do so.

If the Trojan horsemen have their way, government records of many kinds--and not just national security matters--will be exempted from the Freedom of Information Act, thus throwing a curtain of secrecy over the activities the Act was designed to reveal.

If the Trojan horsemen have their way, the Voting Rights Act will be truncated.

And finally, the Trojan horsemen are trying to saw off one leg of the stool on which our government sits. They want to take away from the federal courts all jurisdiction on abortion, school prayer and busing. Attorney General William Smith says that liberal, unelected Federal judges have "trespassed upon responsibilities our Constitutional system entrusted to legislators," and that it is time "to reverse this unhealthy flow of power." In other words, if you don't like the decisions of the Court, constrain it, circumvent it, cut away its power--and this from the chief law enforcement officer of our land.

But our federal courts were established by the Constitution as one of three co-equal branches of government, and they guard the rights of all of us. The attempt to bar the courts from ruling on controversial issues "could threaten our constitution, our separation of powers and our very system of government." That's not just my opinion: that's a quote from David Brink, president of the American Bar Association.

We must resist these threats to our basic liberties and make our country whole again. And so I call on you to pass--and, more important, to act upon--the resolution that the Commission on Social Action and the Board of Trustees has offered to you.

Human Rights

The need for brevity compels me to limit myself to but two comments concerning the administration's foreign policy--if indeed there is one.

The first relates to the notion that when it comes to human rights one can distinguish between totalitarian governments of the left and authoritarian governments of the right, that we must confront Communist governments that oppress their people but that it is quite proper to sell guns to anti-Communists who do the very same thing.

What nonsense this! Such a distinction is sheer sophistry! Do they really think that a prisoner tortured in a cell in Buenos Aires or Johannesburg or Guatemala somehow feels less pain than a prisoner in the archipelagos of Russia? We cannot divide these victims into two classes based on the ideology of their tormentors! All bigotry, all persecution is equally abhorrent!

So long as the U.S. continues to follow a double standard, its protestations on human rights will be ignored--particularly by the Soviet Union, which has locked in its Jewish population and harasses and persecutes those who want to emigrate. In 1979, a record number of 51,000 Soviet Jews were allowed to leave. Now the flow has become a trickle: only 400--a tenth of the people in this hall--departed in October of this year. Some 200,000 applications for exit visas are on file in Moscow; no one knows how many more Jews want to leave but do not apply because they know what the answer will be.

It is the Kremlin, of course, not the White House, that is trampling on the human rights of Soviet Jews. But the abrupt decline in Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union grimly reflects the tensions on the international scene. Soviet policy on Jewish emigration often fluctuates for mysterious reasons, but two facts are clear: the volume of emigration has never been high unless Jews and governments in the west were raising their voices to demand it; and emigration has always diminished when Soviet-American relations are strained.

On both counts, the Reagan policies have hurt the cause of Soviet Jewry. Demands that the rights of Jews be respected in the U.S.S.R. sound cynical coming from a country that wants to sell arms to Argentina. And where is the hope for the easing of tensions when our leaders speak casually of nuclear options?

An Obsession with Force

Which brings me full square to the second foreign policy issue I wish to raise: the administration's obsession with force. Haig's hollow horsemen want to shoot first and ask questions afterwards. They have but one motto: produce weapons, sell weapons, pre-position weapons. Trouble in the Middle East? Sell the Saudis planes. Revolution in Central America? Replace Soviet arms with ours. Pakistan producing the Bomb? Send them lots of conventional arms and they'll stay non-nuclear. And so it goes....

So great is this obsession with force that the administration seems almost unable to deal with nations that don't want arms. Our ambassador to the United Nations, Jeanne Kirkpatrick, recently suggested to Costa Rica--the only Central American country without a military force--that it reorganize the army it happily abolished several decades ago.

Can such things be? And these were the people who used to criticize liberals for "throwing money" at social problems. Maybe so. But it's far and away better than throwing planes and missiles at every international trouble spot.

The most frightening aspect of this military policy is the escalation of the nuclear arms race by word and deed. President Reagan on at least two occasions has declared that the use of nuclear weapons in the field would not necessarily lead to all-out nuclear war. And General Haig asserted categorically that the detonation of a nuclear bomb as a "demonstration" of our seriousness is one of NATO's options.

There were denials, of course, and explanations. But still, the talk continues: about "first strike" and "second strike" capabilities, and how we will respond if our missiles are "taken out," and how only 35 million or so of us will be killed in the first round.

And there is talk about the neutron bomb--in a cool, casual, almost detached manner, as if it were just another marvelous technological gadget, like a video game or a home computer. The neutron bomb is the one, you will remember, that doesn't destroy tanks or buildings or things--it just kills people. How reassuring to know that our telescreens and Gucci loafers will survive us.

What kind of morbid, ghoulish imagination is it anyway that can describe such a weapon as "clean"? There is nothing "clean" about it, not about a device that can put a torch to civilization. There are no "possible limits" to a nuclear conflict. There is no "acceptable level" of radioactive poisoning. There is nothing "clean" whatsoever about maimed limbs and burned flesh and the whole dark butchery without a soul.

Now I am aware of the fact that several weeks ago President Reagan made a thoughtful speech on this subject and in an entirely new tone of voice indicated that he wants to decelerate the nuclear race and achieve an accord with the Russians.

But, as John B. Oakes has noted--he is, as you know, a contributing editor of the New York Times and through his membership in New York's Temple Emanu-El a member of this union-President Reagan's "bite is worse than his bark." It's what the administration *does* that counts, and not what it says.

Moreover, it cannot be overlooked that the President reacted to tremendous pressure from allied leaders and millions of anti-nuclear marchers in Europe. It is significant also that his speech was beamed live to Europe and that it was delivered on the eve of Brezhnev's visit to West Germany.

Therefore I am convinced that the pressure must be maintained, and I consequently call on this Assembly to give overwhelming approval to the Resolution on Arms Control before us. We must do everything we humanly can to make certain that the new beginning signaled in the Reagan speech will indeed become the policy of this land.

The Saudi Peace Plan

Despite this glimmer of hope for some sanity in our nuclear policy, we cannot forget the administration's tendency to solve international problems with armaments. We who are particularly attentive to the problems faced by Israel have seen a shocking example of that tendency in the fight over the AWACs and the airborne missiles that are being sold to Saudi Arabia. The confrontation Arab states now have been furnished with more arms and brandish more sophisticated weapons than NATO.

I am not going to rehash the controversy tonight. You all followed it and I am sure you were all as appalled as I was by the outcome and by the way that outcome was engineered.

How vain the illusion that we can somehow buy support for our policies by selling the Saudis arms! That didn't work three years ago when we sold those squadrons of F-15s. They thanked us by taking in Idi Amin, denouncing the Camp David peace treaty and continuing to bankroll the P.L.O.

And how do they thank us this time? By coming up with a so-called "peace proposal" that would dismember the Jewish state. The document makes no reference to Security Council resolutions 242

and 338. It makes no call for negotiations. It demands that Israel withdraw from *all* territories occupied in 1967--and that word "all" was deliberately omitted from the Security Council resolution after the Six-Day War. The phony Saudi proposal insists on setting up a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, and it declares that this should be brought about within a few months under the even-handed supervision of the United Nations.

The Administration would have us believe that the Saudi plan "implicitly" recognizes Israel, and that therefore it represents a forward step. But the Saudis stated categorically and emphatically that they do not imply recognition of Israel, so it is dangerous nonsense to find such an implication in their oblique verbiage about the right of states to live in peace. In the Arab lexicon, Israel is not a state, merely the "Zionist entity," an infidel, alien presence upon which to declare a holy war.

If the Saudis are ready to accept Israel, let them learn to pronounce its name. And let them strive for peace within the framework that has already established peaceful relations between Israel and her largest Arab neighbor. Let them do so, and we will bless their name as we now bless Anwar Sadat's memory.

It is true that the Administration has recently restated its commitment to Camp David, and that is encouraging. But we have felt the blows of those who prize oil over Jewish blood, and petrodollars over promises. And we are concerned lest our leaders begin to believe their own rhetoric about Saudi "moderation." The hardline Arabs may have rejected the Saudi plan last week--that makes the Saudis moderate, but only by comparison. Let the free world note that the Arab disagreement is merely over methods, not over goals--like two muggers arguing about whether to shoot their victim or cut his throat.

Therefore I call upon this Union to undertake a massive informational campaign--through ARZA, Kadima and its Commission on Social Action--a campaign that will make clear to our national leaders and our fellow citizens the true nature of Saudi intentions, a campaign that will remind our decision-makers that when promises are made to the only democratic state in the Middle East those promises must be kept.

"The Demons Beneath the AWACS"

There was an equally serious, perhaps even more sinister consequence of the AWAC debate. I refer to those demons of anti-Semitism that it raised.

Everyone knew who was meant when the President stated that "it is not the business of other nations to make American foreign policy." Nixon made it explicit when he said, and I quote, "If it were not for the intense opposition by Begin and part of the American Jewish community, the AWACs sale would go through. This fact," Nixon added, "will greatly affect the consequences if the sale fails to go through." Then President Reagan promptly rewarded him by sending him to Cairo to represent us at Sadat's funeral.

All across the country, the demons were stirring. In Oregon, Senator Mark Hatfield, who voted against the sale, reported frankly that the debate had started a "resurgence of anti-Semitism." In Delaware, Senator Joseph Biden, another opponent, felt that supporters of the arms sale were making American Jews "a scapegoat." Even Senator John Tower of Texas, who supported the President, noted that anti-Semitism was running loose, and--in his fashion--he deplored it. "It shouldn't be raised to the level of public debate, but unfortunately I'm afraid it has been," Tower said.

New York Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, who opposed the sale, detected an ominous "pattern of argument"; those who favored the sale, he indicated, were predicting that anti-Semitism would increase if the deal was defeated. That argument apparently undermined the usually sound judgment of Maine Senator William Cohen, who is a Unitarian with a Jewish father: he switched at the last minute and voted for AWACs, saying it would be better for American Jews to lose the contest than to suffer the consequences of winning.

Nearly a third of the letters received by Senators during the controversy criticized Israeli "inter-

ference" (even while a Saudi prince was in Washington--in a senate office supplied by Howard Baker, no less--openly lobbying for the sale), and more than seven percent of the mail was openly anti-Semitic. Senator David Durenberger of Minnesota was shocked: "I have never experienced anything like this in my life in terms of basic prejudice," he said.

Unfortunately, the strategy of subtly threatening Jews with a backlash if they don't keep their mouths shut is part of a larger pattern of rising anti-Semitism in the U.S. and the world. I was at the White House a couple of weeks ago, where President Reagan took a great deal of time to assure me and other Jewish leaders that he was not anti-Semitic. I believe him. But all Americans--not just Jewish Americans--are in trouble when the President of the United States has to do that.

He has to do it because anti-Semitism is alive and kicking in this land. The number of reported incidents mounts daily. Synagogues are defaced, cemeteries desecrated, religious schools vandalized, slanderous leaflets are distributed, and individuals are pelted with rocks. Telephones ring in the night, transmitting threats and messages of hate. So far, thank God, there have been no deaths and no serious injuries in North America. Although we have reason to be anxious on that score, too, when we learn that the KKK has set up paramilitary training grounds. I am convinced that the number of attacks on Jews and Jewish institutions is even greater than the number reported. Too many Jews dismiss such incidents as pranks, or hope that if ignored they will somehow go away. They will not go away and we might as well face up to it.

What a soothing narcotic this refrain of ours: "It can't happen again." About the only thing we dare say with assurance is that the six million *kedoshim* of Europe won't be killed again. They are dead and buried and incinerated and they can't be martyred again. This is all that we can say with full assurance.

Forgive me, my anger and my anguish make me wax hyperbolic. I do not suggest that we brace for a holocaust. God forbid. According to a recent study by the Yankelovich organization, the *percentage* of anti-Semitic Americans declined in the last two decades. I am merely pointing out that the breathing space we have had since World War II may have come to an end. The memory of the holocaust is fading. The sense of guilt has waned. Hatred of Jews is stirring again among the bigoted, and we had best be ready.

The hatred may turn even more rampant, as it already has in Europe, where the PLO, backed by Moscow, has formed a strange alliance with the radical right. It will certainly rise up again in this country whenever an issue like AWACs comes before us. Although fewer Americans are anti-Semitic, the Yankelovich study showed that *more* Americans see Jews as too powerful, and *more* Americans regard Jews as more loyal to Israel than to the U.S.

What should Jews do about the demons of anti-Semitism? We must speak up. Let us reject the counsel of timidity; let us scorn silent diplomacy. We must prevent a repetition of the silence, the passivity, the paralysis that gripped us two generations ago.

Jews in America must never fear to arouse the public against the hate-mongers, because the overwhelming majority of Americans will stand at our side--*against* bigotry and hate and *for* the American ideal. And we must never hesitate to state our views and vote our consciences: to knuckle under to the hate-mongers out of fear of what they might do is to give them the victory they seek--and they will come back for more, like any blackmailer.

We need not wage this struggle alone. We can reach out to form coalitions of decency with moderate Christian leaders, with civic leaders, with blacks and labor and the liberals and with conservatives too, true conservatives who are pledged to the preservation of the American ideal and not the riders of the Trojan horse.

It is interesting to note in this connection that our traditional alliances held during the AWAC battle. It was led by true and tested friends--the Kennedys, the Cranstons, the Packwoods. Labor was most supportive. Sixteen of 17 blacks voted against the sale, as did all the Hispanics in the House. In fact, these minorities did more for us than did the Jewish legislators, as a group.

My friend, Prime Minister Begin, may not be happy to hear this, but the Moral Majority did not fare as well. Their leader, Jerry Falwell, did sign an anti-AWAC ad, but that was all--no mail, no phone calls, no sermons in support of their public position. In fact, the higher the "Moral Majority rating" of a legislator, the more likely he was to approve of the arms sale.

And this is not surprising, either. The Yankelovich study found that anti-Semitism is intertwined with intolerance of any kind of diversity--the hallmarks of the supposedly "moral", self-proclaimed "majority." Today, the extremism of the radical right and the extremism represented by anti-Semitism are bound up together in a threat to American principles. We must not ignore it. We must not turn away from the fray. The future of the American ideal that we cherish, and our future as Jews within America, both depend on the outcome.

I therefore urge this Union to adopt the resolution on Right Wing Extremism--already approved by your Board on my recommendation--which cites the clear and present danger to the tradition of American pluralism, and which calls for a program to strengthen human rights and human dignity.

The Jewishness of the Jewish State

As we measure America by its own ideals, we must judge Israel too by a moral yardstick. There is a Jewish idea, a Jewish ideal, which animates Israel and to which the nation must be true.

Let us confess that there are times when Israel, too, falls short of its aspiration. It scarcely yet resembles the pattern of our ideal vision. We know this, the Israelis know this too. There are qualms and there are doubts and many self-accusing lines need be spoken.

The Likud-Aguda coalition agreement assuredly gives occasion for such an *al chet*. It scarcely enhances Israel's ideal image. Quite the opposite is true. It besmirches the Zionist dream.

I refer particularly to that provision which seeks to amend the Law of Return. How dreadful a design! How wantonly destructive of Jewish unity!

At a meeting with Prime Minister Begin, Herman Schaalman, the new President of the Central Conference of American Rabbis properly pointed out that since the Knesset must amend this Law, Communists and Arabs who comprise the Knesset will determine just who is and is not a Jew. What an absurdity! What a perversion of the halachic process which this amendment presumes to serve!

How can this be? How can any Jewish leader after Auschwitz permit the institution of a 'selection process' at Jerusalem's gates? That monster who stood at the gates of that infamous camp imposed the death sentence on our wretched brothers and sisters as they came tumbling out of their squalid boxcars; he did not ask: is your mother Jewish? Your father? Who converted you? He killed us all and as we died together we mean to live together.

We must make our collective voice heard on this issue. We will not accept a secondary status in Jewish life! We refuse to be beggars at Jerusalem's gates! We mean to fight for our full and equal rights--as Jews!

I therefore call on you to endorse the pertinent ARZA and Kadima resolution on this subject and also to urge our congregations to fully support the current membership drive of these organizations so that our struggle for pluralism in Israel can continue with an even greater force--until we prevail.

The State of Our Union

A little while ago, I spoke about the need for Jewish unity and for the vigorous assertion of our rights. There is something else we can do. It is what our fathers and mothers have always done in times of travail, and that is to sink our roots deep into the soil of the Torah, a soil more enduring than that of any country or continent. The Torah is our reason for being. It is the source of our strength for collective continuity.

Accordingly it is with no small measure of pride and satisfaction that I hold aloft this copy of the Union's Torah Commentary just completed. It is the crowning of a venture which began over seventeen years ago, when I was first appointed to the directorship of our Commission on Jewish Edu-

cation in 1963. Scores of rabbis, scholars, and lay leaders were involved in its creation, but let it be noted that little of anything would have come to fruition without the energy, imagination and the prodigious labors of Rabbi Gunther Plaut, the gifted Rabbi Emeritus of Toronto's Holy Blossom Temple. We are all indebted to him for allowing us to reach this historic moment: the publication of the first *Reform Commentary* on the Five Books of Moses and the first Torah Commentary in the English language to be created in the 300 years of Jewish life on the American scene.

The Torah Commentary will be an invaluable tool for our educative endeavors. It can also give our pluralistic community a sense of ideological cohesion, providing the centripetal force that Reform Judaism requires to keep the periphery of our movement in touch with its center. Accordingly, it is my hope that the Torah Commentary will have a place in every Reform Jewish home, that it will be used in our classrooms, and above all that it will find its way into every synagogue pew for use at worship services throughout the year.

Hopefully, many of you here will find the time to visit the Widener Library of Harvard University, where our exhibit of Polish Jewish art and artifacts is on display. This is another venture in which we can take pride. It has a worth not only in and of itself; the exhibit is but one element of a larger agreement, painstakingly concluded by Rabbi Philip Hiat, my special assistant, and the Polish authorities, that will give Jewish scholars throughout the world free access to all documents relating to Jewish life in any of the state and diocesan libraries and archives of Poland.

These books and artifacts are brands plucked from the fire. By recovering them for the Jewish world, we recover our vanished, voiceless past. I hope that this Assembly will authorize us to pursue similar agreements with other Eastern European nations. All this is holy work, for it enables lips silenced by death to quiver anew with life.

Now I have frequently urged upon this movement the fashioning of synagogues into caring communities. The synagogue is not just a school or a place of worship or a setting where life-cycle functions can conveniently be performed. It must also be the home of Jews, responding with concern to the needs of all its members. We all have such needs--the widowed, the divorced, the afflicted, the discouraged--we all require sympathy, compassion, caring, and concern.

It is most gratifying that this concept has become a dominant theme of this Biennial and that we will be dealing with practical ways to encourage such a thrust in our congregations. I therefore call upon all UAHC congregations and affiliated bodies to translate these techniques into effective and ongoing programs that will enable our synagogues to be what they were meant to be: the love-guarded home of Jews.

One such problem for which we might be able to provide a collective response comes from those Jewish intermarriages in which divorce occurs. Increasingly, rabbis and lay leaders throughout the country have shared with me the anguish of a Jewish parent whose non-Jewish spouse has been given custody of the children and then refuses to continue to raise them as Jews.

But there *are* legal safeguards available for such children. Accordingly I seek your concurrence for the convening of a conference of jurists who will help us to prepare guidelines for the pre- and post-nuptial proceedings, and who will make themselves available, where necessary, for expert advice and testimony. The rights of these Jewish children must be protected. We must do everything we humanly can to make certain that they will be Jews, that they will be a part of our community and share the destiny of this people Israel.

There is another, more ambitious project to which I would like your assent. I refer to the creation by the UAHC of a full library of Jewish educational TV software. What I have in mind is to take the total corpus that we wish to transmit to future generations and transform it to the TV screen.

The preliminary explorations in this sphere, which our able Director of Education, Rabbi Syme, and the Chairman of the Union's TV Committee, William Hess, have made, assure us that we have the talents and resources needed for this task. At the very least we can videotape the best teachers in any grade and subject and thus help them to reach every Jewish classroom in our land. We can

do better still, much better: teach Hebrew a la Sesame Street, present Jewish history in all its full sweep and power, and explore Jewish ideals and deepen their meaning by casting them in the context of great drama.

We have entered the age of the Electronic Revolution. We are riders on an electronic surf. We must lead the Jewish school into this new age and make it possible for Jewish education to harness this great and vital force.

Finally a word about Outreach. I am grateful for the outstanding work of the special task force on this subject, chaired by David Belin and populated by the best and brightest minds of our movement. And I call on this General Assembly to adopt this report in all of its several recommendations.

Let no one underestimate the scope of this projection. What we propose, in effect, is that we launch a massive effort to transform the attitude of an entire community, an entire generation, if you will, from a resigned, embarrassed acquiescence into a determined, emphatic counter-action. What we propose here is that we stop bemoaning our fate, once and for all shake off the defensive stance born of a ghetto mentality and make Judaism a proud, yes, an assertive faith.

The stakes are exceedingly high. To the best of our knowledge there are some 35,000 Jewish intermarriages a year--that makes 70,000 adults and, given our miniscule birthrate, an additional 35,000 children minimally. The total is 100,000 souls up or down each year, or a swing of two million in a decade, or four million more or less Jews by the year 2000. All this out of our present population of just under six million. Aye, the stakes are exceedingly high. Our survival is at stake!

With all that, I am glad that the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation has determined to challenge the last provision of the Outreach report and thereby has sharpened our debate. Nothing would be more unfitting and hurtful than to have this report go by unseen and unconsidered. Its recommendations, after all, go to the very core of our collective being. Indeed, I made my proposals as dramatic as I did for this very reason. I meant to stimulate an impassioned debate. I want us to think about what we believe and how deeply we believe it.

Those of you who have read the full text of my proposals know that the suggestion about winning proselytes for Judaism was--and still is--circumspect and low key. I flatly ruled out travelling religious circuses and street-corner soap boxes. What I had in mind was precisely what the Outreach Task Force ultimately proposed: a well-considered, carefully constructed program of Information about Judaism to the general public.

To be sure, now, we have had such information programs before, but their tone was not what we need now. The effort of the past was essentially defensive--justifying our existence, assuring everyone that Jews are really no different, no less worthy than anyone else. The newer effort, I hope, will be assertive, unabashedly proclaiming that we are indeed different and that because we are we have something of worth to offer to the alienated and the rootless and to those who are seeking after truth.

Will our traditional interfaith alliances be impaired by such a decision? I scarcely think so! My proposals were widely circulated among leading Protestant and Catholic churchmen. Invariably those who have been our staunchest allies were also those who were most encouraging of my views. Fisher, Boyd, Cox, Baum, Berger--all were approving. Krister Stendhal, Dean of the Harvard University Divinity School, wrote: "Rabbi Schindler's analysis of the place and potential of such a mission is correct. I celebrate his perspective and proposals." Indeed, how could their response have been otherwise? All of these traditional allies of ours persist in *their* proselytizing efforts. Then why should *we* abandon the fray.

I agree with Baltimore Hebrew that our present resources are not sufficient for the need. We cannot allow the outstanding document of the Task Force to remain a hollow gesture. Accordingly, I ask this Assembly to call upon the entire Reform movement to establish a fund outside the regular budget that will provide the resources needed for this far-reaching program.

There is no doubt in my mind that we will be able to muster the needed support. Indeed, I am proud to let you know that one in our midst, Mr. Bernard Rapoport of Waco, Texas has offered us

a munificent challenge grant of \$1,000,000--for this Fund. Tomorrow night we will honor him and his lovely wife Audre. I am heartened by the knowledge that he shares my vision, even as I am confident that many others will be captured by it.

To all this I must add that those educational materials which we will prepare with this fund--the pamphlets, and books and films--and the programs that we project will serve our over-all educative effort. The Outreach program is not just for Jews-by-Choice. It is for Jews-by-Birth as well.

During the discussion on this issue, next Monday, you will see a video-film of an interview with several Jews-by-Choice. Among these was a couple neither of whom was born as a Jew but who chose Judaism together. When they are asked to relate what experience in the conversion process was most disturbing to them, John, the husband, answered: "I was most bothered when born Jews said to me: Are you crazy? You needed this to become a Jew? And I began to wonder . . . if *they* don't know its there, maybe it *isn't* there!"

"If *they* don't know its there, maybe it *isn't* there!" Here is the essential challenge, for in lacking a mission we are suspect of also lacking the message.

But we do have a message, my friends. Let us not doubt it or fail to proclaim it. We have so very much to offer. Judaism celebrates life and not death. It teaches free will, not surrender of the body and the soul to another human being. The Jew prays directly to his God, not through an intermediary. Judaism is a religion of hope and not despair. It insists that humankind and society are perfectible. Moreover, we offer more than a disembodied faith system. We are a people of faith, a caring community of Jews. In other words, we have an enormous amount of wisdom and experience, of warmth and love, to offer to our troubled world, and we Jews ought to be proud to speak about it frankly, freely, and with dignity.

ARCHIVES

Now I am painfully aware that much of what I had to say tonight was disheartening. Would that it could have been otherwise. I would have preferred to echo the hope-filled mood that prevailed when last we assembled here in Boston. For that matter, I would have liked to resurrect Harry Truman--but, alas, resurrection is indigenous to the soil of Israel and not to the soil of America. And so we must face grim reality as it is.

But this must not dispirit us. Pessimism is a waste of time, a kind of "intellectual treason," and we must avoid it at all costs. If we fail or fall back it is not because we are weak or because others have stood in our way but because we have denied our own potentialities. Our world is what we make of it.

Look back and see. We have been guilty of flaws and failures. But we have also pursued excellence and created an occasional splash of grandeur. Sure it is tough to be a Jew. *S'is allemol schwer tsu zain a Yid*. But it is not as tough now as it was 40 years ago in Germany--or 90 years ago in Russia--or 500 years ago in Spain. We have come a long way, in the Diaspora and in the Return. What we have already achieved gives promise of what we can do.

So look ahead with me and see what I see:

I see our young people in our schools, fascinated by the electronic marvels that unlock the world, learning how to manage and utilize what is new while simultaneously discovering the rich wisdom and soul-satisfying beauty of our faith.

I see them then as young adults, reaching out to their communities, giving of the warmth of our heritage, demonstrating what it means to be a Jew. And I see Judaism enriched and strengthened by the ideas and energy of those who choose to join its ranks.

I see an Israel flourishing in the true fulfillment of the Zionist dream, at peace with its neighbors, blending its skills and intellect with the talents and capabilities of other peoples living in the cradle of civilization, so that all can be nourished by the wealth of God's good earth.

I see an America that pursues its national purpose, that acts firmly on the moral principles that gave it birth, that once more provides hope and leadership to the world--not because it has more

guns or more steel or more wealth than other nations but because it has more faith in life, liberty, justice and the well-being of humankind.

Are these dreams? One could call them that. But Joseph was called a dreamer. Herzl was a dreamer. Martin Luther King had a dream. Our grandparents crossing the Atlantic in steerage were dreamers. Two hundred years ago the British thought Jefferson was a dreamer.

They were dreamers all, but doers as well. It was the dreamer within them that saw what the cynics and pessimists can never see: that the beginning point for a better world is the belief that it is possible. Our dreams *can* come true. Let us therefore dream--and let us go forward.



RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PRESIDENT
TO THE
56TH UAHC GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1. I call upon this General Assembly to approve and vigorously to implement the vital resolutions submitted by the Commission on Social Action, particularly those dealing with the urgent issues of economic justice on the American scene, threats to civil liberties, and Nuclear Arms Control.

2. I call upon this General Assembly to approve the following resolution on Peace in the Middle East:

a) We continue to cherish the Camp David Accords as an historic and magnificent breakthrough for peace, and we maintain our profound conviction that the Camp David process is the only viable avenue for the achievement of peace in the Mid-East.

b) We deplore the widespread and uncritical flirtation with the so-called Saudi plan for peace. The document makes no reference to Security Council resolutions 242 and 338. It utters no call for negotiations. Rather, it is a take it or leave it ultimatum that would impose a PLO state on Israel's borders, with its capital in Jerusalem. It is a prescription for war, not peace.

c) We are deeply concerned about the sophisticated arms and equipment, including AWACs, which the United States has agreed to supply to Saudi Arabia. We regard this lavish and reckless arsenal of arms as a serious menace to the security of Israel and to the arms balance of the area. We believe it is contrary to American interests, and we call upon the President and the Congress to take effective measures to safeguard Israel's qualitative edge through strategic cooperation between stable democratic allies.

d) We call upon this Union--through ARZA, KADIMA, and its Commission on Social Action--to mount a massive educational effort to safeguard Israel's security, welfare, and safety in a dangerous period in which many nations seem willing to sacrifice the only democratic state in the Middle East to the exigencies and temptations of oil and petrodollars.

3. I endorse the resolution on Israel and the Prophetic Vision, submitted by ARZA and KADIMA, our rapidly growing Reform Zionist movements.

I further call upon this constituency to support their drive aimed to achieve a membership of 100,000 for the forthcoming World Zionist Congress.

4. I am delighted that the UAHC Board of Trustees has approved my recommendation, made at its November 23, 1980 meeting, regarding Right-Wing Extremism and I therefore call on this General Assembly to accept its recommendation on this score.

5. The publication of the UAHC Torah Commentary represents an historic contribution to a living and growing Jewish faith. I therefore call upon our congregations to make full use of this exceptional resource by making it available in the pews, using it for adult education and urging every Jewish family to make it the centerpiece of their home libraries.

6. In order to lead the Jewish school into the new age of electronic education, I recommend that the UAHC:

a) Identify members of our UAHC congregations who are professionals involved in all phases of television production to solicit their counsel and assistance.

b) Develop a clear set of priorities for that which we hope to offer to our people, akin to the new UAHC Curriculum for Jewish education; including programs for children and adults, liturgy, music, classic literature, the best of our rich and unique Jewish heritage.

c) Produce our own library of UAHC television programs and acquire rights to existing programs of Jewish content to add to our collection.

d) Develop an international distribution system of our programs, so that we might supply national broadcast networks and their affiliates, cable systems and their program suppliers, synagogues, camps, schools and homes with the very best of Jewish programs.

e) Assist UAHC congregations in the production of their own programs, through the creation of sample scripts and formats.

f) Aggressively solicit the charitable gifts required for production, acquisitions and purchase of air time when necessary, to ensure a Jewish presence in the medium of television.

7. We are deeply grateful that the UAHC, through the devoted and far-seeing efforts of Rabbi Philip Hiat, has been able to gather for exhibition at this Biennial, and subsequently in prominent museums throughout the country, some extraordinary fragments of the treasure of historic Polish Jewish life--Art and Artifacts--Lost and Rediscovered. We are gratified by the agreements reached with the Polish authorities and we encourage efforts by Rabbi Hiat and his associates to pursue similar agreements with other countries where such brands plucked from the fire may be found.

8. I have frequently urged upon this movement the development in every synagogue of a caring community, with attention to the emotional and personal needs of the individual members. Not only the widows, the widowers, the single parents, the divorced, the ill, and the elderly, but *all* of us have needs that require sympathy, compassion, caring, and individual concern. It is most gratifying that this concept has become one of the major themes of this Biennial and that we will be dealing with practical ways to organize such a program in the congregation. I call upon all UAHC congregations and affiliated bodies to translate these techniques into effective and ongoing programs to make our synagogues deeply human and caring communities.

9. We must protect the rights of children issuing from Jewish intermarriages in which a divorce occurs. Increasingly, rabbis and lay leaders throughout the country have shared with me the anguish of Jewish parents whose non-Jewish spouses have been given custody of the children and then refuse to continue to rear them as Jews. But there are legal safeguards available for such children.

Accordingly, I seek the concurrence of this General Assembly for the convening of a conference of legal experts who will help us to prepare guidelines for pre and post-nuptial proceedings, and who will make themselves available where necessary for authoritative advice and testimony.

10. In recognition of the outstanding work of the Task Force on Reform Jewish Outreach, chaired by David Belin and populated by the best and brightest minds of our movement, I call upon this General Assembly to adopt the Task Force Report and its several recommendations. So that the acceptance of this outstanding document not be a hollow gesture, I urge this Assembly to call upon the entire Reform movement to establish a fund which will provide sufficient resources to implement this far-reaching, forward thinking program.

CENTER FOR DEFENSE INFORMATION
FORUM ON NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, DC - FEBRUARY 10, 1982
ADDRESS BY:
RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER, PRESIDENT UAHF

It is a privilege which I greatly appreciate to add my voice and to lend my strength to the task which summons us here. It is an urgent task, a toilsome task, a sacred task: to arouse the conscience of humankind, to delimit those fearsome dangers which beset us, to stir men and women everywhere towards norms which serve the cause of life and not of hideous all-consuming death.

Our political leadership is paralyzed. It is mesmerized by empty slogans. It is frozen into self-destructive patterns of national behavior.

This is why the voice of religious leadership must be heard. This is why we must meet and speak and teach and write and organize our congregations into an effective force of public opinion and political action which will reverse the arms race, which will reduce the risk of fatal error, and which will avert the necessity to make life and death decisions about humankind in but a fleeting minute.

It is a task which encumbers us especially, as the religious leaders of the most powerful nation on earth. America is that -- a bounteous and most blessed land. But it is also, alas, the world's leading arms merchant and its foremost proponent of a "nuclear balance of terror." One of those slogans which has brought humanity nought but grief.

Our present political leadership seems seized by an obsession with force. It appears to have but one motto: produce weapons, sell weapons, pre-position weapons. Trouble in the Middle East? Sell the Saudis planes. Revolution in Central America? Replace Soviet arms with ours. Pakistan producing the bomb? Send them lots of conventional arms and they'll stay non-nuclear.

So great is this obsession with force, that the administration seems almost unable to deal with nations that don't want arms. Our Ambassador to the United Nations, Jeane Kirkpatrick, recently suggested to Costa Rica -- the only Central American country without a military force -- that it reorganize the army it happily abolished several decades ago. Can such things be? And these were the people who used to criticize liberals for "throwing money" at social problems. Maybe so. But that's far and away better than throwing planes and missiles at every international trouble spot.

The most frightening aspect of this military policy is the escalation of the nuclear race by word and deed. President Reagan on at least two occasions has declared that the use of nuclear weapons in the field would not necessarily lead to an all-out nuclear war. And Secretary Haig categorically asserted that the detonation of a nuclear bomb as a "demonstration" of our seriousness is one of NATO's options. He should know -- he was, after all NATO's Commander and privy to all its most secret plans.

There were denials, of course, and explanations. But still the talk continues: about "first strike" and "second strike" capabilities, and how we will respond if our missiles are "taken out," and how only 35 million or so of us will be killed in the first round.

And there is talk about the neutron bomb -- in a cool, casual, almost detached manner as if it were just another marvelous technological gadget, like a video game or a home computer. The neutron bomb is the one, as you all know, that doesn't destroy tanks or buildings or things -- it just kills people. How reassuring to know that our telescreens and Gucci loafers will survive us.

What kind of morbid, ghoulish imagination is it anyway that can describe such a weapon as clean? There is nothing clean about it, not about a device that can put a torch to civilization. There are no "possible limits" to a nuclear conflict! There is nothing "clean" whatsoever about maimed limbs and burned flesh and the whole dark butchery without a soul.

Now I am aware of the fact that not long ago President Reagan made a thoughtful speech on this subject and in an entirely new tone of voice indicated that he wants to decelerate the arms race and achieve an accord with the Russians.

But, as John B. Oakes, the editor of the New York Times has noted, President Reagan's "bite is worse than his bark." It's what the administration does that counts, and not what it says. And what has it done of late, just look at the budget that it just proposed. It seeks to secure the fastest possible military buildup, even at the risk of jeopardizing economic revival (Les Aspen). It chooses the force of arms rather than social tranquility. It makes still further unconscionable cuts in human services in order to thicken an already over-bloated defense establishment. What a travesty of justice! What a perversion of morality and of truth!

And so the pressure must be maintained. And we must do everything we humanly can to make certain that the new beginning signaled in the President's recent speech on this subject will indeed become the policy of this land.

What Vietnam represented to the public conscience in the 60's, the nuclear arms race will represent in the 80's and 90's. As religious leaders we must resolve to lead this moral enterprise now as we led it successfully then.

We are not the practioners of realpolitik, pitchmen for the Pentagon. We are the spiritual descendents of the Prophets. We serve the cause of life. We stand for sanity and reason, for compassion and for peace.

Ongepatchket...

Delighted to be at this occasion which unites the several congregations
of this community into one forum...

this is as it should be...

after all, while we are a pluralistic community, that which unites us
as Jews is infinitely greater than that which holds us apart.

it is good that we remember this

good that we recognize those words which designate our divergence as
a pluralistic community -- orthodox etc - for what they are
adjectives and not nouns

the noun is jew: woz mir zennen

Whenever I am asked to speak on the Middle East, do so with a measure of hesitation.

especially when I speak to an audience such as this

most of you exceedingly well informed

you read not only the news but countless news analyses

What can I possibly tell you that you do not know so much better yourself

And yet I came and you came knowing this and I think I know why

We came here not so much to learn something new

but to reach out for one another

to huddle together for warmth

to gain that inner strength which can only come from the companionship of kindred
and aspiring souls.

SCHINDLER

N.J. Speech 5/2/82

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

2

LET ME MAKE MY POINT OF DEPARTURE THOSE MOMENTS ^{HITLER} OF THE
The more specific occasion which summons us here as ~~the~~ leaders of the
American Jewish community

is the impending culmination of the peace process between Israel and Egypt.
^{in 1978} Several days ^{ago} hence the ^{last} portion of the Sinai ^{will} be returned to Egypt,
thus bringing to an end events which had their beginnings
over three years ago when Sadat made his journey to Jerusalem.

A veritable eddy of emotions swirls within us at this time:

gratitude, regret, confidence, apprehension. -- ^{Following the success}
^{in 1978 of a resolute success}
But if there is a leitmotif in the symphony of our sentiments
then surely it is pride, a moral pride ^{born of the knowledge that Israel}
^{has taken heroic risks for peace}
~~in these heroic risks and sacrifices which Israel is making for the sake of peace.~~

For some reason this truth has not penetrated the consciousness of the world:

~~Israel is courting danger for the sake of peace~~
~~and has made sacrifices to gain it.~~

Almost from the very beginnings of Sadat's journey to Jerusalem

the impression has obtained that Israel has not been sufficiently responsive
to his gesture

that she is unyielding unyielding, an obstacle to the peace.

What a tragic misperception, what a malignity, what a perversion of the truth!

Just what has Israel not given for the sake of peace

Indeed, what more is there for Israel to give to Egypt!

The oilfields were surrendered -- and with it the energy supply for all of her
domestic needs.

The airfields were given back -- and the funds which were spent for their replacement

further fuelled an already intolerable inflation.

^{AIR DEFENSE CONSTRICTED BY LACK OF AIR SPACE}
Strategic depth was yielded -- every inch of territory back to the international lines.

5
The Sinai settlements were dismantled...every house, every field...

And ~~now alas~~ ^{will in 1981} even Jewish blood will be spilled by Jews -- all for the sake of peace.

^{Israel}
Sometimes I think that ~~Begin~~ paid too heavy a price.

I said as much to Begin when He first shared his plans with me in December Of 1978.

^{My} It is ~~a~~ view which was shared in ^{by prominent} private, though not in public,

by students of world affairs

the too feel that too much was asked and given.

There might have been some territorial adjustments or at least a leaseback of

^{DM} the settlement lands...

But Sadat would have none of it and Begin yielded -- for the sake of peace. ^B

Note if you wil, ^{Israel} ~~moreover~~, that he is determined to keep ^{her} his word

even in altered circumstances unfavorable to ^{her} Israel.

After all, Egypt is not the same after Sadat.

Oh yes, Mubarak says the right words, especially in Wstern Capitals,

and he probab;-y means it/

But Mubarak is not Sadat,

and his government is not as firmly rotted as was Sadat's.

^{ME} MET

^{ME} He is certainly not the idealist that Sadat was.

He is an amiable, much more practical man.

As a pragmatist, he seeks but to consolidate and retain his power.

As a pragmatist, outer forces more than an inner vision will drive him.

He will cast a wary eye on the domestic scene

and if he senses a serious challenge from the fundamentalists

he will spee the process of turning from Israel to return to the Arab world.

WE HAVE SEEN EVIDENCES -

REFUSAL

PLS STAFF - KUN7.

24

We have seen some evidences of this, have we not

in Mubarak's refusal to follow Sadat's footsteps to Jerusalem
(Sadat when not just to West Jerusalem, but to East Jerusalem)

in his urging through an emmisary at Kuwait PLO state

So far, at least, Mubarak has been only a reluctant heir of Sadat

refusals
rejections
cancellations
denials --- have marked his way

Now all this is not to say that I am despairing of the peace, far from it
those underlying economic reasons which moved Egypt to opt for peace still obtain
the process of normalization still continues
after all scarcelt a week passes

Nor do I say that the gain is not worth the risk...it is...

the neutralization of the arab wold's most populous state
holds the potentiality of making Israel more secure
and it is a great historic achi-vement

1 want to
All ~~is~~ say is that the risks for peace were enormous

and the sacrifices whic Israel has made for peace were enormour

And the world ought to know it

and we ought to know it.

5
~~We have seen some evidence of that, have we not~~

in Mubarak's refusal to follow in his predecessors footsteps to Jerusalem
in his championing of a PLO state at the recent *KUWAIT* Conference.

~~Israel knows all this, and still, Israel chooses to take the risk for peace.~~

Now I speak of Mubarak as a pragmatic man

Now as a pragmatist, Mubarak will not only yield to pressures from within,
his antennae will be carefully attuned to those directions which America will take.

Alas, here too, we can find no comforting reassurance,
for of late American Mid Eastern policy has made a turning
away from Israel and toward Saudi Arabia,
away from Camp David toward something resembling the fahd plan.

This foreign policy approach favors a massive sale of arms to Persian Gulf States
to add to their military strength
and as a means of prepositioning arms for an eventual use ~~by~~ by our troops
should this become necessary.

In this view, Saudi Arabia is posited as a stable, moderate, pro-Western force,
the corner stone of an eventual union of Arab States as a kind of cordon sanitaire
against Russian aggression in the Middle East

*WHAT NOBLESSE ALL THIS - WHAT DANGEROUS PRATTLER - IT IS A DANGER TO ISRAEL
BUT A DANGER TO AMERICA
IT WILL !*

Now Saudi Arabia is not a stable country.

It is a backward society,

with weak political institutions

suffering from the shock of explosive economic growth

and from a grotesque mal-distribution of wealth.

Saudi Arabi has scarcely been a moderating force in the Middle East.

It bankrolls terrorism

denounced Sadat for his journey to Jerusalem

and organized the rejectionist front against Camp David.

Saudi Arabia is neither pro-Western nor pro-American.

It view itself, rather, as the natural leader of emerging Islamic world force which is essentially anti-Western and anti-Christian.

It has invoked a holy war against Israel

precisely because it sees Israel as the visible presence of the West in the Middle East.

Nor has Saudi Arabi been exactly pro-American in its conduct.

The sale of the AWACS was followed within 24 hours by a \$2,000 hike in oil prices and a cut in production.

Within a year after the Senate authorized 60 F15s,

there was not a reduction but rather a trebling of oil prices.

As for ~~xxx~~ those anticipated strategic ties to the US

Casper Weinberger came back empty handed from his recent journey to Riyadh, did he not

The Saudis will not permit US facilities there.

They blackmailed Oman into withdrawing its offer for US bases.

And they vigorously oppose the presence of US forces in the Gulf.

"You are just an arms merchant," Weinberger was told,

"we'll ~~xxxx~~ pay your price and you have no further claim on us."

As for the ^{notion} ~~notion~~ that the Arab nations can be forged into some kind of united front against the Soviet Union that ~~concept~~ is altogether laughable.

There are some 21 deeply rooted conflicts rending the Middle East,

and none of the would be healed by a resolution of the Arab Israel dispute.

Even if be some waving of the magic wand ^{A magic wand} ~~that dispute could be resolved,~~ ^{ARAB NATIONS}

the Iraqis won't go to bed with Iran, ^{ARAB NATIONS} ~~and~~ ^{ARAB NATIONS}

Aman and Damascus won't re-embrace

and the Syrian rape of the Lebanon will not cease...

nor, for that matter, will the Russians withdraw from Afghanistan

or close thier bases in S. Yemen and Ethipia.

~~In fact, there is only one thing that can be said for the Saudi connection,~~

~~and that is money~~

~~169 trillion dollars of it, which the Saudis are expected to earn through the 80's~~

~~But if moeny is at stake, let us say so.~~

~~Let us not pretend that it is something else~~

~~Let us not lift it to the level of a higher national interest.~~

~~Let us not delude ourselves into thinking that what is good for the Hashtel Corporation~~

~~is good for America.~~

~~Let us recognize that the ~~current~~ [↑] our kowtowing and currying of Saudi favor~~

~~courts ultimate disaster for our country and the free world.~~

8

In afct there is only one thing that can be said for the Saudi connection

and that is money - 169 ~~xxx~~ trillion \$s of which they are expected to earn 80s
the profit motive is at play

(conversations with Begin re Weiberger)

Well, if it is money which is at play, let us at least say so

Let us not pretend that it is something else

Let us not delude ourselves into thinking that what is good for the Bechtel
coporation is good for America

The Saudis can satisfy our thirst for the profit motive

But they offer precious little *else*

and because they don't all this currying of Arab favor courts ultimate disaster
not only for Israel
but for America too.



4

Finally, I want to talk about the current situation on the West Bank,
in Judea and Samaria

Let me begin by saying that I regret these developments deeply.

The death of innocents is not easy to see

be they Arabs or Israelis -- no matter..

(Song by the Sea)

Israel's image as a nation pursuing the moral ideal is scarcely enhanced
by these events.

Whenever I see a picture or hear reports of Arabs killed

I remeber what Golda said in 1973

"We might be able to forgive the Arabs for killing our sons

It is infinitely more difficult to forgive them for

having amde them killers"

Secondly, ~~whitxxxxxx~~ it must be recognized that while the opposition

to Israel's administration is wide-spread to be sure

The more violent forms of that ipposition doubtedly are fomented

by those who want to scuttle the peace,

by the PLO and other~~sxxxx~~ arab nations who have not come to terms

with Israel's existence

and who are determined to drive the Israelis off the map and into the sea.

The PLO has gunned down Arab moderates who want to come to term with Israel

And it is the absence of such a moderating force

which is preincipally reponsibee for impeding the autonomy talks and

the process toward peace.

10

Lastly, there is no doubt that the media lense enlarges these disturbances
Friends on whose judgment and objectivity I rely

have assured me that these distrubances aren't nearly as pervasive
as the headlines would have us believe.

Certainly the Israeli administration of these territories
compares most favorably with what is going on in the rest of the Arab world.

~~SEVERAL WEEKS~~ As a case in point, several weeks ago,
the Syrian city of Hama was virtually wiped off the map
a substantial proportion of its males executed
because they were presumed to challenge Sadat's rule.

From the point of view of an absolute morality, we have reason to feel
uneasy about what is going on in Judea and Samaria

But Israel does not live in a world where an absolute justice reigns
It lives in a world which is ruled by a calculus of force.

The world has no right, therefore to judge Israel and Israel alone by the measure
of an absolute justice

And from a relative measure, of what is going on in the rest of the world,
th- Israelis and the Jews of the world
can well continue to walk about with head heald high.

Which brings me full square to the final point I want to make.

It is a protest of that unfairness with which the worlds fingegers are
constantly pointing at Israel:

The slaughter of thousands of Moslem fundamentalists in Syria goes unnoticed
while each death in Gaza makes front page news.

El Fatah guns down Westbank Arabs who are prepared to deal with Israel
and yet they are called the moderates

But when Israel makes a proper claim in the ~~negotiating process~~ give and take
of the negotiating process, she is labelled obdurate.

When Israel replaces military rule with a civilian adminsitration in the Golan
she is denounced as expansionist and labelled a colonial power

But when Syria invades the Lebanon with a mighty force
first massacres the Palestinians
and the butchers the Christians
why then the world silence is deafening.

Menachem Begin has been particularly subject to such a double standard.

He has been much maligned

His actions and his motivations have been probed with a measure
which is applied to no one else..

Let me give you a classic case in point:

17
To be sure now Begin does not speak softly, though his stick is far from big.
His rhetoric strident...

It appears that that he might have brought some of the problem on himself
Still, there is a double standard operative to which I take objection.

When Sadat was alive, he might make some outrageous statements
against Israel,

but whenever he did, the State Department people would calm us saying
don't weigh his word

he has to appease the other Arabs and the fundamentalists in his own government
And when Mubarak refused to go to Jerusalem, again we were told:

be understanding of him...he can't afford to arouse internal opposition.

Well, why not extend the same courtesy to Begin...

He too faces internal pressures of no small consequence:

Look at what happened only last week:

His government nearly brought down...

but note, and here is the point

he was nearly brought down not by a challenge from the left but from the right

Telem abstained

Tehiya voted against him, and Tehiya stands far to the right of Begin

The deputy of the NRP deserted the coalition, and he is the leader
of the Gush Emunim

It is the right which brought him low

It is the right felt that he was entirely too soft in the West Bank policies

It is the right which probably hoped in some fashion to keep him from surrendering the
Sinai...

And in the final analysis Begin allowed to be persuaded to stay
because he did not want to risk the peace

and allow Israel to

The criticism of Begin is grossly unfair.

Peace with Egypt is a historic achievement -

the second most important happening to the State since its creation.

~~Let no one deny that~~ the merit for this achievement is his, + his ~~alone~~.
He ~~well earned~~ THAT NOBEL PRIZE WHICH HE RECEIVED
He is an honorable man, a great patriot and a proud Jew.

In fact I have met no other head of state more worthy than he



All this is not to say that I agree with his every decision.

No do I want to suggest that Israel is never guilty of fault or failing
or that she is relieved of all moral responsibility.

Let us admit it.

Israel ~~is~~ still has some way to go before it becoemes the fulfillment of our
ideal vision.

We know this.

The Israelis know this too.

There are qualms and there are doubts and many self-accusing line are spoken.

But we speak thse lines ourselves about oursleves.

Let none others speak them

Let them be silent for all time to come.

Let them not to to raise one hand in accusation.

Their hands are drenched in blodd, comingled with oit.

Come to think of it, let them do what they will.

We will continue to do what we have aloways done

dreaming our dreams, laboring for their fulfillment

We are not about to collapse under pernicious libe; and contemptible verbal abuse

We have suffered far worse and survived.

And so against the schemings and the maledictions of our enemies

we will extend our stake in Israel

We will not yield.

We will stay and we will build.

**Report
of Rabbi
Alexander M. Schindler,
President
of the Union
of American
Hebrew Congregations
to the Board of Trustees**

DECEMBER 3, 1982
DENVER, COLORADO



We are deeply grateful to the leaders and members of Temple Emanuel for welcoming us to their communal home. They are joined in their host role by the Board members of four other area Reform congregations who are with us tonight: Temples Beth Am, Micah and Sinai of Denver, and Temple Har Hashem of Boulder. We salute them and we thank them for their gracious reception as well as for their manifold contributions toward the advancement of our work.

The semi-annual meeting of the UAHC's Board of Trustees which convenes here this weekend is special in several respects. To begin with, we mark the 70th anniversary of the NFTS — the very first of our affiliates, now grown to seven. We hold Sisterhood in high esteem and for good reason. Many of our finest attainments — especially in the field of youth and education — were given birth and nurtured by Sisterhood. The House of Living Judaism could not have been built without Sisterhood. There were times in our early history when the Union itself would not have survived without Sisterhood. Much the same can be said for many of our temples throughout the land which live and flourish only because there were women of Sisterhood who labored to sustain them. We do well, then, to honor NFTS and to give voice to our prayerful hope that its future will be as glorious as was its past.

Our Board meeting is special in one other respect. We have enlarged it by inviting the presidents of our congregations. Many of them are with us tonight and they will deliberate with us throughout these days. We welcome their presence and their counsel.

We have convened this enlarged meeting, because we deem its agenda to merit the widest possible consideration. Indeed, it is our hope to stimulate an even wider discussion of these matters by deferring their resolution to the Biennial so that every congregation can study them beforehand. I want to address myself to some of these problems tonight, not so much to direct your thinking, but rather so that your opinions can react to mine, enabling us to enter into a genuine dialogue, into what our forebears called *obredn doz hartz*, where mind meets mind and hearts touch one another.

These issues flow directly from those dramatic events to which we were witness last summer: the war in Lebanon, the bombing of Beirut, the Phalangist massacre in the camps. These events stirred me deeply, evoking discordant, sharply contending emotions. And because many other American Jews shared my anguish, I also believe that these events mark a watershed, a turning point in the evolution of our community.

Let me say at once, that I believe Israel's incursion of the Lebanon to have been justified by those events that preceded it — the shelling of her settlements, the massive military build-up by the PLO, the emplacement of sophisticated anti-aircraft systems by the Syrians, and the like. No sovereign state can long suffer such a concentration of military might along its borders, especially when shellings and terrorist raids come with it.

As usual, Israel acted with effectiveness: her northern frontier was secured; the training ground for international terrorism in Southern Lebanon was wiped out; the re-establishment of Lebanese independence became at least a possibility; Russian influence in the area suffered a serious set-back, her most advanced weapons systems were neutralized by the Israelis, while American influence in the Middle East has been vastly enlarged. Paradoxically, even the peace process appears to have been furthered; certainly Hussein is closer to the negotiating table now than he has been at any time since Rabat.

Indeed, from a strictly military point of view, this could well have been Israel's most successful campaign. The doubts of 1973 have been brushed away. Israel's armed strength stands again as a deterrent to attack.

Still, there is no rejoicing in our hearts, no victory celebrations in Jerusalem's streets, no triumphant stirrings of the spirit. I suspect this would have been so even if there had been no massacre and no excessive bombing of Beirut. After all we are Jews, and Jews do not gloat in victory. The satisfaction of victory is never untempered. There is always a sadness beneath the joy, and in this case perhaps more sadness than usual.

Our tradition teaches us that when a starving man sees a bird's nest filled with eggs he may eat them, but "only after he throws a stone into the forest." The rabbis explained this rather curious provision. "It is to distract the mother bird, to make her look away so that she doesn't feel so much pain." In other words, kill if you absolutely must in order to survive, but never forget the pain you are causing, always be conscious of the suffering you have inflicted.

The pain of the Lebanese war was exceedingly great. Many innocents were maimed and slain and Israel's reputation as a country armed not just with a strong military force but also with a superior moral code suffered tragic diminution.

For the first time, Israel started a war when it was not under immediate attack; for the first time Israeli government statements and communiques were less than frank; for the first time, cities were destroyed and large numbers of civilians killed — because PLO terrorists were hiding among them. And, of course, for the first time deliberate atrocities were committed in an area under Israeli military control.

And this is why we cannot forget what happened as the rest of the world — even the Lebanese — can turn to other problems. Tylenol pushed Sabra and Shatila out of the headlines and out of the minds of most Americans, but not out of the minds of Israelis and not out of the hearts of Jews.

In the aftermath of these events, the relations between Israel and world Jewry will never be quite like they were — which is not necessarily bad for us, for Israel, and for the world. Depending on what we make of this moment, future generations of Jews may look back on 5743 as a year in which the Jewish spirit, seared by trauma, tested anew in a moral crucible, achieved a new level of maturity, wisdom and understanding.

Here then is the reason for this extraordinary meeting. We in the American Jewish community have a lot to do, and the sooner we all get involved in it the better. For the dramatic events of last summer will have a lasting influence on three vital matters: our relationship to Israel, our sense of ourselves as Jews in America, and our relationship to that larger community in which we live. How we resolve the dilemmas that have now been so sharply focused for us will determine the future direction of Jewish life.

I. OUR RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL.

At the outset let me emphasize that when I suggest a reconsideration of matters affecting our relationship to Israel, I do not at all suggest a weakening of our support. God forbid. There is a danger here: some in our midst may seize what happened as a reason for withdrawing from the struggle. We cannot permit this to happen. How to prevent that withdrawal and alienation is, in part, our task.

Israel has earned and deserves our support. It may not yet have fulfilled our ideal vision, but it is closer to its realization than any other country of which I know.

Consider this: In the midst of war, the men and women of Israel expressed their concern with national morality by turning out in huge numbers in Tel Aviv. On the second occasion 400,000 men and women, over 10% of Israel's total population, poured into the streets. In Israel, morality cannot be ignored even during a war.

Consider also that Israel established a Commission of Inquiry within a week after the event. Although I wished it had been established sooner and I tried to persuade Prime Minister Begin to set it up without delay, still it was within a week. And it is a deeply probing investigation, as the daily reports make clear. Meanwhile, the new president of Lebanon — whose Phalangist militiamen committed the atrocities — is embraced by the Pope and received with honor in the White House, where for the sake of politeness, no mention is made of the tragedy his people caused. In Lebanon itself, the attitude was best expressed in the words of a Phalangist leader: "we can't allow these massacres to pollute our politics." Aye, most Lebanese are wondering what the tumult is all about. Decades of mutual bloodletting have inured them.

But Israel is not inured. Her people care. The moral turmoil into which they were plunged these many months bespeaks the nation's essential decency. And that is why we will continue to support Israel and struggle for her security with all our heart and soul and might.

Dissent

But when we support Israel, we support an entire nation. Our support has always transcended party and policy and personality. And that leads us — and Jews everywhere — to ask a relevant question: Is it therefore proper under certain circumstances to disagree with a particular leader or government or policy? And if so, how should such disagreement be expressed?

Over the years, the Jewish community has reached a theoretical consensus on this score: full and free debate of any and all issues *within* the community, coupled with the obligation that we communicate our views to the Israelis through every channel at our command — from the Prime Minister on down. Strictures were applied only to *public* dissent. This was discouraged lest it provide wood for the axes of our enemies and dilute our effectiveness in Washington. The assumption was that a united front adds weight to the political effort.

Unfortunately this public reticence does not always work out well in practice, particularly when it comes to letting the Israelis know precisely how we feel. In our personal conversations we are honest with them, yet how can we expect them to believe what we say in private when we say such very different things in public? Inevitably, our private protestations are overwhelmed by our public proclamations of unqualified support.

Special missions to Israel itself are also of doubtful worth. The trappings of public office overawe, people are polite and the message usually gets lost. I was bemused recently, on re-reading Cervantes, to come across these lines spoken by Don Quixote: "It is the duty of loyal vassals to tell their lords the truth . . . without enlarging on it out of flattery or softening it for any idle reason. I would have you know, Sancho, that if the naked truth were to come to the ears of princes, unclothed in flattery, this would be a different age."

And so we must find new and better channels through which we can present the naked truth to the Israeli government and to its people. A number of possibilities come to mind:

*The Presidents Conference could meet quarterly with members of the Knesset Committee on Foreign Affairs as well as with the Editors' Association of Israel's major newspapers.

*Jewish Senators and Representatives could meet periodically with their counterparts in Israel to discuss American political realities.

*The idea of a Parliament for the Jewish People ought to be re-examined to see whether it can be brought to life. The need for such an assembly has never been greater, and nothing now exists that even approaches this concept.

*We might publish a weekly column in the Israeli press, paying for the space if need be, to present our views, certainly on the question of our own religious rights, but even on the broader questions of justice and civil liberties in Israel.

Somehow American Jews, the largest Jewish community in the world, must find a way to communicate more openly and honestly with Israel. We do not serve her cause when we censor or sanitize or stifle our opinions.

One more point must be made in this connection: *dissent should never be equated with disloyalty*. Yet there are pressures on the American scene which make it so. They were applied during the recent crisis with special force, not by the Israelis so much as by their self-appointed minions here in America — minor functionaries strutting about as the guardians of the state's security. And the further from the center of power they are, the more inquisitorial they become.

I ask you: Must I indulge in annexationist fantasies to prove that I am a passionate Jew? Must I justify every single restrictive administrative measure in Judea and Samaria to demonstrate my love for Israel? Is this love diminished in the slightest when I assert that the incorporation of these territories into Israel represents a threat to the Jewish essence of the state? Let us once and for all reject the accusation that by speaking the truth as we see it, by giving Israelis our own perception of events, we are somehow treasonous. I believe that Israel is indeed the possession, the treasure and the burden of the Jewish people. And that gives us both the right and the responsibility to speak out.

Golda Meir had a refreshing way of putting it. Interviewed soon after the Yom Kippur war she said the following:

"We want to hear nice things about ourselves, but we must also hear the truth. The Arabs, the United Nations, the anti-Semites — *their* criticism we ignore. But American Jews are 'mishpacha,' they are our family, and from them we expect not only praise, but criticism as well. They should not only support us, that is understood; it is equally important that they help us see what is wrong and how it can be corrected."

True enough, dissent is delicate and sometimes dangerous. It must be exercised with 'sechel' and with the greatest of care. I certainly have no intention of joining those media wolves who beset Israel with their baying and barking at her every step. Thus I will continue to oppose the taking out of ads in American newspapers or the signing of petitions intended for the front pages of the *NY Times*, or public protests like those anti-Begin rallies held by the Satmer Chassidim in New York and Washington last fall. But if either the Israeli leaders or the institutions of American Judaism suppress honest dissent and smear the dissenters, I predict that the Jewish people will be spiritually impoverished and Israel's cause intolerably diminished.

Regaining Israel's Soul.

In arguing for the right of dissent, I do not suggest for one moment that we involve ourselves in the operational details of Israel's domestic or foreign policy. We have neither the resources nor the competence for that. We also recognize that the *final decision rests with Israel* whose people live under the gun. But I do believe that it is our obligation to make ourselves clear about the great issues, those fundamental matters which will have their impact on Israel's future — and the destiny of the Jewish people.

One such issue is the future of Judea and Samaria. As a matter of fact, our views here really involve no dissent, since the government has not formally resolved this matter and Prime Minister Begin called on "all Israel" to enter this debate. I assume he meant that greater Israel that extends beyond the boundaries of the political state. And so I take him at his word.

Let me repeat here what I said at the beginning. I do not want to direct your thinking; I merely want to engage your thoughts. Still, you are entitled to know what my views are, and briefly put, they are as follows:

While I understand and appreciate Israel's historical claims to Judea and Samaria, I believe it necessary for the sake of peace and justice that these claims be moderated. Far from increasing Israel's security, the absorption of these territories — either openly by fiat or covertly in stages — will sow the seeds of endless conflict. Most importantly, it will corrode the Jewish character of the state and thereby rupture world Jewish unity.

Why will this happen if Israel retains the West Bank and its Arabs? Because sooner or later this will produce an Arab majority in Israel making Israel if not an Arab then at best a bi-national state with the balance of power shifting precariously between Moslem and Jew. And if Israel tries to extricate itself from this dilemma by either repressing the Arabs or driving them out — this too will lead to a disfiguring of Israel's essential nature and alienate substantial segments of world Jewry. America's moral support will also be lost — witness the erosion of that support during the summer just past!

There simply is no genteel, democratic way to keep a restive population exceeding 1 million people in check. Only force will restrain them. That is the only way to keep a refractory population under permanent rule — with force and spies and the political power that comes from the barrel of a gun.

Is this what we want? Is this what the Zionist dream will come to? Is this what Israel must do to preserve its security? Is this what we mean by establishing defensible borders? We all share the goal of a secure Israel, but what will be preserved behind those borders if Israel goes the way her ideological zealots are now demanding? Democracy will wither, Judaism will be betrayed and we will become like our enemies: *Vayimalu belohay avotayhem* — "And they broke faith with the God of their fathers, and went astray after the gods of the peoples of the land whom God destroyed before them."

There is, of course, an alternative: to acknowledge the aspirations of the Palestinians, to build bridges to them, to reach an accommodation with the people who share with Israel a troubled corner of the world. I speak here of the Palestinians, and *not* of the PLO; of territorial compromise, and *not* of a state.

Can this alternative succeed? There is no certainty. But this much we *do* know. The contrary way is foredoomed to failure. No national movement including Zionism has ever been erased by military force. Reciprocal terror will but plunge us into a downward spiral to eternal conflict and the loss of Israel's soul. If Israel is to remain Israel, there is no other way.

All this assumes that such a territorial compromise will include flawless security arrangements in Judea and Samaria. It also assumes that the Arabs will, in fact, come to the negotiating table prepared to make those compromises which will meet Israel's true security needs.

I categorically reject the notion that Israeli policy is the primary obstacle to peace. The fatal stumbling-block is still the obduracy of the Arab governments, barring only Egypt, in refusing to acknowledge Israel's legitimacy. Until they overcome this barrier, Israel's settlement policy can well be rationalized as valid pressure to bring them to the table.

Aye, Begin may be a hardliner, but he is nonetheless far more accommodating than are the rejectionist Arab states. They have still a long way to go. They have to find new leaders. They have to abandon the illusion that the murderous PLO is a proper instrument for the Palestinian cause. They have to realize that neither terror nor rejectionism will bring them what they want. And they can begin the process by learning how to pronounce Israel's name. Let them do so and we will bless *their* name as we now bless Anwar Sadat's memory.

The 'Other Israel.'

A brief word about that 'other Israel' — the Sephardim and Jews of oriental lineage. They provide the Likud with its most substantial electoral base and they are assumed to be of one mind when it comes to Israel's security needs, hardliners all, who having suffered Arab oppression are now bent on revenge and insist that brute force is the only language the Arabs understand.

I am not at all persuaded that the Sephardim are as monistic as all that, all of them of one mold and view. After all, Deputy Prime Minister David Levy, who is their hero and top political figure, is most prudent. Moderation is his hallmark. At a crucial cabinet meeting in September he was one of the few to question the wisdom of allowing the Phalangists to enter the camps, and he was among the first political leaders to call for an independent inquiry into the massacres. So was Navon, of course, who is also Sephardi.

We simply don't know this other Israel. We stand at a distance, all of us, we Reform Jews too. At best we romanticize them — their colorful garb, their quaint customs, their tremorous, quivering melodies — as if they were a breed apart, something of another age and place.

We had better come to know them. They are the emerging majority of Israel. They already constitute a major portion of Europe's Jews. And their numbers are not insubstantial on the American scene. I therefore call on our Board to establish a special task force — to include the Conference and the College and ARZA — to help us learn more about this community of our fellow Jews more fully, to chart ways for our reciprocal contact — in a word, to help us de-Ashkenize Reform Judaism so that we might truly become one people.

II. OUR COMMUNITY'S SELF-IMAGE.

And what now of the character of the American Jewish community?

First of all, let us recognize and affirm that we are more than just a part of Israel. While deepening our solidarity with Israel, we must also affirm our own identity, integrity and value.

It is difficult to explain this to American Jews, who for too long have been plugged into Israel as if it were a kidney machine, a scientific marvel that keeps them Jewishly alive. How can we teach them simultaneously two apparently contradictory lessons: One, that they have a worth as Jews independent of Israel and, two, that they must continue to love and support Israel?

If we make too much of the first lesson, some will take it as an excuse to cut themselves off from Israel. And if we make too much of the second, we will never know who we are. We will continue to use Israel as a fig leaf to cover our own nakedness.

Just what does Israel mean to us as Reform Jews? What do we mean when we affirm the concept of Israel's centrality? At tomorrow's luncheon our worthy colleague, Rabbi David Polish, will lead us into a consideration of these questions, even as he led our affiliate ARZA into resolving these issues when it joined the WZO.

I do not want to preempt his discourse. Let me say only that we have not yet sorted out the relationship between Israel and the Diaspora.

Thus, we have slipped into the sloppy equation which says that Judaism equals Zionism equals Israel. The three are isometric but not isomorphic, they are congruent but not of identical form and substance.

In our deep love for Israel and our concern for her security we have become a largely one-issue community. For many American Jews the state has become the synagogue and its prime minister their *rebbe*. Domestic and international issues are now measured by the standard of whether they are good or bad for Israel.

We do ourselves irreparable harm when we allow this to be, when we make Israel our surrogate synagogue, when we permit our Jewishness to consist almost entirely of a vicarious participation in the life of the state. There is a greater Israel which sustained our Jewishness through the many centuries of our dispersion. It is not isomorphic with the political state. And it is this greater Israel which we must nurture if we — and it — are to survive.

I am not arguing that we should diminish our involvement with Israel. Quite the contrary. I want more not less. I want us to make Israel more truly Jewish, a more truly Zionist state, with a quality of life that reflects the most profound Jewish vision.

I argue merely for a restoration of some balance. We will not survive if all we are about is Israel. And Israel will not survive if the Jews of the world become but pale peripheral extensions of its essence, merely lonely asteroids circling in space about a distant sun.

Both are needed: a strong Israel, and Jewishly strong communities throughout the world. For both are but manifestations of an undergirding reality: *Am Yisrael* — the Jewish People!

III. RELATIONSHIP TO LARGER COMMUNITY, AND ANTI-SEMITISM.

Our relationship to the larger community of which we are a part also requires some repairs. It will not be easy. As anti-Semitism amplified some of the rage against Israel early last summer, the events in Lebanon have stirred up the witch's brew of the Great Hatred itself.

Make no mistake about it: anti-Semitism has been given license, and it will increase. We have already seen some of the consequences in Europe, and although such bloodshed is not to be expected in this country, we had better brace ourselves for a difficult time.

Still and all, those Israelis were utterly wrong who said that we American Jews were upset by the Beirut events because we were afraid of anti-Semitism. While I was in Israel after Rosh Hashono, the papers were filled with charges along that line, made by a high government official, that we were running for cover, that many American Jews didn't even attend high holy day services because they were so afraid, and whatnot. What nonsense this! I know of no generation of our people less fearful, more confident than this generation of American Jews! Our concern was and is not what others have done and will do to us. Our concern is what we are doing to ourselves, what we are making of ourselves and what we have failed to make of ourselves. It is a moral concern, nothing more and nothing less!

As for anti-Semitism, the arguments over how we should respond to it does parallel somewhat the debate about Israel's response to the Arabs — and the rest of the world for that matter. Those in Israel who see their country as utterly alone, embattled, surrounded by implacable foes, doomed to bomb its way to survival — are echoed here by those who see an anti-Semite lurking behind every Christian and who walk down the street with a chip on their shoulders daring the 'goy' to knock it off.

These people want us to withdraw behind our own walls and dig in our own garden. Why, they ask, should we be concerned with other causes — the blacks, the disadvantaged, world peace? No one cares about us. So let's forget about them and take care of ourselves.

But here too we must relentlessly go about the task of building more and better bridges. There are risks involved, but here, too, the way of force is utter madness, and withdrawal into a spiritual ghetto will serve us ill.

We must form new coalitions of decency with the majority of Americans who reject bigotry and hatred. We must reach out to them by joining them in the struggle for universal justice that serves us all.

But how can we ask them to stand by us, if we do not stand by them? How can we expect them to crush the haters in their midst, if we do not join them to crush the menace of nuclear proliferation? How can we expect to engage them in the struggle for the freedom of Soviet Jews if we fail to see the shackles and feel the hunger of those who are imprisoned in America's urban ghettos?

We live under an administration which has determined to multiply missiles rather than to mitigate human misery. The weak, the poor, the helpless, cry for relief. Will we heed them? Or will we block our ears, so long as we see President Reagan smiling benignly and speaking of support for Israel?

If we continue to be fixated on a narrow agenda, we will lose our allies and our cause. We will also have lost our reason for being — our compassion, our humaneness, our Jewish soul.

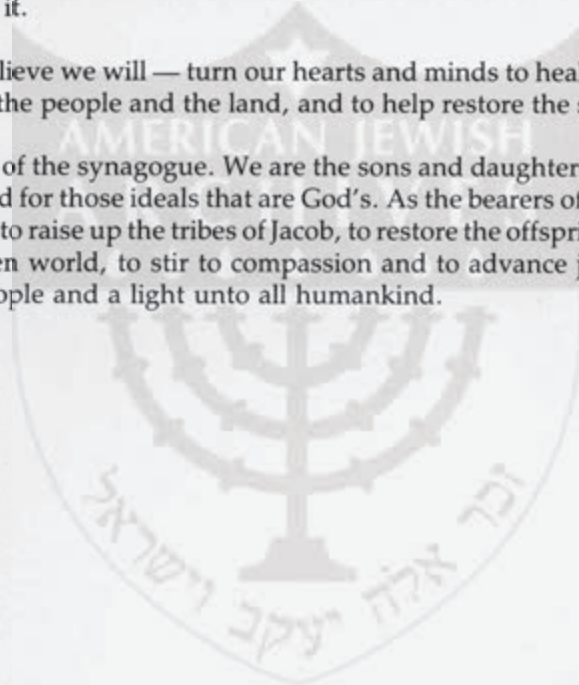
It need not happen that way, and I don't think it will. Somewhere within each of us the spark of Jewishness still trembles and will not be quenched.

We may be disheartened by recent events, but we are not wrapped in melancholy gloom. The word 'despair' cannot be found in our lexicon.

Sure it's tough to be a Jew — *z'is allemol geveyn schwer zu zayn a yid* — but it's still not as tough now as it was in other years we can remember. This is 1982, not 1942. We live in America and not in the Warsaw Ghetto. We have synagogues and communal institutions and highly educated constituents. We also have *Medinat Yisrael* — the Jewish State — to give us strength and focus. And we have our beliefs that sustain us, our Jewish ideals that can show us the way. It is worthwhile, this enterprise of being Jewish. It summons us to be fired by the vision of the good and to fulfill it.

We can — and I believe we will — turn our hearts and minds to heal America, to hear the true harmony of Israel the people and the land, and to help restore the soul of the Jewish nation.

We are the leaders of the synagogue. We are the sons and daughters of Jacob surnamed Israel because he wrestled for those ideals that are God's. As the bearers of his name we are destined to fulfill a like task: to raise up the tribes of Jacob, to restore the offspring of Israel. And also this: to repair the broken world, to stir to compassion and to advance justice. Thus will we be a blessing to our people and a light unto all humankind.



Angel I took about 1000 words from the book I should be try to give you eyes to your feelings & confidence
M. S. Schindler
T. J. J. J.
 RABBI SCHINDLER

It is a privilege which I greatly appreciate
 to add my voice and to lend my strength to the task which summons us here.
 It is an urgent task, a toilsome task, a sacred task:
 to arouse the conscience of humankind
 to delimm those fearsome dangers which beset us.
 to stir men and women everywhere towards norms
 which serve the cause of life and not of hidepus all-consuming death.

Our political leadership is paralyzed.
 It is mesemerized by empty slogans.
 It is frozen into self-destructive patterns of national behavior.

This is why the voice of religious leadership must be heard.
 This is why we must ^{MEET} ~~speck~~ and ^{SPEAK} ~~meet~~ and teach and write
 and organize our congregations ^{ations + the will of members} into an effective foree of public opinion

which will
 reduce the risk of fatal error
 which will
 and avert the necessity to make life and death decisions about humankind
 in but a fleeting minute.

+ political action

It is a task which encumbers us especially,

^{as} the religious leadership of the most powerful nation on earth.

America is that -- a bounteous and most blessed land.

But it is also, alas, the world's leading arms merchant

and its foremost proponent of a "nuclear balance of terror."

One of those slogans which has brought humanity nothing but grief.

Our ~~present~~ political leadership seems seized by an obsession with force.

~~It~~ They appear to have but one motto:

produce weapons, sell weapons, pre-position weapons.

Trouble in the Middle East? Sell the Saudis planes/

Revolution in Central America? Replace Soviet arms with ours.

Pakistan producing the bomb? Send them lots of conventional arms

and they'll stay non-nuclear.

So great is this obsession with force, that the administration seems almost unable to deal with nations that don't want arms.

Our Ambassador to the United Nations, Jeanne Kilpatrick recently suggested to Costa Rica

-- the only Central American Country without a military force --

that it reorganize the army it happily abolished several decades ago.

Can such things be?

And these were the people who used to criticize liberals for "throwing money"

at social problems.

Maybe so.

But that's far and away better than throwing planes and missiles at every international trouble spot.

SETH/NOV 1981, p 3

The most frightening aspect of this militart policy
is the escalation of the nuclear race by word and deed.

President Reagan on at least two occasions has declared
that the use of nuclear weapons in the ffield
would not necessarily lead to an all-out nuclear war.

~~SECRETARY~~
And General Haig categorically asserted

that the detonation of a nuclear bomb as a "demonstration" of ~~ap~~^{our} seriousness
is one of NATO's options. - He should know - He was, AFTER ALL
NATO'S COMMANDER + PRIDE TO ALL ITS MOST SECRET RANS

There were denials, of course, and explanations.

But still the talk continues:

about "first strike" and "second strike" capabilities,
and how we will respond if our missiles are "taken out,"
and how only 35 million or so of us will be killed in the first round.

And there is talk about the neutron bomb -- in a cool, casual, almost detached mannner
as if it were just another marvelous technological gadget,
like a video game or a home computer.

The nuetron bomb is the one, as you all know,

that doesn't destroy tanks or building or things --
it just kills people.

How reassuring to know that our telescreens and Gucci loafers will survive us.

What kind of morbid ghoulish imagination is it anyway

that can describe such a weapon as clean?

There is nothing clean about it, not about a device that can put a [✓]toch to civilizatio[✓]

There are no "possible limits" to a nuclear conflict!!

There is no "acceptable level" of radioactive poisoning!

There is nothing "clean" whatsoever

about maimed limbs and burned flesh and the whole dark butchery w/ou a soul.

SEHINDLER, p.4

Now I am aware of the fact that not long ago
President Reagan made a thoughtful speech on this subject
and in an entirely new tone of voice indicated
that he wants to decelerate the arms race
and achieve an accord with the Russians.

But, as John B. Oakes, the editor of the NY Times Has noted
President Reagan's "bite is worse than his bark."

It's what the administration does that counts, and not ~~what it says~~.

AND WHAT HAS IT DONE OF LATE - LOOK ^{7/5} AT THE BUDGET ^{TIMAT IT} JUST PASSED.
WAND look at what the administration did during the week just past.

^{IT SEEKS TO}
The budgrt that ~~it~~ offered would secure the fastest possible military buildup
even at the risk of jeopardizing economic revival (LES PAREN)

It chooses the force of arms rather than social well-being. tranquility.

It makes still further unconscionable cuts in human services

in order to thicken an already over-bloated defense establishment.

What a travesty of justice!

What a perversion of morality and of truth!

And so the pressure must be maintained

And we must do everything we humanly can to make certain

that the new beginnig signalled in the President's recent speech on this
subject will indeed become the policy of tis land.

SHINDLER, S

What Vietnam represented to the public conscience in the 60s

the nuclear arms race will represent in the 80s and 90s

As religious leaders we must resolve to lead this ~~moral~~ enterprise now

as we led it successfully then.

We are not the practioners of realpolitik, pitchmen for the Pentagon.

We are the spiritual descendendants of the propehts.

We serve the cause of life.

We stand for sanity and reason, for compassion and for peace.





EMILY R. AND KIVIE KAPLAN BUILDING
2027 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036
(Code 202) 387-2800

Co-Director: ALBERT VORSPAN

Co-Director and Counsel: RABBI DAVID SAPERSTEIN

Religious Action Center

Commission on Social Action of Reform Judaism

צדק צדק תרדף

Justice, Justice Shalt Thou Pursue

For Immediate Release

Contact: Rabbi David Saperstein
(202) 387-2800

RABBI SCHINDLER ASSAILS REAGAN ADMINISTRATION FOR 'THROWING WEAPONS' AT WORLD'S TROUBLE SPOTS

Washington, February 10-- A leader of American Reform Judaism today assailed the Reagan Administration's "obsession with force," which he said was "characterized by one motto: produce weapons, sell weapons, pre-position weapons."

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler, President of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, told a forum on national security and defense sponsored by the Center for Defense Information that arms sales were the Administration's "single answer" to problems abroad. He added: "Trouble in the Middle East? Sell the Saudis planes. Revolution in Central America? Replace Soviet arms with ours. Pakistan producing the Bomb? Send them lots of conventional arms and they'll stay non-nuclear."

"These were the people who used to criticize liberals for 'throwing money' at social problems. Perhaps we did, but it is far better than throwing planes and missiles at every international trouble spot."

Call for U.S.-Soviet freeze on nuclear testing, deployment

Rabbi Schindler, whose organization is composed of 750 reform synagogues with 1.25 million members, declares:

Our country should urge the Soviet Union to join in the mutual agreement to cut existing nuclear stockpiles by 50% and to freeze all testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons, missiles and new aircraft designed to deliver the Bomb.

"The nuclear arms race casts an ominous shadow over the very future of the human race. For three decades, the world has acquiesced in the balance of nuclear terror. But as the nuclear race spirals upward ominously, as the Russians point S-20's at western Europe and as the U.S. moves theatre missiles into western Europe to point at the Soviet Union, there is a rising rebellion against the Buck Rogers madness that transcends East and West and burns like fire beneath the ashes.

"It is rising in the United States as well, within the religious community and on the college campuses. And sooner or later, it will surface among ordinary people in the U.S.S.R. and in the Soviet bloc as well.

"As a Jew, I am proud that the Roman Catholic bishops in the United States have denounced the nuclear arms race as a moral plague, and that the nuclear

debate has now stirred a revolutionary ferment within the church. As a Jew, I am gratified that Protestant groups and Mormons and Evangelicals, like Billy Graham, have declared the nuclear arms race to be the primary moral challenge of our time.

"What the Vietnam war represented to the public conscience in the 1960s, the nuclear arms race will present in the 1980s. In this moral enterprise, American Jews will, I am certain, take their rightful and historic place as messengers and pursuers of peace in the spirit of the Hebrew prophets, standing-- and standing up-- for sanity, reason, compassion and peace."



ABCNEWS

Show #113

7 West 66th Street, New York, N.Y. 10023

Transcripts: ABC News, Box 247, Ansonia Station, New York, N.Y. 10023

Press contact: Elise Adde (202) 887-7237



THIS WEEK

with *David Brinkley*

December 25, 1983

Guests

JOSEPH Cardinal BERNARDIN, in Chicago

Dr. CARL F.H. HENRY, in Washington

Rabbi ALEXANDER SCHINDLER, in New York

Interviewers

DAVID BRINKLEY

GEORGE WILL

SAM DONALDSON

Roundtable Participant

HODDING CARTER

Reports from ABC Correspondents

JOHN DONVAN, in Bethlehem

DAVID ENSOR, in Rome

JOHN MARTIN, in Bethlehem

DORRANCE SMITH, Executive Producer

Copyright © 1983 by American Broadcasting Companies, Inc. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.
This transcript may not be reproduced in whole or in part by mimeograph or by any other means, without permission.

TRANSCRIPT CHARGES: One to ten copies, \$2.00 each; additional copies, \$1.00 each.
Be sure to indicate air date and subject or participants. All orders must be prepaid. Annual subscriptions available at \$95 per year. Indicate starting date and enclose payment.

Transcript produced by Journal Graphics, Inc., New York, N.Y.

December 25, 1983

ANNOUNCER: From ABC News, This Week with David Brinkley. Now, from our Washington headquarters, here's David Brinkley.

DAVID BRINKLEY: Even if it is Christmas Day, we're still all here and still glad to have you with us, and we hope you're having a wonderful day. We'll have today's news — from Bethlehem, among other places; and three guests from the three major religious faiths in this country, Protestant, Catholic, Jewish. We'll ask their thoughts on the state of and degree of religious commitment in this country, the condition of American faith and morals, the issues we all live with that are of special concern to the three great religious communities. Our guests: from Chicago, Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, archbishop of Chicago; Dr. Carl F.H. Henry, theologian and founding editor of *Christianity Today*, in Washington; and Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler, president of the American Union of Hebrew Congregations, from New York; some background from John Martin; and our discussion here with George Will, Sam Donaldson and Hodding Carter, all here on our Sunday program.

Today's news, from Bethlehem — this is hardly news in the usual sense, since the event celebrated was 1,983 years ago and has had a good deal of attention and publicity every year or every day since then. So it is not something that happened since the Sunday morning papers exactly, but it remains news nevertheless. A ceremony in Manger Square, and ABC's John Donovan has a report from there.

JOHN DONVAN [voice-over]: Christmas is but a flash in the night in Bethlehem, a brief and single evening of high ceremony in the place where three wise men nearly 2,000 Christmases ago came looking for still greater wisdom, and where today the high ceremony competes with the Christmas reveling outside the ancient church in Bethlehem's town center, Manger Square. Now in daylight, the party is over in Manger Square — all but the cleaning up and the fishing out of litter from last night's celebration. And once again, the tourists are arriving to turn Manger Square into the parking lot it normally serves for.

The Christians of Bethlehem, like Christians everywhere today, will be celebrating Christmas at home — perhaps a few stopping in for Christmas morning services at their local churches.

[on camera] And what's striking here on this Christmas Day is how fleeting an impression Christmas really makes in this country. For here in the Holy Land, Christians are a minority, and Christmas itself is seen by most here as a passing curiosity.

[voice-over] For Jewish Israel, the larger part of this country, this is a day like any other. For most, a normal working day. For some, a normal day for prayer. The Moslems too have their prayers to say, and even inside Bethlehem, where the mosques share pride of place with the churches, there are many who will go through this day as if Christmas simply weren't there. John Donovan, ABC News, Bethlehem.

Mr. BRINKLEY: Because Bethlehem is not what it was in the year one, the Israeli army was there on security duty, trying to prevent outrages by those who like to throw bombs around. [voice-over] While in Lebanon, the U.S. Marines celebrated Christmas a day early, feeling it wise to be on full alert today in case any of the crazies in Beirut — there are plenty of them — thought Christmas would be an appropriate time to attack again. For Christmas they were supplied, or oversupplied, with cookies sent by admirers in the United States, tons of them. A man in Texas sent them 3,000 fruitcakes. There was some shooting and some shelling in Beirut today, but no attacks on the Marines.

[on camera] While in Rome, Pope John Paul spoke in St. Peter's last night celebrating midnight mass. ABC's David Ensor in Rome.

DAVID ENSOR [voice-over]: A congregation of thousands gathered for the Pope's mass in St. Peter's, the largest church in Christendom. John Paul told again the story of Christ's birth, and said, "On this night, let the earth rejoice." The service was broadcast live to

millions in 34 countries, but for the second year in a row it was not seen live in the Pope's native Poland. John Paul looked tired tonight. It had been an emotional day, including a meeting with some of his countrymen and with the family of a young girl kidnapped last June and still missing. But he read with great feeling the words of the apostle Luke about this night: "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a saviour, who is Christ, the Lord." David Ensor, ABC News, Rome.

Mr. BRINKLEY [voice-over]: In Rome today, the Pope celebrated the birth of Jesus and again spoke against the arms race. Hungry children, he said, could be fed with a fraction of what is spent on weapons of destruction. He wished his listeners a blessed Christmas in 44 languages, ending with a word of encouragement to his own countrymen in Polish.

[on camera] We'll be back with all the rest of today's program in a moment.

[commercial break]

Mr. BRINKLEY: This is the 1,983rd observance of an event in Bethlehem, a town not as peaceful now as it was then. But the world has not been totally at peace for very many of these years, certainly not enough, as it is not at peace today. Our man John Martin, in Bethlehem, has some background details for us. John?

JOHN MARTIN: It's impossible to come here to Bethlehem, David, to the Church of the Nativity, without being struck by the irony of it all. Here is the birthplace of the Prince of Peace surrounded by a region that has been torn apart by war. But the fact that some of the world's most religiously fanatic people use weapons of death does not contradict an essential truth about the world's religions. They can be an enormous influence for peace, and this was a year in which some of them made remarkable progress.

[voice-over] Five hundred years after Martin Luther's birth and the beginnings of bitterness that produced the Protestant Reformation, Catholics and Lutherans are going through a ritual of reconciliation. Just this month the Pope spoke from the pulpit of a Lutheran church, 20 years after Vatican II opened the door and five years after the first meetings between delegates from the two faiths. Now there has been a joint declaration on the path to salvation.

So this is a season of accommodation — Christians celebrating what is for them a great event, while the remainder of the world's two and a half billion people of religious faith — Jews and Muslims and Buddhists and Hindus — acknowledge that it is a special day. But there is also a dark side to religion. At its worst it seems to fuel the insatiable passion for violence and vindication. The Shiite car bombs of Beirut seem no different than the Irish Catholic car bombs or the Irish Protestant reprisals. In this Protestant church three weeks ago, gunmen murdered three innocent worshippers in the name of justice. Now guards stand outside the church to which the survivors have fled. In Hebron, on the West Bank of the Jordan River, Jewish settlers carry arms to defend themselves as they worship. The cycle seems unbreakable and universal.

In the Indian state of Punjab, dozens of Hindus have been murdered. Authorities suspect an oppressed minority of Sikhs, who follow this man, Sant Bhindranwale, a religious leader who carries arms.

MAN: He's a curious phenomenon. He's really like Khomeini of the Sikhs. There has been a kind of rise of fundamentalism amongst the Sikhs, as it has been amongst other communities like the Muslims and the Hindus. He is both serious and dangerous. He is serious because he has now a large following amongst the younger generation of Sikhs, and he's dangerous because what he is preaching is violence.

MARTIN [voice-over]: In Iran, the religious regime of the Ayatollah Khomeini has reportedly executed 150 members of the Baha'i faith in four years, tortured perhaps 450 more. It is the dogma of Iranian state religion that has alarmed the secular regimes of the region and complicated the search for reconciliation in Lebanon, where Shiite Muslim believers are struggling against what they see as an oppressive minority Christian government. Throughout the world, in fact, the rise of religious activism has produced a mixed blessing. It has become a controversial cliché: passionate priests or nuns involved in the

politics of peace and justice. In Chile, a dictatorial regime faltering before a surge of protesters, including priests.

RAPHAEL MAROTO, Chilean priest *[through interpreter]*: The people don't believe in the possibility of a dialogue with a government like this one that has been oppressing people for 10 years.

MARTIN *[voice-over]*: In El Salvador, an archbishop has become a symbol in death of the search for justice. In the Philippines, a cardinal is the symbol of resistance to a dictatorial regime. In Poland, another cardinal seems caught between a dictatorship and the papacy. A battle with wide ramifications behind the Iron Curtain, where religion remains a matter of political expression.

In the United States the barriers between church and state remained under considerable pressure this year. The Supreme Court approved state aid to parents who send their children to parochial schools, although the United States Senate refused to give tax credits for tuition to such schools. A federal court ruled that Alabama could not authorize a voluntary moment of silence, but the Reagan administration asked the Supreme Court to rule that such silence is constitutional. Whatever the outcome of those struggles, the most visible sign of religious activism remains the search for peace.

BISHOP *[May 2]*: There's a contradiction because it admits under certain circumstances you can fire nuclear weapons.

MARTIN *[voice-over]*: For nearly two years America's Catholic bishops debated the morality of stockpiling nuclear weapons.

BISHOP: Then we also quote the Holy Father, who says that in the present situation deterrence by nuclear weapons is morally acceptable. I don't see how all of these statements hold together.

MARTIN *[voice-over]*: In the end they circulated a pastoral letter denouncing the arms race and calling for an end to nuclear weapons.

More recently the Vatican has been trying to mediate between the United States and the Soviet Union, offering the good offices of an ancient institution to help the two sides resume negotiations on modern arms reduction.

And in Central America, in a direct attempt to prevent fighting, teams of Christians have been visiting the border between Nicaragua and Honduras to form a symbolic human barrier between Sandinista troops and rebels supported by the United States.

Finally, this week, making their way through the Holy Land, a group of 20 American priests, nuns and lay Christians were taking the final steps of a 7,400-mile walk from Seattle to Bethlehem.

[on camera] So despite the battle scars of centuries, there are reasons to come to Bethlehem this year in the hope that the spirit of peace can somehow prevail in the world. It's a way of reaffirming our idea that for men and women of good will, the world's religions offer an inspiration for a peace that always seems just beyond our grasp. But it's the celebration of Christmas, here and at home, that confirms our stubborn belief that somehow it will be achieved here in the Holy Land and around the world. David?

Mr. BRINKLEY: John, thank you. Coming next, interviews done on Friday with Cardinal Bernardin, Dr. Henry and Rabbi Schindler. In a moment.

[commercial break]

Mr. BRINKLEY: Cardinal Bernardin, Dr. Henry, Rabbi Schindler, thank you very much for coming in to talk with us today. It's a pleasure to have you with us. Here with me are George Will of ABC News and Sam Donaldson, ABC News White House correspondent. First I would like to ask a question of all three of our guests, beginning with Cardinal Bernardin, if that's all right. The question is this. We hear that church and temple attendance are down, that interest in religion is diminishing, and then we hear it is increasing. Would the three of you, one at a time, tell me what is happening and tell me why? Cardinal Bernardin?

JOSEPH Cardinal BERNARDIN, Archbishop of Chicago: Well, it depends on how you analyze the situation. Certainly in our country in recent years the number of people going to church has diminished, though I think that has bottomed out, and I understand in some places the number is increasing again. But we find that many of the people who come to church today are really quite enthusiastic about religion; they are very committed to the church, and so I think that this is a very positive thing that we have to keep in mind. Also I think that there is a greater interest generally in religion today. People are hungry for spirituality, even though at times they may not be so interested in church structures.

Mr. BRINKLEY: Dr. Henry, how would you answer that?

Dr. CARL F.H. HENRY, evangelical theologian: Yes, I think that's a very good beginning. I think on the one hand there is the hunger, the deep hunger for a personal faith that's quite pervasive in American society. And the recent Gallup Poll, I think, showed that 41% of the American people are in church or synagogue during a typical week. And that figure is up slightly from two years ago. At the same time— and it's a phenomenal figure contrasted with the continent of Europe, for example. On the other hand, in secular society there's also a deepening will set, as well as mind set, I think, that tends to put distance between itself and traditional faith. And this is due in part, I think, because of the impact of humanism and naturalism in the public schools and in the political arena, and also to some extent in the media mood that one discovers today. So that the situation is ambiguous — on the one hand a deepening quest for spirituality, on the other hand this deepening secular mood.

Mr. BRINKLEY: Rabbi Schindler?

Rabbi ALEXANDER SCHINDLER, Union of American Hebrew Congregations: Well, my answer would be substantially the same. Of course, Judaism differs from other religions in that — from Christianity — in that it is not limited in its expressions to prayer, to the acceptance of certain creedal statements, to a way of life. There are other elements which go into the expression of Jewishness which is more akin to a civilization. So that when you consider involvement in the temple in this broader sense, there is a great deal of burgeoning going on in Jewish life. I can speak for my particular community, the reform Jewish movement in the United States. We are growing, steadily — in numbers, in the number of our congregations, in the membership within the congregations, and also there is an ever greater involvement of our constituency in the life of the congregation. I manifestly share what my colleagues have said about the hunger for the sacred in life. I do believe that the idolization of reason as the source of salvation for humankind, that is over. Science is not seen anymore as the saving grace of humanity. An ever increasing number of people are coming to realize that the future of mankind cannot be entrusted to the mindspace of a scientific rationality; that as the spirit within us withers, so does everything we build about us; that in the final analysis the state of a single soul is the state of the universe. So I feel that the spirit of our times is infinitely more congenial to religion and holds the promise of an ever greater growth.

GEORGE WILL: All three of you have spoken about a hunger for spirituality. But some people feel that what you get when you go to a good many churches is not spirituality but politics. You get Nicaragua and arms control and capital punishment and all kinds of interesting issues, but the sort of thing you might not generally have expected from a church; and in fact that the churches, particularly on the Christian side, that are growing most in this country are those least concerned with social issues and most concerned with spirituality. Dr. Henry, do you think that's a fair statement, that the churches that are growing fastest are least political?

Dr. HENRY: Oh, I do indeed. And it is not because they think that political and economic issues are irrelevant to faith, but rather they feel alienated and lost in their own churches, because they turn to their leaders for spiritual guidance and what they get is political instruction.

Mr. WILL: Cardinal Bernardin, the Catholic bishops, of course, were very active this year talking about nuclear arms and about capital punishment. They are now proposing to do a similar study and statement on capitalism. Do you think there's some danger that the Catholic clergy is neglecting the spiritual side of the flocks' needs?

Cardinal BERNARDIN: I think that I have to put that question in proper context. There are two dimensions to religion. There's both the private or personal dimension, as well as the public. And obviously at any given time you have to achieve a balance between the two. Certainly as a church, as a faith, we must respond to the needs of people, their quest for spiritual values, their desire to enter into a closer union with the Lord through prayer. This is part of our religious responsibility as a church. But in addition to that, we must also address certain public issues. We must address the moral dimension of those issues. We have to help shape the public context in which people live their lives. After all, we live as Christian people, as people of faith in a real world, and we can't separate that world from the people whom we're serving. We have to put the riches, the resources of the Gospel out in front so that people will have a framework within which they can make their own moral analysis of the many issues that they face. I do not see these two dimensions as being contradictory. They're complementary, and a certain balance, as I said before, must be maintained between the two.

Mr. WILL: Rabbi Schindler, you've spoken often about a somewhat different problem, and that is the dilution of Jewish identity in this country, in part because of a high — you can give us the figures, I guess — rate of intermarriage. What does — what kind of anxiety does this raise, and how do you combat it?

Rabbi SCHINDLER: If you'll allow me to go back to the prior question, I'd just like to say that our experience differs. The group within the religious community of American Judaism that is growing most is the most liberal group — that's the reform movement. We are growing steadily in numbers, both in the number of congregations and in the membership roster of the congregations, and we have historically taken the most liberal stances, and we have historically been most involved in the life of the community. So that strangely enough, and I don't know why this is so, the Jewish community does appear to differ from the Christian community in this, although historically we've always been very much akin. There's a German proverb which says *Wie es Judelt es sich so Christelt es sich* — meaning that whatever happens in the Christian community generally happens in the Jewish community as well. It may be that politically — and by their religious inclination, Jews tend to be to the left of the political spectrum — and in any event our religion at its very essence has always demanded an involvement in the life of a community. One of the cardinal principles of Judaism is seek the peace of the city in which you live.

Now, to get back to your other question about the possible dilution of Jewish strength through intermarriage, this represents a danger. The intermarriage rate is very high. It is at the very least 35%. That is to say that one out of every three young people, young Jews, choose a non-Jew as a lifemate. At one point this was seen as a grave threat to the numeric survival and the numeric strength of the Jewish people. What we have found, of course, is that there is a great deal of conversion to Judaism going on because of this intermarriage, and that many of the children issuing from such intermarriages are in fact reared as Jews. So that our present feeling is — not substantiated by broad-based statistics unfortunately, we don't have them — but our present feeling is, our intuitive perception that intermarriage is actually a net gain rather than a net loss to the Jewish community. And of course, those who choose to be Jews invariably are more intensive in their commitments so that there is no dilution of Jewishness because of that.

SAM DONALDSON: Let me ask a question of theology, but one that has certainly practical political application today. Whose side is God on in the Middle East? Now, we call on God to help the United States in our effort there. But the Muslim world, of course, basically on the other side, calls on Allah to help it in its fight there. So who does God favor?

that's not the same as to say that we are for all kinds of, or all forms of violence.

Mr. DONALDSON: All right, let's talk about this fellow who drove that truck into the Marine compound on October 23rd. Presumably, at least some people believe, he thought that he was doing something in the name of his God, Allah, and of course he destroyed fine young men who were there to some extent serving a political will, but in the name of their God. Where was the right?

Cardinal BERNARDIN: Well, I certainly could not justify that violent act. There is no way in which I could justify that.

Mr. DONALDSON: Could God?

Cardinal BERNARDIN: I don't think God would justify that.

Mr. DONALDSON: Dr. Henry, what is your answer to this question, which I won't repeat, but you've heard it all. Whose side is God on?

Dr. HENRY: The question is not whose side God is on, but whether we are on God's side. The Bible does not promise anywhere unending survival to nations that insist upon revolting against Him. And that's the position of the modern nations overall. The difference between the nations is one of degree; it's not of black and white. And one thing that troubles me about Cardinal Bernardin's positioning of the dual message of the church, and which I believe is necessary, is that the bishops' statement has no intellectual force on the Soviet side. And it seems to me that the statement adopted by the French and the German bishops, which emphasize deterrence rather than elimination of weapons, showed a far more realistic approach to the international problem in terms of biblical perspective, because the Bible, it seems to me, takes much more seriously than many of the modern peace-seeking movements the deep predicament of human nature. It speaks of the necessity of force in the public arena to restrain evil. And when one is dealing with aggressors and with tyrants, and also with those who readily resort to violence to promote their ends, one had better keep his guard up.

Mr. BRINKLEY: Dr. Henry, I would like to ask you a question.

Cardinal BERNARDIN: May I respond to that?

Mr. BRINKLEY: Yes, go ahead.

Cardinal BERNARDIN: I would like to say this, that the pastoral letter on war and peace that the bishops published recently is not a pacifist document. It does not call for unilateral disarmament. It states very firmly that a nation has not only the right but the obligation to defend itself. But it then goes on to talk about the means that may be used in such self-defense, and so I think that it would be incorrect to give the impression that somehow the American bishops, speaking through the pastoral, are not concerned about the defense of one's country. In terms of the French bishops' pastoral letter, there are many common elements. There's a common framework between the French pastoral and our pastoral, admittedly, there are also some differences. For example, they are less critical of deterrence than we are, but nevertheless I would like to point out that we did not condemn deterrence. We followed the lead of the Pope in indicating that under the present circumstances, nuclear deterrence is morally acceptable, but not as an end in itself but as an interim strategy, and that deterrence should not be used as a basis for things that would lead to more than deterrence. In addition to that, our pastoral letter also emphasizes, perhaps not as much as the French letter, the difference between the Soviets and the United States, the difference in our history, our philosophy, our ideology. Admittedly, their perspective, the French perspective, is somewhat different from ours. So there are differences between the two pastorals, but they are not in contradiction to each other.

Dr. HENRY: Can we get to the fundamental point that Christmas, in a sense, dramatizes. And that is that the vision of world peace is found for the first time in the Bible, and a universal kingdom of peace and justice is biblical, in a world that was plagued by war. And that vision is messianic. And is it not the temptation of modern peace movements to seek peace on an unregenerate human basis that drops out the whole biblical message of

Rabbi SCHINDLER: Well, I think God favors justice. Men sometimes are wrong in their interpretation of what is just.

Mr. DONALDSON: Well, Plato said that justice is giving each man his due. But of course, who gets to decide what the due is.

Rabbi SCHINDLER: Well, that's the problem for every country. Human beings have to decide that together. Even in American society, we are very much fragmented. We have many special-interest groupings, each seeking to attain what they want—

Mr. DONALDSON: Well, Rabbi Schindler—

Rabbi SCHINDLER: — and somehow we have to achieve a harmony, don't we?

Mr. DONALDSON: Well, excuse me, sir, but I think you've ducked the question a little bit. If we have a situation in the Middle East, in Lebanon, in which there are warring factions — the Christians and the Muslims fighting this bloody war, the United States involved, other Arabs involved — can God be on both sides equally? Can He be in the cab of the truck that blows up the Marines with a fellow who thinks he's going to heaven, his heaven because of his action? Could He also be on the Marines' side?

Rabbi SCHINDLER: Well, I think that your conception of what God is— diverges from mine, obviously. I would call God the source of righteousness, and it is the task of human beings to help God complete his design of righteousness in the world. So God is on the side of right. When the right competes, when different groupings compete in their assertion of the right, there is only one proper way to resolve it, and that is to talk to one another, to communicate with one another, and hopefully this will eventuate in the Middle East too. This has been the essential problem for Israel, that there was no one on the other side to talk to Israel. Once there was someone with whom they could talk, with whom they could negotiate, a peace was achieved. That of course was with Egypt.

Mr. BRINKLEY: If I may interrupt here for just a moment, we'll be back with more questions for our three guests. In a moment.

[commercial break]

Mr. BRINKLEY: We're back. Sam, you were in the middle of a question that may be impossible to answer, but go ahead.

Mr. DONALDSON: Well, it may be, but I want to try the other two guests, Cardinal Bernardin first. Whose side is God on? Rabbi Schindler seems to say that God is on the side of the right, and when there is competition between rights, then people ought to talk to one another. But surely, Your Eminence, if God has a will, it is not simply to have people figure out what to do, is it?

Cardinal BERNARDIN: Well, I would have to say this, that it's very easy to resort to God and to say, "Well, God is on my side" or "God is not on the other person's side." God is on the side of justice, He's on the side of peace; He's against injustice, He's against violence. And He did give us minds, He did give us the gift of reason, and it's our responsibility, within the framework of the principles that he has given us, to work these things out.

Mr. DONALDSON: Well, now, you say God is against violence. But the Pope in his Christmas message said — not these exact words, but the message was that pacifism is not the way, that justice must be earned, suggesting that at times violence in the cause of right is justified. Let me just press you on this matter.

Cardinal BERNARDIN: All right. I would like to make it very clear that in speaking against violence, which the Holy Father has done many, many times, we're not suggesting a total pacifism. A nation certainly has not only the right but the obligation to defend itself.

Mr. DONALDSON: All right, let's talk about—

Cardinal BERNARDIN: We have never denied that. That is part of our tradition. But

redemption and obscures Messiah? And this is the question that I'm centrally raising.

Rabbi SCHINDLER: Well, if I am allowed to interject right here.

Mr. BRINKLEY: Yes, Rabbi.

Rabbi SCHINDLER: It seems to me that, at least our understanding of the Bible, is that man was created to be the co-worker with God in the act of creation; that therefore much of the responsibility for bringing about peace rests with us. And it is our duty to do it, and not to await some kind of redemption which comes to us as a blessing from the outside.

Mr. BRINKLEY: I have a question I would like to address to all three of you, beginning, say, with Rabbi Schindler. President Reagan is considering sending an ambassador, a full, formal ambassador, for the first time to the Vatican. What do you think of it? Rabbi?

Rabbi SCHINDLER: Well, I don't think that this would be a serious problem with the Jewish community at all. We would welcome it. Catholicism is a force in the world today. It has millions, hundreds of millions of adherents all over the world, and to have such a contact would not at all be troubling to the American Jewish community, certainly.

Mr. BRINKLEY: Dr. Henry?

Dr. HENRY: Well, I think the evangelical community would have serious questions. In fact, the Southern Baptists, the largest denomination, some of its spokesmen have already voiced objection. The National Association of Evangelicals is opposed. They consider it preferential, a confusion of church-state issues, and they would say that the President might well consider sending representatives to the Baptist World Alliance and to the World Council of Churches and to other church movements.

Mr. BRINKLEY: Cardinal Bernardin?

Cardinal BERNARDIN: Well, I favor the establishment of this official relationship, but not for sectarian reasons, but rather because I think that this will contribute to the well-being of the human family. There are many nations that presently have official relationships with the Holy See, nations that have a separation of church and state such as we have. So I repeat: I see a value in it. The Holy See, the Holy Father is a moral force in terms of the world scene, but my reason for saying that I value it does not stem from strictly sectarian reasons.

Mr. BRINKLEY: Cardinal Bernardin, Dr. Henry, Rabbi Schindler, thank you very much for coming in and talking with us today. It's been a pleasure to hear your views. Coming next, our moderately but not immoderately uninhibited discussion here, and joining us will be commentator Hodding Carter. In a moment.

[commercial break]

Mr. BRINKLEY: There are only a few days left in 1983, and a popular indoor pastime this time of year is to pick the man or woman of the year. Man or woman who affected the news the most, for good or ill I think usually is the test. Hodding, you got one? Who would be your nomination?

HODDING CARTER, PBS commentator: I think 1983's person of the year is the faceless leaker, because no one has more obsessed official Washington, more titillated or informed the public at large, been more responsible for more lousy edicts, executive orders, attempted legislation, has produced more column inches of vituperation, unhappiness, and has been in some ways that typical Washington figure, the one who consumes a great deal of time and produces not much of real merit. This is my man of the year, and if you want a picture of this man or woman of the year, you can take almost any group picture immediately around the President of the United States, take your choice, and you can get the picture that you need.

Mr. BRINKLEY: There'll be several leakers in the group.

Mr. CARTER: Several.

Mr. BRINKLEY: None will admit it. Sam, who's yours?

Mr. DONALDSON: Well, let me just first ask Hodding. Is it that there have been more leakers in 1983 or simply a greater dedication to trying to find the leakers?

Mr. CARTER: I think that this is the year in which the government finally fell right over into the pit of hysteria about something that's been going on as long as any of us can remember.

Mr. DONALDSON: Well, my person of the year, I guess, by your test might be the terrorist or the Marine or the Soviet fighter pilot who loosed those rockets. But actually by the test of heroics I nominate Martin Feldstein. Not only did Mr. Feldstein have to suffer the indignity of having his name mispronounced by officials and reporters alike, but he had to suffer the further indignity—

Mr. BRINKLEY: They kept calling him Feldsteen, right?

Mr. DONALDSON: That's right. He had to suffer the further indignity of being the lone voice in the administration speaking out publicly against budget deficits and the fact that they would raise interest rates eventually, while the President and the secretary of the treasury and other people said no, no, there's no connection.

Mr. BRINKLEY: Are you saying he was the only one telling the truth?

Mr. DONALDSON: Well, he wasn't the only one speaking out, but he was the loudest, because they went to him privately and they said, to put it bluntly, "Shut up, Marty," and the next time he went out and gave a speech, he said it again. Now, that to me — President Reagan is fond of saying there are no heroes anymore. Well, Mr. President, you've got one right there in your official family; I nominate Martin Feldstein as the person of the year.

Mr. BRINKLEY: George?

Mr. WILL: Well, I suppose if the test is consequential for good or ill, you might say that it's President Assad of Syria, who certainly has preoccupied a great many forces around the world. If the big story is the recovery of the American economy pulling the rest of the world like a locomotive, then it would have to be the American consumer, who's on a spending binge right now and is giving Ronald Reagan that which he did not want but has got and is happy to have, and that is a great Keynesian consumer-driven recovery. But I think—

Mr. BRINKLEY: Why did he not want it?

Mr. WILL: Well, he wanted a different kind of recovery.

Mr. DONALDSON: He wanted a supply-side economic recovery.

Mr. WILL: He wanted one fueled by capital investment and all the rest.

Mr. BRINKLEY: But is it really all that different?

Mr. WILL: Well, people don't seem to mind one way or another why they're prosperous. But I really think that the big story this year is a reassertion of American power around the world, and the great articulator, it seems to me, in the administration of a coherent understanding of the world gets credit this year for that. So my mine of the year is a woman, Jeane Kirkpatrick.

Mr. BRINKLEY: Okay. What was the biggest event this year, the biggest — not so much news story, because that includes a lot of stuff that gets all kinds of space but may not be terribly important, divorces and this and that — the event that meant the most to the most people, I would say? What would you choose? George?

Mr. WILL: I suppose it was— well, if you're going to make me choose one, I guess you wouldn't— I'd choose Grenada, I guess, because it changed the morale of the country and the morale of the country matters a great deal.

Mr. DONALDSON: I'd choose the Beirut bombing of the Marine barracks there,

because I think it really brought home to people the policy, or lack of policy, if you will, that we have in Lebanon. We had a bunch of Marines on the airport flatland. The President told us in one of his news conferences, airports are flat, to explain why the Marines were there. But on October 23rd that explanation didn't help when that fanatic went in there with a truck. That's the biggest event of the year to me.

Mr. CARTER: And coming at it from the other side from George, I think finally Grenada, though I'm torn between Beirut and Grenada, but Grenada because it represents what is a central reality, which is not the assertion of American spirit but the militarization of American foreign policy, with Grenada simply standing as shorthand for Lebanon, for Honduras, Nicaragua, and for another half-dozen or so points in the world in which we have decided that carrying a big stick may not be successful but it makes you feel good.

Mr. DONALDSON: Well, you know, we seem to be in a position of the fellow, you know, using the old bromide, who has broken the eggs in order to make the omelette. The eggs are broken. We have problems in Lebanon; we have problems in Central America; the arms negotiation reduction talks have all been broken off; the missiles that are going into Europe on the NATO side have increased tensions, and it can be argued that the Soviets started it by increasing the SS-20s on their side. So here we are, we have all these broken eggs. Now the question is do we put them back together to a nice little omelette of peace, or do we just run off the skillet?

Mr. WILL: But you know, there's a certain narcissism about those of us who deal all the time with national and public issues. We talk about the important elections that were won and not lost by the prodeployment forces in Europe and all the rest. Four hundred years from now people may say the most important thing that happened in 1983 was that in 1983, the 500th anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther, the Pope went to a Lutheran ceremony as the Bishop of Rome. He left behind at the Vatican his crosier and his miter and his symbols of authority, and over the long haul this sort of development probably matters more than every twitch and wiggle of M-1 that we're so obsessed with.

Mr. BRINKLEY: Well, all those are events of great significance, but if we are speaking here to the American people, and if the test — this is fairly arbitrary — if the test is the event that affected the most people, wouldn't it be the economy, the recovery in the economy?

Mr. WILL: Sure.

Mr. CARTER: Absolutely.

Mr. BRINKLEY: The decline of inflation, the decline in unemployment — not far enough, but decline substantial.

Mr. CARTER: And George really spoke to the reality of it, though, which is that this was an extraordinary recovery for which the President should get credit and for which Keynesian economics has to finally get the credit. The biggest deficits ever, consumer-powered recovery when it comes to buying, and a sure increase in the federal budget, a massive increase in the federal budget across the board.

Mr. DONALDSON: Well, the President is going to get the political credit, and that's fine with me, because I think they have to take their lumps there. When Jimmy Carter was in and oil prices went up 100%, he got the blame although he had nothing to do with it whatsoever. So I'm content for Mr. Reagan to get the political credit. But the question is, down the road are we just living in sort of a high created by this consumer spending? Savings are down; it is not the sort of supply-side recovery that the President promised us would lead to prosperity uninterrupted. And in 1985 do we then go off the cliff again?

Mr. CARTER: What about '84?

Mr. DONALDSON: Well, I think it'll last through the election.

Mr. CARTER: It always does.

Mr. BRINKLEY: You mean you think he will see to it that it lasts through the election?

Mr. DONALDSON: Well, I think that's the way it's done in Washington.

Mr. BRINKLEY: I believe it is. I want— somebody mentioned the Marines, the disaster in Beirut — 241 young Americans lost. In the next several weeks here in Washington, we're going to see feverish efforts to place the blame. There are all sorts of studies, all sorts of reports — I think the military's comes out next week. What in your judgment is— where in your judgment should the blame be placed? Sam?

Mr. DONALDSON: Ultimately the blame is placed just where the President has often said it should be, barring the Harry Truman statement, the buck stops here. It is a policy of the political leaders of this country that put the Marines in a basic indefensible position in Lebanon. If you had said to a Marine commander, whether P.X. Kelley or anyone else, where would you put your men, he'd put them on some high ground. He wouldn't put them down there at the airport. And he'd build a lot of bunkers. He wouldn't be open about it. So ultimately it's the policy. But on the ground, those commanders who hadn't learned from Vietnam and the terrorism there, and who hadn't learned from the embassy bombing in Beirut just six months prior to that, that you had to reinforce your precautions — they should be held responsible.

Mr. BRINKLEY: George?

Mr. WILL: Well, it is a difficult policy to execute. Nevertheless, as someone wrote to *The Washington Post*, there are three rules you're taught when you first become a soldier: dig in, spread out and post a guard. They didn't do any of the three adequately.

Mr. BRINKLEY: Hodding?

Mr. CARTER: I think it's the old saying that rank has its privileges but rank has its responsibilities. The responsibility is on the ground. You have to put final responsibility to those who were on the ground for the security of those people. The larger question is somewhat like the investigation of who was responsible for Pearl Harbor. They managed, I will always remember, after the war to escape assigning that to the ultimate civilian responsibility. You can debate that a great deal — a great disaster, I would say. But the military man on the ground has to be responsible.

Mr. BRINKLEY: Before our time runs out there's one somewhat slightly more mundane question I would like to ask, and ask each of you if you have experienced it. Christmas Eve, a toy or some sort of object which comes in a box saying in tiny letters down in the corner, "Some assembly required." Do those words strike terror into your heart, George?

Mr. WILL: They're probably responsible for the divorce rate in this country, to begin with. There's also a little man in Japan or wherever they make these toys, who takes one part out right before they seal the box, which also helps a great deal. And then Christmas morning—

Mr. BRINKLEY: And a part that you are unlikely to have around the house.

Mr. WILL: Exactly. And Christmas morning the refrain is the children saying first, "Daddy, it's broken," and Daddy saying, "I thought you bought the batteries."

Mr. CARTER: It's not the branch.

Mr. BRINKLEY: Well, think of those things that you're supposed to put together and the screwhole is here and the hole it's to go into is over here.

Mr. WILL: Insert Cap B in Slot A and there is no Slot A.

Mr. DONALDSON: Yeah, but you can always take the coward's way out and say to the children on Christmas morning, "Santa wanted you to learn how to assemble this, and take the instructions and if you need any help, see your mother."

Mr. BRINKLEY: Okay, our time's up. Thanks very much. Merry Christmas, everybody. We'll be back with a few words, very few, about the three wise men and what it

would cost them now in 1983. In a moment.

[commercial break]

Mr. BRINKLEY *[commentary]*: Finally, this hardly seems the day for any kind of harangue or any heavy breathing about events in the news, and so I will spare you any of that and instead offer some economic news of a sort: the 1983 prices for three commodities that quite literally have been famous since the year one. Here in late December 1983, the price of gold is \$391 an ounce, the price of frankincense is \$.15 an ounce, and the price of myrrh, \$.11 an ounce. That's today's economic news, and for all of us at ABC News we wish you the very best for Christmas and the holidays. And for all of us at the This Week program, until next Sunday, New Year's Day, thank you.



PREVIOUS EDITIONS & GUESTS:

(Send \$2 for each transcript ordered)


- 7-10 #89 Dick Cheney, Thomas Downey, Malcolm Toon,
Archibald Cox, A.E. Dick Howard
7-17 #90 Jake Garn, William Proxmire, Henry Kaufman
7-24 #91 Robert Strauss, John Silber, Anthony Quainton,
Christopher Dodd
7-31 #92 Moshe Arens, John Glenn
8-7 #93 Glenn Watts, Charles Brown, John Dingell,
Mark Fowler
8-14 #94 Henry Cisneros, Tirso del Junco, Edwin Meese
8-21 #95 Robert Broussard, Jim Dickinson, Bob Gottsch,
John Block, John Meltzer
8-28 #96 Meir Rosenne, Gerald Ford, Helmut Schmidt,
Valery d'Estaing, James Callaghan, Malcolm Fraser
9-4 #97 Moshe Arens, John Tower, Daniel P. Moynihan,
Lawrence Eagleburger
9-11 #98 Walid Jumblatt, Abdallah Bouhabib, Robert Byrd,
Richard Lugar
9-18 #99 Amin Gemayel, Richard Wirthlin, Walter Mondale
9-25 #100 Margaret Thatcher
10-2 #101 Frank Lorenzo, Alfred Kahn, Ferdinand Marcos
10-9 #102 Toney Anaya, Mark White, Dennis DeConcini,
Henry Schwarzschild
10-16 #103 Edward Rollins, Daniel Moynihan, Jim Sasser
10-23 #104 Caspar Weinberger, Henry Kissinger, Charles
Mathias, Sam Nunn
10-30 #105 Elie Salem, J.M.G. Adams, Caldwell Taylor,
Lawrence Eagleburger
11-7 #106 Stephen Solarz, Howard Baker, Caspar Weinberger
11-13 #107 George Shultz, Dan Rostenkowski, Robert Dole
11-20 #108 Petra Kelly, Michael Heseltine, Richard Perle
11-27 #109 Tony & Ann Tallini, Daniel Callahan, Richard Gross,
C. Everett Koop
12-4 #110 Lawrence Eagleburger, Yitzhak Shamir
12-11 #111 Dante Fascell, King Hussein
12-18 #112 Said Khorassani, Robert Kupperman, Michael Ledeen,
William Webster

THIS WEEK WITH DAVID BRINKLEY

Box 247, Ansonia Station
New York, N. Y. 10023

Show #113: December 25, 1983





THE NEW YORK TIMES, MONDAY, JANUARY 3, 1983

Much has been written recently of the relation of American Jews to Israel and of the character of the American Jewish community. I believe our community's self-image requires us to recognize that we are more than just a part of Israel. We must also affirm our own identity and integrity, even as we deepen our solidarity with Israel.

It is difficult to explain this to American Jews, who for too long have been plugged into Israel as if it were a kidney machine—a scientific marvel that keeps them alive as Jews. How can we teach two apparently contradictory lessons: that we have a worth as Jews independent of Israel, and that we must continue to love and support Israel? If we make too much of the first lesson, some will take it as an

'More Than Just a Part of Israel'

By Alexander M. Schindler

excuse to cut themselves off from Israel. And if we make too much of the second, we will never know who we are, for we have slipped into the sloppy equation that says that Judaism equals Zionism equals Israel.

In our deep love for Israel and our concern for its security, we have become a largely one-issue community. For many American Jews, the state has become the synagogue and its prime minister their rabbi. Domestic and international issues are measured by the standard of whether they are good or bad for Israel.

We do ourselves irreparable harm

when we permit our Jewishness to consist almost entirely of a vicarious participation in the life of Israel. There is a greater Israel that sustained our Jewishness through the many centuries of our dispersion. It is not the same as the political state. And it is this greater Israel that we must nurture if we and it are to survive: a faith, a culture, a commitment to social justice and to the dignity of man created in the likeness of his Maker.

I am not arguing that we should diminish our involvement with Israel. Quite the contrary. I want us to make Israel more truly Jewish, with a quality of life that reflects the most profound Jewish vision. I argue merely for balance. We will not survive if all we are about is Israel. And Israel will not survive if the Jews of the world become but pale peripheral extensions of its essence. Both are needed: a strong Israel, and a strong Jewish community whose members know the history and heritage of their people, and who take strength from one another in a network of communal insti-

tutions that includes the synagogue as center not only for worship and study but also for friendship and social action.

Such a community will reject the counsel of those ask why we should be concerned with the poor, the oppressed, the threat of nuclear war. The Jewish community I envision will refuse to withdraw into a spiritual ghetto. Rather, we will form new coalitions of decency with our fellow citizens, giving our hearts and minds to heal America as we strengthen and deepen our commitment to Israel and revitalize the spirit of Judaism.

Alexander M. Schindler, a Reform rabbi, is president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

57th General Assembly/Union of American Hebrew Congregations/November 10-15, 1983/Houston, Texas



QUESTIONING WRESTLING DECIDING

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler

A sadness touches me as I begin my President's Message. It is occasioned by the knowledge that this is the last Biennial Assembly to be led by Donald Day. He has served our Union faithfully for four years now, and our Constitution will not allow his re-election.

Don maintained and advanced that high standard of excellence which our Chairmen of the past have set. He never saw himself merely as the steward of an institution. He saw himself rather as the leader of a religious community, and he led that community by precept and example alike. He was what he wanted *us* to be. He embodied those ideals which he enjoined *us* to pursue. Little wonder, then, that he won the admiration and respect of all whose lives were touched by his.

The relationship between the President and the Chairman of the Board was exceedingly good, as it always is. It transcended the functional to enter the realm of the personal. Don and I became warm friends. To me, to all of those with whom he dealt, he was open and honest, understanding and supportive. I will lastingly be grateful for that friendship.

Don, in behalf of our Union, I want to present you with this beautiful *menorah*. It was crafted in Israel and is fashioned out of silver. It symbolizes your shining leadership, that light of reason and of faith with which you led us. May it ever remind you of our abiding love for you and for your gracious Edie.

It is good to be here in Houston for this 57th General Assembly of the Union, good to be united with men and women from many congregations but of one faith, bound together by a mutual sacred task. There is a strength which flows from this companionship. All of us can sense it. It is palpable, perceptible to the touch. The soul quickens, the spirit soars when we hear the chorus of four thousand voices intoning the *sh'ma*.

We are grateful to the rabbis and lay leaders of our host community for welcoming us so warmly. They have been most gracious in every way. We thank them for their hospitality, even more for building so vital a community here. Because of their energy and their devotion, Houston has become a stronghold of Reform Judaism in this land.

It has been two years now since last we were in convention assembled. They were tumultuous years, years which brought us their full measure of joy as well as of sorrow, alas. That Kaddish list which we recited but a moment ago was far too long. Too many places are left vacant in our leadership ranks.

I think of Irvin Fane, Past and Honorary Chairman of our Board, who went the way of all earth but a year ago. What a leader he was—soft-spoken yet firm, gentle yet commanding—we will rarely see his like!

I think also of Maurice Eisendrath as we mark his *yahrzeit* tonight. None of us who was there on that fateful Sabbath eve ten years ago will forget the shock of that terrible moment when he was torn from us. Maurice was a master builder in Reform Jewish life, the principal architect of its program of religious action. He summoned us to be engaged in the world, to pursue justice and to demand peace. He will never be forgotten in our midst. The Union remains as his lasting, living memorial.

*

*

*

Maurice left us a rich legacy and we have enlarged it. Look about you and see! This is the largest Jewish assemblage on this continent. We are here, nearly 4000 strong, men and women, young and old. Since the last Biennial 35 new Temples have joined the Union. Scores of other temples and chavurot are in the process of becoming. We represent nearly 800 congregations now, and their cumulative membership rolls have long since passed the million and a quarter mark.

Programatically we are also making substantial progress. The outreach venture has been widely extended. Ten video tapes for Jewish educational TV have been completed and eighteen others are in various stages of preparation. Our new religious education curriculum is receiving wide and warm acceptance. Thanks in part to NFTB, full-time field workers have been dispatched to various colleges throughout the country to work with Reform Jewish youth on campus. Sisterhood has cooperated with our Department of Education to launch a successful nation-wide PATT program. An ambitious research project on coping with synagogue change has been initiated. The Joint Commission on Synagogue Administration has instated an effective leadership development program. NFTY held its first national convention, in Washington. And in Israel, our second Kibbutz—Lotan joining Yahel in the Arava—has been settled. These new ventures, coupled with our ongoing programs of youth and camping, education and publications, of worship and synagogue administration, all offer evidence that we remain a vital, vibrant movement, blending the old and the new, on the cutting edge of modern life, yet ever more deeply rooted in the Jewish tradition.

In the realm of religious action, we have also preserved and enlarged Maurice's legacy. Much of the credit for this must go to Al Vorspan who currently marks his 30th year of service on the Union staff. He was Maurice's mentor, even as he is mine. He is remarkably gifted—keen-witted, intelligent, creative—I could not do without his wise counsel. He is the Union's conscience, our still small voice within. We salute him and wish him many more years of good health, and joy and fulfillment.

Issues of Conscience

Alas, Al's voice of conscience will not be heard at this convention 'til Monday night. We wanted to save the best for last. It becomes my task, therefore, to keynote the themes which would ordinarily be his. Don't fear! I scarcely propose to detail our full social action agenda now. But I *do* want to identify myself with at least some of those issues of conscience which we will be considering here.

Two years ago in Boston, we gave collective voice to our doubts concerning the course on which our nation was embarking. Unhappy to say, our apprehensions proved fully justified.

Reaganomics has but tightened this nation's belt 'round the necks of the poor. True, our economy gives appearance of being on the mend. Certainly the inflationary cycle has been broken, but only by means of a most severe recession. As a result, millions of Americans are out of work and out of hope, and they have lost the faith that America gives a damn for them.

This administration, in its foreign policy, continues to be beset by an obsession with force. It reflects an arrogance of power which ignores our political ideals and disdains our moral values. Impetuously, impulsively, it forces military solutions on crises that are political, economic, and social in their essence.

Look at Central America and see: The plight of her countries does not begin with Russia and Cuba, as the Reagan policy so smoothly assumes. It begins with destitution and despair. It begins with wide-spread malnutrition and an unpardonable infant mortality rate. It begins with the military interventions that have frustrated the popular will in election after election.

Of course the Cubans and Russians cynically exploit these pitiful conditions. They take ruthless advantage of them, in Central America as they do everywhere else. Yet our response is largely counter-productive, because we have our eyes fixed on the superpower game whilst ignoring all the local pawns. President Nixon made this very point in his recent testimony before the Kissinger Commission. "The communists talk about economic justice, but all we Americans talk about is communism." Yes, Richard Nixon said that, and he said it exceedingly well.

What else do we do? We throw marines and military aid in every direction. In El Salvador we fuel a civil war. In Nicaragua we stir such a war to life. Honduras has become a virtual U.S.

military base. Our arms aid to that country has multiplied nine-fold in two years even while our economic aid has dwindled into nothingness. The needs of her people for food, jobs, health-care, and education are but little noticed in Washington.

We have neglected to absorb the lessons of the past. We don't remember that U.S. Marines put the Samoza dictatorship into place. We forget that our troops occupied ports, determined governments, and created martyrs. We have put out of mind the knowledge that it was America that played the role of matchmaker when hacienda owners, rich merchants and military caudillos joined in their golden embrace. But all of this did not avail us!

Nor will such policies serve us well today, for they are neither principled nor pragmatic. They sow the wind with guns and bullets and anti-communist rhetoric and have already reaped the whirlwind of violence, death, and anti-American reaction. We may gain control and even territory for a time, but we will surely lose the spirit of the people.

This is why I endorse the pertinent Resolutions which have been placed before us. There must be an end to U.S. military intervention in El Salvador and Honduras, an end to the covert war against Nicaragua. Instead, we must seek a negotiated solution, proffer unqualified support for the Contadora nations in their effort to achieve it, and make a permanent commitment to democracy, economic reform, and social justice.

Our superpower game plan vis-a-vis the Soviet Union is equally flawed. The tactic here is twofold: bristling rhetoric and the weapons race. And both are escalating at a terrifying pace.

We are witness to the most massive build-up in nuclear systems ever proposed by a single administration. We live under the first administration in memory that has aimed not to contain the arms race but to win it, unable or unwilling to see that the finish line is ultimate disaster.

In virtually every negotiating area we have closed the door.

—The 20 years of hammering out a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty came to an end.

—The historic 1972 ABM treaty negotiated by President Nixon now is threatened by the administration's decision not to participate in talks to examine the implications of the new technology on that treaty.

—Our refusal to renew talks to limit antisatellite weapons led the Soviets to reverse their voluntary agreements in this realm, which, in turn, led President Reagan to project a panoply of star wars weapons. And so it goes. And so we are in danger of seeing the space age turn into the stone age.

Please don't think me blind to Soviet aggression—in Afghanistan, and Poland, and in the Middle East, indeed in every corner of our world. Nor am I unaware of the cruelty of her system or of her oft-times paranoid, pernicious reaction as witness the recent death-dealing Korean airliner incident.

But I see also this with a clarity: Insult and bluster and threats will not persuade them. Nor will we ever be able to force the Russians into compliance by means of the arms race. Thus far they have matched if not exceeded our every advance, step by step, and the race reels on relentlessly and threatens to destroy us all.

There simply is no alternative to the arduous task of talking, of painstaking negotiation, of a constant striving to define our mutual interest in survival that we manifestly share. This is why I earnestly, urgently call on you to vote for the Resolution on the nuclear arms race which will be considered during our deliberations here, thus extending that courageous stance we took in Boston two years ago. Let our debate not be drowned in the argot of weapons-systems analysis. Let, rather, the ethical note be sounded in our midst, for nuclear disarmament is the overriding moral issue of the day. There is no greater calamity than nuclear war. There can be no greater purpose for this generation than to put an end to this madness. Let us, as Jews, proclaim to all the world: *lo zu ha-derech*, this is not the way!

Whether the foreign and domestic policies of the United States change in the near future, depends more on the integrity of our political system than it does on any other single factor. It is our duty, therefore, to preserve its integrity, to guard it against assault.

In recent years there has been a profusion of attempts to weaken that system and to impair its integrity. There were efforts to curtail the jurisdiction of the courts, to diminish the rights of women, to undo the structures and administration of racial justice, and to breach that sturdy wall separating church and state in our land.

And now, most ominous of all, we have a presidential directive to impose a draconian secrecy for life on an exceedingly broad range of government employees. No less than four million people are covered by this ruling. Had such a requirement been set by an earlier administration, life-time gags would have been placed on men such as Mondale, Kissinger, Vance, and even Presidents Ford and Carter for that matter. Everything they said and wrote publicly would have been subject to prior clearance by the White House.

What dangerous nonsense this! It is a course which must be reversed! Lie detectors are the tools of a totalitarian state. Comprehensive censorship is the mark of an authoritarian and not of a free society. I, therefore, urge this Union to join with other like-minded groups to oppose this unprecedented violation of our liberties.

Lastly, in the social action realm, I want to place before you an issue that was considered but rejected by the Resolutions Committee and, hence, removed from the table. I make bold to do so, because I consider the matter of sufficient weight to merit the consideration of this wider constituency.

I speak of the proliferation and size of PACs, of Political Action Committees, and their hurtful effect on our body politic. These conduits for special interest money, as you know, give campaign contributions to any candidate who is amenable to their view. A veritable alphabet soup of such PACs has spilled across Washington in recent years. PAC money represents a third of all the money spent by Congressional candidates in the last election. Two senate candidates alone received more than \$1 million each a year ago.

The expected happens. Extensive studies demonstrate that there is a close correlation between moneys received and votes favorable to PAC donors. The public will is thwarted and special interest prevails.

Take, just as an example, the two major foreign policy issues I raised earlier tonight. Opinion polls show that 70 percent of the American people strongly oppose President Reagan's approach to Central America. An even greater number, the vast preponderance of Americans, in fact, oppose his arms policies and favor a nuclear freeze. With all that, the political system has failed to translate these convictions into public policy. On a host of other issues—oil prices, gas prices, tax reform, health insurance, gun control, you name it—the political system has persistently represented private dollars rather than the public will.

Let me make the following absolutely clear: I do *not* include AIPAC in these strictures. Our effective America-Israel Public Affairs Committee is not a PAC in the meaning of the term as it is used in the current debate. It does not endorse candidates for office. It does not support them financially.

My strictures, however, *do* include a number of Jewish groupings, like NACPAC on whose national board, incidentally, I sit. Yet I will continue to sit on that board, and I will continue to seek money for NACPAC, until the rules of the game for *everyone* are changed.

But at the same time I will press for a changing of these rules. Because I know that Israel's enemies have deeper pockets than we have. And because our long range needs will be better served when the health of our democracy is preserved.

I therefore call on you to address this issue by approving an appropriate resolution on the subject. What is at stake here is the idea of representative government. It is the soul of this nation. America deserves something better than the best Congress money can buy.

Israel and Lebanon

The past two years were especially turbulent for Israel and for the Jewish people. Just think of those traumatic events to which we were witness: the war in the north, the scattering of the

PLO, the Phalangist massacre of the camps, then a lukewarm agreement with Lebanon, a cooling of the peace with Egypt, finally Begin's resignation, economic chaos, and now the brutal bombing in Tyre. The Jewish world spins 'round and 'round and the reeling will not stop!

I was in Israel for just a few days a week or so ago. I met with Israelis, high and low. What a wonderful people this is, how well they bear up in adversity! Israel has earned and deserves our support. It may not yet have fulfilled our ideal vision, but it is closer to its realization than any nation I know.

Israeli officials—and I met with Shamir and Arens and Herzog and a half score other members of the K'nesset—are much concerned about the vagueness and the vacillations of American diplomacy. Our tergiversations confound them. The constant and capricious shifts in our policy perplex them.

Only yesterday, Washington's diplomats pressed the Israelis to be more compliant. Today, they want them to be tougher. Yesterday they wanted Israel to leave the Lebanon as quickly as possible. Today they would rather Israeli soldiers were back in the Shuf mountains, fighting to checkmate Assad. When Israel fought its bitter fight in Lebanon, it was deluged with condemnations and sanctions. Now that it has withdrawn closer to the twenty-five-mile line, so sacrosanct only a year ago, it is berated for not doing more to protect Western interests in Beirut. There has even been a reversal of roles in Washington: Secretary Weinberger plays dove to Secretary Schultz who suddenly has become the hawk.—What a metamorphosis! What a transformation!

I fear still another reversal in policy. I'm afraid that the fragile Israel-Lebanon treaty will be the price that Israel is asked to pay for the success of the current Geneva talks. That agreement has already been frozen and referred to the United States for further disposition. Our government must not yield on this score. That would be scandalous! Washington must not broker agreements one day and on the next collaborate with *one* of the sides to break it.

This is not to say that we wish the Geneva talks ill. I hope that they will be fruitful in their effect. The full sovereignty and independence and territorial integrity of Lebanon is consequential for Israel and America alike. Their respective goals are in absolute congruence here.

In this connection, Israelis everywhere were grievously offended when, in the wake of the Marines catastrophe in Beirut, Israeli offers of medical care and emergency assistance were summarily rejected. Israel was but minutes away from the tragedy. Unhappily, it is experienced in serving the victims of such terrorism. Yet Israel's humanitarian offer was spurned, for spurious political reasons. That is both incredible and appalling. It is a paradigm of the inconsistency of American policy in the Middle East.

Let our voices ring clear on these issues. And above all, when we return to our communities and homes, let us do everything we humanly can to support Israel economically and politically and with every resource at our command.

Reform and Orthodox Jews

I say all this, even though I know that Reform Judaism in Israel is still disadvantaged. Our rabbis are not recognized. Our synagogues do not receive their share of communal resources, neither from the government nor from those funds made available to the World Zionist Organization via the UJA and the UIA. And our *olim* suffer the indignity of charade conversions and life-cycle rites in order to avoid future legal complications for themselves and their children.

Thus do Jews discriminate against Jews... What a terrible irony, this! What a mockery of our history! What a perversion of everything for which we stand!

The recent change of government in Israel raised the specter of renewed efforts to amend the Law of Return. The ultra-Orthodox Agudah party demanded this and more in payment for its political support.

Consequently, I raised this matter with everyone I met in Israel. I warned them that such a change would do damage to world Jewry, that it would shatter Jewish unity, that it would

plunge the Jewish world into a Kulturkampf whose denouement might well be internal disintegration. One simply cannot deny the authenticity of four-fifths of a people without placing at risk its continuity.

Most Israelis said they understood, though they caution us not to ignore the grim political realities. Prime Minister Shamir promised me not to impose party discipline should the issue come before the K'nesset. Abraham Shapiro, the leader of the Agudah, with whom I also had a long and amiable if inconclusive conversation—call it disputation, rather—gave me to understand that pressure for the Law's change comes not so much from within Israel itself, as it does from Williamsburg and the Lubavitcher Rebbe. Chaim Herzog explained it this way: the Agudah would like to give Rabbi Schneerson an 80th birthday gift. Some birthday presentation—the broken pieces of the Jewish people on a silver platter.

Now, I am painfully aware of the fact that this is not the first time that I speak of these matters at a Biennial, but neither you nor I have another choice so long as these inequities persist. We must raise our collective voice again and again, until the wrong is made right, and we achieve that full equality which is our entitlement as Jews.

Note that our plaint is not against Orthodox Judaism or Orthodox Jews *chaila-y'chas*. I embrace them as brothers and sisters, as we all of us should. I recognize their vital place in the scheme of things Jewish. What I denounce is that politicized element within modern Orthodoxy that appeals to the coercive power of the state rather than to the conscience of the individual. What I decry is its separatist component that seeks to exclude rather than to include. It is this minority Orthodox element, with its holier-than-thou syndrome and its teaching of contempt for other Jews, that I find so disdainful. More's the pity, these narrow-minded attitudes and schemes are destructive of Orthodoxy itself.

I hope we will not allow their contumely to impair our sense of self-worth as Reform Jews. Indeed, we have every reason to be proud of what we are and what we have accomplished. Reform Judaism believes that Jewish life cannot be held hostage to the conditions and perceptions of three thousand years ago. We believe that Judaism is a living faith, constantly evolving, ever in the process of becoming. We believe that a religion which refuses to come to grips with the challenges of modern life will fossilize and die. We believe in tradition and its laws, but we accord them a respectful vote and not an immobilizing veto. We believe that Judaism has survived for three thousand years, precisely because of its capacity for growth and self-renewal. In a word, Reform Judaism gives glorious, jubilant testimony to those creative powers inherent in Judaism itself.

Disadvantaged Jewish Communities

As Reform Jews we exult in that infinite variety which manifests itself in Jewish life. We are pledged to peoplehood and pluralism. We accept *all* segments of the Jewish people without questioning their authenticity. And we assume our responsibility for all Jews everywhere, especially those Jews who live in lands of darkness.

The poignant plight of Soviet Jewry continues to evoke our concern. Their rights continue to be circumscribed, and emigration has dwindled to virtual nothingness. Their peril is vividly illuminated by the cruel sentence imposed on Iosif Begun by Andropov's KGB regime. This gentle Jew was condemned to 7 years in prison and an additional 5 years of internal exile for no other crimes than teaching Hebrew, and practicing traditional Judaism, and for aspiring to live in Israel. How brutal this Soviet regime is, how primitive, how frightened by the power of the human spirit!

This matter relates to what we said earlier about the need to relieve tensions on the international scene. Russian Jewish emigration invariably declines when Soviet-American relations are strained. Arms control agreements, therefore, would be good not only for the peace of the world and the survival of the planet. They will help us, also, to pry open those tight-locked gates that imprison Soviet Jewry once again.

Be that as it may, it is incumbent on us to speak up for the rights of Russian Jews, and for Ethiopian Jewry too. Let us organize and demonstrate and mobilize public opinion. Never more let it be said of us, that we had eyes but did not see, that we had ears but did not hear, that we had mouths but that we failed to speak.

Intermarriage and Outreach

One of the ways in which the Union has sought to respond to the challenges of modern life is the Outreach program. It is an effort I projected in this very community five years ago, and substantial progress has been made since then. David Belin will render the final report of his Task Force at this Biennial, and a Joint UAHC-CCAR Commission on Outreach has been created to carry forward the work it projected.

We are grateful to David for all that he has done. His leadership was indispensable to our advancement. He gave us rich gifts of mind and heart and substance too. Sandy Seltzer and Lydia Kukoff were his principal staff associates, as well as Dan Syme whose help is effective in this and so many other aspects of our doing. Talented, creative all, we are fortunate to have them on our staff.

We have gone far beyond the charting of plans. Conversion curricula have been tested and developed; guides, pamphlets, books and films have been prepared; countless conferences were held throughout the land; and para-professionals have been trained, and placed in several of our regions.

Much remains to be done. We stand only at the beginning of our work. As just one case in point, we have done precious little research. Yet we need to be truly informed. We cannot act merely on our intuitive perceptions. Why does one person convert and another not? Does conversion in fact safeguard Jewish identity? Just what are the implications of widespread conversion for the American Jewish population in general and the Reform Jewish community in particular since the preponderance of these Jews by Choice choose us?

These and a host of other questions need be answered if we are properly to proceed. And so I herewith formalize the suggestion of our Outreach Task Force for the creation of a research arm—an Institute for Reform Jewish Public Policy—jointly undertaken by the Union, the College, and the Conference, to undertake such a comprehensive study.

Our Conference of Rabbis was exceedingly helpful in the Outreach sphere. I am especially grateful for its adoption of the Resolution on Patrilineal Descent. That was a courageous vote, an act of farsighted leadership. It lifted the burden of doubt from the hearts of many, children in our religious schools and members of our congregations, who barring this declaration that they are *fully* Jewish had reason to fear that they weren't really Jewish.

The outreach idea has found acceptance far beyond our ranks. Many groupings in the larger American Jewish community—Conservative congregations, Federations, Jewish family agencies, community centers, and the like—all have adopted it in one form or another. The concept has developed a momentum all its own. It requires only directing but scarcely further fuelling.

One prominent Jewish sociologist termed Outreach "the boldest step undertaken by modern Jewry to cope with the problems of emancipation." Quite honestly, I never saw it in such grandiose terms. I saw it primarily as a partial, but positive effort to come to grips with the reality of intermarriage, to contain the loss it threatens to our numerical strength and if at all possible, to convert that loss into a gain.

The goals of Outreach are clear and simple: to make certain that the majority of interfaith-marriages will result in the conversion of the non-Jewish partner to Judaism; and that the majority of the children issuing from such marriages will, in fact, be reared as Jews.

This is not an illusory quest. Our experience demonstrates its attainability. Even our work with non-affiliated mixed-married couples is encouraging. It establishes beyond doubt that they too need not be lost to us, that we can, if we but try, regain them for our people.

Recent studies confirm our perception. In his address to the Conservative rabbinate, Dr. Egon Mayer reported that the rate of conversion to Judaism increased dramatically over the past several years, 300 percent, in fact. This increase has not only gone hand in hand with the rise in the rate of interfaith marriages, but has in fact exceeded it.

His studies further establish that Jews by choice are more likely to be religiously observant than their born Jewish partners, and to insist on the religious rearing of their children. In other words, there is no dilution of our Jewishness when others join our ranks. Quite the contrary, our Jewishness is enhanced because of them.

We, on our part, have always found this to be so. It has been demonstrated over and again. Just listen to the lines of a poem penned by Barbara Jackson, a Jew by choice. Entitled *Ivri*, it appears in her collection called *Across the Pond at Summer (A journey from gentile to Jew)*

"My eyes were opened late to you
And now I learn what every child knows
Bringing to it an adult understanding.
Within the fields of Judaism
I am rested and at peace—
but strangely ill-at-ease, being a
Trespasser, peeping past the gates, wondering what
Passwords bid me enter.
This sacred discomfort is like leaves upon the
Ground, covering the grass that blooms beneath.
If God is not worrying about my newness, my
Awkwardness, or the thick sound of Hebrew in my mouth
Why should I?
These are such transient, shallow differences
Easily blown like leaves away, revealing what soon
Will grow to be a lasting oneness at the roots."

Would that many *born* Jews would manifest so reverent a feeling, so great a sense of oneness with God. Albert Einstein was perceptive when he said: "I regret that I was *born* a Jew, for it kept me from *choosing* to be a Jew."

Issues of Faith

This brings me full square to the final matter that I place before you tonight: the need to cultivate a sense of the sacred within ourselves and in our midst.

Here is an aspect of our religious enterprise that has been far too long neglected. But how to repair it, how to recapture the sense of the holy, that is an exceedingly complicated task. Certainly no Biennial resolution on the subject will avail, for it requires a grappling not with outer forces, but with the self and within the self.

Tradition suggests Jewish practice as one likely pathway to spirituality. "The *mitzvah* is the place where man and God meet," taught Abraham Joshua Heschel. If this is so, our problem may be rooted here, because we are not disciplined in our observances. As liberal Jews, we assert our autonomy, we insist on the right to choose. But all too often we choose nothing at all, or choosing something we observe it only haphazardly. We make no demands on our constituents beyond the financial. And because we don't we give substance to the perception of some that Reform Judaism is but a religion of convenience, that in Reform anything goes, that this is a place where easy answers are given and few if any questions asked.

Let no one pretend that this problem is endemic to Reform. Orthodoxy and Conservatism both have their fair share of those who offer only lip-service and not the service of the heart. Nevertheless, there are numerous Reform Jews who *do* take their Judaism seriously and see it as a meaningful religious pursuit. And lest you think that my focus is exclusively on the ritual

and my measure merely quantitative, most of the pious, truly believing Reform Jews I know come out of the matrix of classical Reform and not the recent, presumably more emotive mode.

I have no ready prescriptions to offer here. There are no hidden agendas, I have no canons or codes or even guides for practice in mind. I ask merely that we address this issue, urgently, earnestly, and with all the resources of mind and spirit at our command.

I ask also this: that we begin the task by probing within ourselves, by making demands on ourselves. We are, after all, the leaders of liberal Judaism. We cannot command, we can only convince. We lead not by precept but by example. The task of self-renewal, therefore, must begin with us.

In this manner, we may be able to re-awaken our community's capacity for wonderment. So, at least, we have been taught. "Commandment and mystery are inextricably intertwined," wrote Leo Baeck. "Our deeds open up the gate through which the floods of the divine surge into human life."

Aye, there is a growing yearning for the sacred in our day. We all of us can feel it. The very air we breathe is tense, a wind blows through space, and the tree-tops are astir. Men and women are restless, but not with the restlessness of those who have lost their way in the world and have surrendered to despair, but rather with the hopeful questing of those who want to find a new way and are determined to reach it. It is a searching after newer and truer values, for deeper, more personal meaning. It is a purposeful adventure of the spirit.

These men and these women are in the grips of a great hunger which, like all "great hungers feeds on itself, growing on what it gets, growing still more on what it fails to get." The prophet Amos spoke of such a hunger when he said:

"Behold the day cometh saith the Lord God
that I will set a famine in the land
not a famine of bread nor a thirst for water,
but of hearing the words of the Lord."

Can you find a more vivid description of the very body and spirit of our age? Can you paint a more vivid portrait of the Great Hunger that seized us? Never before in recent history, has there been a greater yearning for those ideas and ideals which the synagogue enshrines.

Let us therefore build our congregations and strengthen their core!

Let us bestir our members to the task of repairing our hideously fractured world!

Let us reach out and embrace all who hunger after truth!

And above all, let us recognize that ours is an earnest enterprise, a fateful religious pursuit. We dare not ask easy questions or give facile answers. Let us, rather, as Reform Jews provide a Judaism that is a spur and a prod and a relentless provocation!

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PRESIDENT
TO THE
57th UAHC GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1. I call on this Assembly to express the indebtedness of our religious community to our chairman, Donald S. Day, for his extraordinary leadership of our Union. He led us with "the light of reason and the light of faith."
2. I call on our Assembly and its delegates to express our collective gratitude to all those who brought this convention to be:
 - a) To our host congregations, their rabbis and lay leaders, for the "graciousness of their hospitality" and for building so "vital a Reform Jewish community" in this city.
 - b) To the chairman and the members of our Biennial Program Committee for that rich fare with which they feasted us. They responded fully to the felt needs of our constituency.
 - c) To the chair and co-chairpersons of the Local Arrangements Committee and their army of co-workers who did everything to make this convention run smoothly and made us welcome in every possible way. We regret that illness prevented Isabell Herzstein from seeing the fruitage of her work, and we wish her a speedy and complete recovery.
 - d) To Rabbi Leonard A. Schoolman, the Union's National Director of Program, who single-handedly coordinated the multitudinous details of this convention. He is a gifted rabbi and an efficient administrator both.
3. I ask that we salute the Union's vice-president, Albert Vorspan, on the occasion of his 30th anniversary as a member of the Union staff. An unusually gifted leader, "keen-witted, intelligent, creative," he has been "the Union's conscience, our still small voice within."
4. I submit the Resolution drafted by the Union's Committee on New Congregations which recognizes the "validity of independent Chavurot as an expression of Jewish practice and aspiration" and which sets forth the rules governing their admission to the Union.
5. I ask our delegates to acknowledge the splendid work of curricular development done by the Joint Commission on Jewish Education and to call on our congregations to make full use of it in their various religious education efforts.
6. I call on this Assembly to approve and vigorously implement the vital resolutions submitted by the Joint Commission on Social Action, particularly those dealing
 - a) with Central America which calls for "a halt to our military intervention in El Salvador and Honduras and to end the covert war against Nicaragua." It urges our government relentlessly to pursue the quest "for a negotiated solution."
 - b) and with nuclear disarmament which extends the "courageous (mutually verifiable freeze) stance we took in Boston two years ago" in several significant ways, and appeals to our government "to discourage the dangerous delusion that society can survive a nuclear war."
7. I ask the delegates assembled to protest the Executive Order which "imposes a draconian secrecy for life... on a broad range of government employees." Comprehensive censorship "is the mark of a totalitarian and not of a free society."
8. I introduce a resolution which calls for the controlling of PACs as a means to preserve the "integrity" of our political system. "America deserves something better than the best Congress money can buy."
9. I urge this Assembly to express satisfaction that the Lebanon-Geneva talks have finally

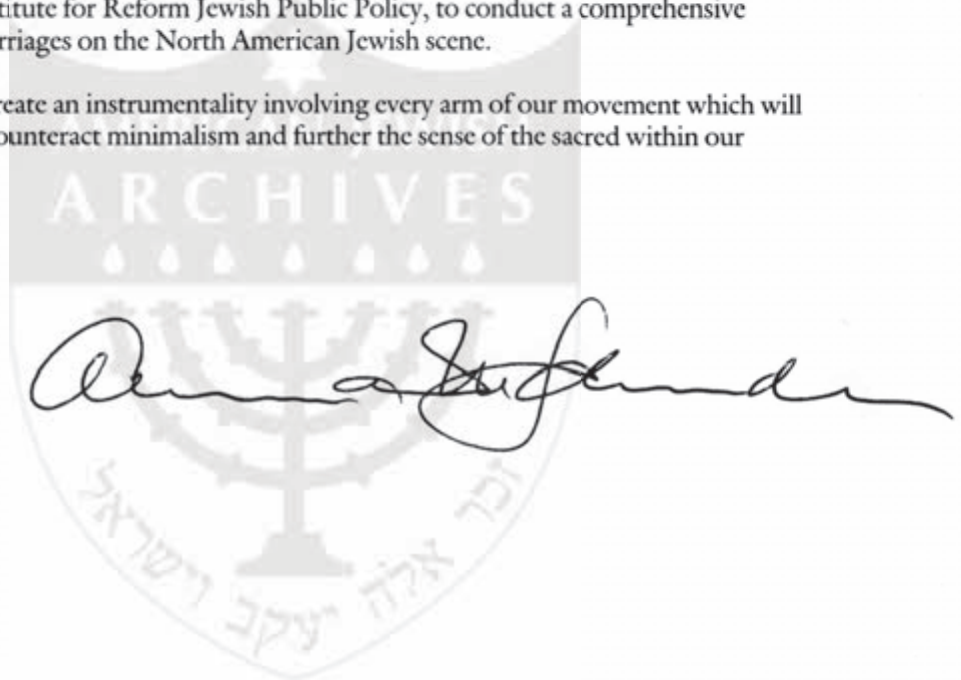
been convened, and to give voice to our prayerful hope that the fragile Jerusalem-Beirut agreement will not become a bargaining chip on its tables. "Washington must not broker agreements one day, and on the next collaborate with *one* of the sides to break it."

10. I call on this Assembly to pass a Resolution on Reform Judaism in Israel and which protests our continued second-class status in that land.

- a) It regrets renewed efforts to amend the Law of Return.
- b) It calls on international Jewish bodies to assure the equitable distribution of funds,
- c) And it summons our congregants to enlarge their support of Reform Jewish projects in Israel sponsored by the Union and its Youth Division, ARZA, and the World Union for Progressive Judaism.

11. I formalize the suggestion emerging from our Task Force on Outreach for the creation of a research arm, an Institute for Reform Jewish Public Policy, to conduct a comprehensive study of interfaith marriages on the North American Jewish scene.

12. I urge that we create an instrumentality involving every arm of our movement which will explore how we can counteract minimalism and further the sense of the sacred within our religious community.



76 AJM 8/17/85
202 KP

WHY PATRILINEAL DESCENT?

by Alexander M. Schindler

The best spirit of Reform Judaism has, since its founding days, been one of preservation-through-interpretation. Ours is a progressive and dynamic approach to Judaism, rooted in our belief that the vibrancy and spiritual depth of Jewish life is dependent upon interaction between God and human beings. Halakha must therefore be measured with an historical ruler--carefully and soberly, with a conservatism bred naturally of our respect for tradition.

Reform Judaism, in other words, believes that if we are to continue to harvest tradition's fruits of wisdom and survival, we may have to prune the tree of halakha. Halakhic innovation (the concept itself is an oxymoron for certain hidebound forces in the Jewish community) thus becomes our grave responsibility and opportunity.

This spirit motivated Reform Judaism's 1983 resolution making the patrilineal principle coequal with the matrilineal in determining Jewish status. There was and is a demographic imperative confronting the Jewish people in the U.S.: an interfaith marriage rate over 30%, yielding at least 100,000 souls annually who are threatened with exile or alienation from our community, in no small measure by the exclusively matrilineal rule of descent. This can mean a swing of two million more-or-less Jews in a decade; of four million by the year 2000--out of our present population of just under six million in the U.S.

Such demographic statistics are shocking yet abstract. But

each number represents a human being, a child of intermarriage who has suffered damage from our past lack of a forthright declaration that they are fully Jewish. Thus, some two years ago, I received the following letter from a young woman named Adrienne Gorman:

When I read your speech (she wrote), I realize how deeply the subject of Jewish identity has wounded me... and how successfully I had covered over the wound through the years. I was raised to be aware that some part of me was Jewish, and that with that birthright came the responsibility to remember the six million victims of the holocaust--to remember them not as a detached humanitarian who, on principle, abhors extermination, but on a far more fundamental level, where the soul of the witness resides.

I can't recall when I first came to understand that my sort of allegiance was to be considered nothing more than a sympathizer's or when I tried to answer for myself the question of what choice I would make if Hitler came again, this time using the Halachic definition of a Jew in rounding up his candidates for the ovens and the camps. But at some point over the years I did decide that where my father's faith--or more precisely, his heritage--was an issue, I would without reservation take my stand as a Jew.

Thus, I effectively bestowed on myself all of the deficits of an oppressed group with none of the benefits of that community. Jews consider me a non-Jew, non-Jews consider me a Jew...and with a despair tinged with as much humor as I could muster, I began to think of myself as nothing at all.

How could we fail to respond to such people? Why should we have continued to demand that they undergo a formal conversion when their Jewish identities are already secured by far more than a symbolic act? Why should we not say to the Adriannes of this world: By God, you are a Jew! You are the daughter of Jewish parents. You have resolved to share our fate. You are therefore flesh of our flesh, bone of our bone. You are in all truth what you consider yourself to be--a Jew.

Should we have continued to enforce our opposition to intermarriage itself by punishing and rejecting those who intermarry? Can we afford, in numbers or in spirit, to alienate them and their--

our--children? On the contrary: We are resolved to reach out to them, to embrace them, to do everything we humanly can to make them a part of Jewish life.

The hallmark of Reform Judaism has been honesty: never to pretend to be what we are not, always to proclaim proudly what we practise. No one in our midst truly believes that Nikita Krushchev's grandchild is Jewish while Ben-Gurion's is not and had to be converted. Yet this is the Jewish reality by light of Orthodox halakhic tradition, in which blood can run thicker than faith and feeling. Therefore, in our real-world practise of Judaism we have struck a real-world definition of "who is a Jew" that is at times more stringent than Orthodoxy's definition. For us, Jewish identity is established by its exercise, by "acts of identification," as our patrilineal resolution stated, "with the Jewish people," and by "the performance of mitzvot." Jewishness cannot only be presumed; it must be expressed in concrete ways through an active involvement in Jewish life and the willingness to share the fate of the Jewish people. Our numbers reflect real people with active Jewish identities.

There is, moreover, another positive reality of Jewish life to which the Reform decision on patrilineal descent is an affirmative response, and that is the deepened involvement of Jewish fathers in the upbringing of their children. The impact of the women's liberation movement upon the general American culture and particularly upon the more educated has resulted, for many young Jewish couples, in a more equal sharing of the burdens, chores, decision-making and joys of child-rearing. Are we to ignore this social reality, assuming that only the mother's religious and ethnic identity will be transmitted to the children of inter-

marriage--an assumption that statistics clearly disprove?

We undertook our halakhic reform not in ignorance or contempt for the past, but in dialogue with tradition. We affirmed patrilineal descent with awareness that the genealogical tables of the Torah are overwhelmingly patrilineal. In matters of inheritance, the paternal line alone was followed. Solomon married many foreign wives, and the child of one of them, Rehoboam, succeeded him to the throne. Moses married Zipporah, the daughter of a Midianite priest, yet her children by him were considered Jews. Joseph married Asenath, the daughter of a Priest of On, and the children of their union were reckoned as Jews. Indeed, unto this day all male children of Israel are blessed with the blessing that they be like unto Ephraim and Menassah--even though ~~one~~^{his} of their grandfathers was a priest who worshipped the sun in the heathen shrine at Heliopolis near Cairo.

In rabbinic literature, as well, evidence of the patrilineal tradition is manifest. We invoke the God of our fathers in prayer. We are summoned to the Torah by our father's name. We are reminded that we live by zekhut avot, the merit of our fathers.

Perhaps most significantly, both the Torah and rabbinic law hold the male line absolutely dominant in matters affecting the priesthood. Whether one is a Cohen or a Levi depends upon the father's priestly claim. If the father is good enough to bequeath priestly status, why isn't he good enough to bequeath Jewishness?

Will Reform Judaism's decision somehow shatter the unity of the Jewish people? That argument could have been made, and doubtlessly was made, at every step in our development as a distinctive movement within Judaism. Certainly the halakhic principle of taharat ha-mishapah was not held inviolate when we, as a religious community, determined to accept a civil divorce without gittin. From the

Orthodox perspective we reared a generation of mamzerim--an irre-medial step halakhically, while the acceptance of the paternal line is at least theoretically subject to remedy by means of halakhic conversion for the "patrilineal Jew" who moves into Orthodoxy. Still, our spiritual progenitors did not wilt, the imprecations were forgotten and the Jewish world is still whole.

Our patrilineal resolution was born of necessity and conviction: an intermarriage of motivations that is worthy of our essential character. Our spiritual forebears did not create Reform Judaism in order to have us turn into a tinsel imitation of Orthodoxy: Let us not be afraid of our differences. Judaism is, for us, a flowering plant. It is not merely a tangle of roots, but is a plant that draws nourishment from those roots. It is not only a bare stem, but is a firm and growing stem. It is not simply a cut flower, fast to fade, but flowers anew in each generation. Our community is committed to cultivating that plant, fertilizing it with new passions and new ideas, and trimming its tangled excess, so that it can grow in the harsh conditions of today's world.