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National Midyear Leadership Conference [Washington, D.C.]. 18  
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# STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPT

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NATIONAL MIDYEAR LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES  
UNITED JEWISH APPEAL

The Shoreham Hotel  
Washington, D. C.  
Saturday, June 18, 1960

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1 NATIONAL MIDYEAR LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

2 UNITED JEWISH APPEAL

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The Shoreham Hotel,  
Washington, D. C.  
Saturday, June 18, 1960

The meeting convened in the Main Ballroom at  
8:10 o'clock p.m., Mr. Melvin Dubinsky, Chairman, National  
Cash Committee, presiding.



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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. DUBINSKY: Ladies and Gentlemen: Won't you please rise for the singing of the HATIKVAH and THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER? You will be led by Mrs. Elizabeth Weil, soprano, of Temple Sinai, Washington. She will be accompanied by Mrs. Arnold Nestle.

Won't you please remain standing for the invocation, which will be given by Colonel Herman Dicker, Chaplain at the United States Army Proving Grounds, Aberdeen, Maryland?

[Singing of HATIKVAH and THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER.]

CHAPLAIN DICKER: O God and God of our Fathers, bestow Thy divine blessing upon these men and women who have journeyed from near and far to rededicate themselves to a noble endeavor called the United Jewish Appeal.

Strengthen, O Lord, the defenders of Thy Holy Land and establish peace on all its residents and all the peoples of Thy universe.

O God, while meeting in our Nation's Capital, we proudly remember America's sacred heritage of protecting freedoms everywhere. Thus we pray for divine guidance of these United States so that she may continue with vigor and determination on the road of her national tradition and purpose; and, finally, O God of freedom, teach all of us the meaning of true freedom, freedom from selfishness that blinds us to the needy, freedom from hate and prejudice against each



other, and freedom from fear and want among ourselves, freedom from sadness by the joy of serving Thee, freedom through gladness of our faith in Thee. Amen.

[Dinner was served.]

MR. DUBINSKY: Ladies and Gentlemen: I am Melvin Dubinsky of St. Louis, your chairman for the conference. It is a great pleasure for me to call this Midyear National Cash Conference of the United Jewish Appeal to order and to welcome you.

First, I have the privilege of calling upon Mr. Isadore S. Turover, President of the United Jewish Appeal of Greater Washington, who will welcome you on behalf of the Jewish community of our host city. Mr. Turover. [Applause]

MR. TUROVER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Shalom, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to our Nation's Capital and to the Jewish community of Washington. It is some years now since a national conference of the United Jewish Appeal has been held in our community. Seeing before me this fine group of leaders from all over the country who'll participate in this conference, I should say now it was well worth waiting for and that you are doubly welcome.

Although Washington is supposed to be a very blase community, we in Washington always feel a new sense of stimulation when the nationwide leadership comes together in our community. It brings home to us the range and the strength



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1 or our United Jewish Appeal support. It brings home forcibly  
2 the fact that we are a united Jewish community, dedicated to  
3 a task which has helped us to change the destiny of the  
4 Jewish people in little more than two decades. We still have  
5 a great job to do. We have undertaken the task of a whole  
6 generation and we are determined to see this job well done,  
7 completely and finally.

8 We meet at a time, ladies and gentlemen, when the  
9 agencies of the United Jewish Appeal face a cash crisis.  
10 The "crisis" has become the normal thing in Jewish life of  
11 late. And this is really nothing unusual and a nationwide  
12 effort which involves the welfare and lives of hundreds of  
13 thousands of people.

14 Whatever we do in our home communities during our  
15 campaign can have only one result and one desirable result --  
16 cash. Cash is the goal and the end of our efforts, for only  
17 cash can do the job we have set out to do, and, as I bid you  
18 welcome, may I also express our joint hope that we will seek  
19 great practical results, so-called "tachlis," from this  
20 conference.

21 It will help us carry forward our great effort one  
22 more step along the road for a better future for Jews through-  
23 out the world who depend on us for new freedom, for a new  
24 chance of life, for life itself.

25 Shalom. [Applause]



1 MR. DUBINSKY: Thank you, Mr. Turover, for a warm  
2 welcome to our Nation's Capital.

3 Ladies and gentlemen, in order to ascertain as to  
4 how we stand today, we must take stock in ourselves and we  
5 must take stock in the accomplishments of the United Jewish  
6 Appeal for the last six months. We must say to ourselves:  
7 It simply isn't the problem of raising the money and collect-  
8 ing the funds that are available to carry on our work, but  
9 how have these funds been used since January 1st.

10 In order to get a clear picture, we must use  
11 figures. We must take into consideration that there are  
12 approximately 600,000 people -- men, women and children -- who  
13 must be assisted in the needy lands of the world today. Of  
14 these 600,000 people who need our assistance, there are  
15 345,000 people who relatively I would classify as unabsorbed  
16 immigrants who are in need and living in Israel today. And  
17 in addition there are in twenty-four lands throughout the  
18 world, too numerous to mention this evening, 255,000 dis-  
19 tressed people who are waiting daily for the assistance that  
20 you and I, the people of America, can give them.

21 These are the people whom we are most directly  
22 responsible to. And these are the people that our committee,  
23 our Cash Committee, around the country, will endeavor to help  
24 by accelerating the flow of cash, so that we can carry on our  
25 worthy work.



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1 I think we have a wonderful team this year. I  
2 refer to my four co-chairmen. I call them "The Four Horse-  
3 men," four good team members :- Joshua Glasser, who is our  
4 chairman in the Middle West; Paul Kapelow, who is our chair-  
5 man in the South; Ben Swig, who is our chairman on the West  
6 Coast; and last, but not least, Gordon Borowsky, our chairman  
7 for the East, the East Coast. [Applause]

8 And incidentally, I think I should mention tonight  
9 (I know they are going to be very bashful about what I might  
10 say) that we have one of my co-chairmen who has given up an  
11 anniversary. I think it is the sixth anniversary. He has  
12 been married six years. Mr. and Mrs. Borowsky are here  
13 tonight. Will you rise here for a round of applause on your  
14 anniversary? [Applause]

15 Ruth, you can answer in French on an appropriate  
16 occasion.

17 I think, not only must I mention the names of the  
18 four co-chairmen, but typical of every football team, it  
19 takes a number of people on the line. We had in excess of  
20 50 men this year, geographically spread around the country  
21 from various places, who were devoted and dedicated in their  
22 endeavors to bring to this cash conference a successful con-  
23 clusion.

24 I am not at liberty to announce figures, but I can  
25 assure you from what I know already that our figure will be



1 very gratifying that will be announced tomorrow morning. But  
2 I need some help from you. Come bright and early and bring  
3 your checks. This will assure us of a successful morning.

4 I am glad to begin this conference by presenting  
5 a very unusual young man. I say "presenting" instead of  
6 "introducing," because you and I have had him in our living  
7 room on many occasions thanks to the electronic wonder that  
8 we call television. If you had seen him, you know that Mike  
9 Wallace is not just a great TV personality, but a great social  
10 critic as well. Each program in the Mike Wallace interview  
11 series and those he had a hand in producing is a commentary  
12 on the American and world scene in finance, in politics,  
13 in religion, in discrimination and in world affairs. He has  
14 developed a technique as a television interviewer which can  
15 best be described as arresting and decisive. Among the  
16 awards he has won are the Emmy Award, the Robert E. Sherwood  
17 and the Foreign Press Awards.

18 Mr. Wallace comes here tonight fresh from a visit  
19 to Israel. I know that what he will have to tell us in his  
20 own honest style of reporting will win him another award,  
21 that of our admiration. I am indeed happy to present Mike  
22 Wallace -- "live" -- to you. [Applause]

23 MR. WALLACE: Thank you very much, Mr. Dubinsky.

24 Mr. Turover, Dr. Sachar, Distinguished Ladies and  
25 Gentlemen: Actually what I have been asked to do tonight is



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1 to say a few words, and very informally, about my recent  
2 trip to Israel, which, incidentally, was my first trip to  
3 Israel. I had been to the Middle East before, to some of  
4 the Arab states, and I had spent almost a month, as a matter  
5 of fact, in the United Arab Republic, but, for one reason or  
6 another, my various itineraries abroad had never taken me  
7 before to Israel.

8 And I think, as perhaps a good many people do, that  
9 I went to Israel with a chip on my shoulder. I say that  
10 for this reason: When one hears over and over and over again  
11 about the vitality of a country and about the excitement of  
12 a country and about the optimism of a people, when one finally  
13 goes to visit that country and to meet its people, one feels,  
14 well, it cannot possibly be this good. And there is a sense  
15 of wanting to go there to find out what is behind this legend,  
16 perhaps it is only my personality, but to see if I can't put  
17 a little bit of a pin into the bubble.

18 Well, I hope that in these informal remarks in the  
19 next ten or fifteen minutes, I will be able to tell you a  
20 little bit about my impressions and let us see whether the  
21 pin was able to prick the so-called bubble of Israel.

22 Another thing is (and I hope you will forgive me)  
23 that I feel it is almost presumptuous of me, after my first  
24 short visit to Israel of two weeks, to talk to you people  
25 about Israel. After all, I dare say that most of you have



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1 been there more often than I and have stayed longer and know  
2 a good deal more about the country than do I. But if there is  
3 a certain validity in what I have to say, perhaps it is be-  
4 cause of my previous lack of participation in things Israeli,  
5 and just because my impressions are new and are fresh and my  
6 lack of participation, I don't mean that I haven't been  
7 involved at all. Of course, I have. I am Jewish. I had a  
8 Jewish religious education, and I am sure that you understand  
9 that it is impossible for virtually any Jew to remain unmoved  
10 by what happens to his fellow Jews here in this country and  
11 around the world. But still I can say accurately that I am  
12 no fanatic on the subject and I am not rabid, I have in the  
13 past been no rabid Zionist and my participation in the activi-  
14 ties of the Jewish community have been, while regular, per-  
15 functory. So if you will view what I have to say in the light  
16 of what I have just told you.

17 The purpose of my trip to Israel this time was a  
18 businesslike purpose. My good friend, Otto Preminger, is  
19 producing the motion picture EXODUS. About three months ago,  
20 Otto called me on the phone and said, "Come out while we are  
21 there and you can watch us on location and you can do a few  
22 pieces with the stars of EXODUS, and you will see a little bit  
23 of the country. Come on. It will make some interesting  
24 programs for you and your show, and perhaps you can persuade  
25 the people for whom you work that it would be a good idea for



everybody all around."

I did talk to the people, the network for which I work, and they thought it was a good idea. So I went. And, of course, while I was there, in addition to talking to the stars of EXODUS -- and let me interject here that EXODUS is being called by the Americans who are there, the first Israeli western. [Laughter] I don't know whether it is going to be a good picture or a bad picture. My hunch is, with the actors he has and with Otto Preminger's gift for producing motion pictures, it will be a superb motion picture, and with the 70-millimeter vision he has, he has a brand new camera, and with the remarkably beautiful landscape of Israel, I don't see how it can fail. I have a hunch that the picture EXODUS will be even better and more meaningful propaganda for Israel than was the book EXODUS. But in any case, after I told Otto that I was going to come to Israel and be with him up in Haifa for a couple of weeks, I read the book.

Now, I know that there are varying points of view about Leon Uris' book. There are those who say it is not good literature, but there is almost nobody who suggests that it isn't an exciting book. And in a funny way EXODUS did for me (and I know it has done it for a good many others, too), it helped me, for the first time in a peculiar sense, to understand my roots a little better, to understand my background a little better, and to give me a sense of identity with the



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1 State of Israel. So by the time I was ready to leave, I  
2 confess that I was a little excited about the prospect of  
3 going to that country. I wanted to find out what is the  
4 feeling of Israel, what is the feeling of Israel and perhaps,  
5 if I can tell you three or four things that happened to me  
6 in the next ten or fifteen minutes, you will find you will  
7 better understand what I felt and what I believe almost any  
8 new tourist, Jew or non-Jew, will feel in going there.

9 Picture, first of all, the El Britannia plane  
10 arriving at the airport outside of Tel-Aviv on Independence  
11 Day eve, on the eve of the 12th Independence Day, and about  
12 an hour before we landed on the airport, you could almost  
13 sense the electricity inside that airplane. Stewards and  
14 stewardesses and the pilot and co-pilot were all of them so  
15 happy about the fact that they were going to be not working  
16 someplace else around the world, but were going to be home for  
17 their 12th Independence Day. The pilot got special permission  
18 to circle over Tel-Aviv at about 1500 feet, which, I under-  
19 stand, is unheard of. He went around about five times. It  
20 was about midnight, as I say, when the plane arrived at Tel-  
21 Aviv. There were fireworks bursting around the plane. We  
22 looked into the streets and people were dancing in the streets,  
23 and I am sure you can agree there is no better way to come,  
24 no better time to come than that time.

25 And because I had to be at work up in Haifa the next



1 morning, as soon as we got into the airport, we took over a  
2 car and spent the two hours driving up to Haifa and learning  
3 about the gossip in the EXODUS crew. They were having their  
4 lumps and have had their lumps while they have been in  
5 Israel.

6 They have now moved to Cyprus. They are shooting  
7 their last two or three weeks in Cyprus now. And the picture  
8 will be released on December 15th, and again, by way of di-  
9 gression, Otto tells me that the first six months, from  
10 December to May, are completely sold out in New York, and  
11 are virtually sold out in Chicago and Los Angeles for an  
12 equal length of time, so that the \$2 million which have been  
13 pumped into the Israel economy by the production of EXODUS,  
14 if EXODUS proves to be a huge success (and it looks as though  
15 it is going to be), the chances are that other motion picture  
16 producers will go to Israel to produce motion pictures, and  
17 that can do nothing but good for the over-all economy of that  
18 state.

19 Anyway, we got to Haifa two o'clock in the morning,  
20 and I imagined, of course, that the town would be all buttoned  
21 up. Not at all ! There must have been, I don't know, 25,000  
22 young people on the streets of Haifa, two, three in the morn-  
23 ing. We put our bags away and my wife and I walked through  
24 the streets of Haifa, and people were dancing and singing  
25 and waiting for the parade to begin, and all of them seemed



1 to be, I would say, 16-17, 20-21. It was that kind of a  
2 crowd. And the first thing that astonished me there that  
3 night -- we call ourselves here in the United States a melting  
4 pot, but the thing that flabbergasted me in Israel was the  
5 fact that here, too, is the same kind of a melting pot, all  
6 shades and colors of skin, all shapes of eyes, various accents,  
7 whether they were Moroccans or Persians or Iraqi or Germans  
8 or Poles or whatever, you sense you were in the middle of  
9 a wonderful and happy and polygot community that was a melting  
10 pot and a very happy one.

11 After a couple of days of working up there and  
12 earning my keep with Otto (and he is a very difficult fellow  
13 to work with, so I wanted to get out from under his clutches  
14 almost immediately), I had an opportunity to go to the  
15 Weizmann Institute. I walked into the home of Meyer Weisgal.  
16 There is a young man in the picture. His acting name is  
17 Michael Wager. His real name is Mendel Weisgal. He is Meyer  
18 Weisgal's son. When I walked in that afternoon at lunch,  
19 sitting at the table were Dewey Stone and his wife and Louis  
20 Wasserman, who is head of the Institute, Mr. and Mrs.  
21 Weisgal, and a couple of people from Haifa.

22 I was having a little trouble with my digestion  
23 after two or three days, so Meyer Weisgal immediately took  
24 me and fed me about a half bottle of pyregoric. As a result,  
25 I was healthy the rest of the time I was there.



1 In any case, after lunch he took us out to this  
2 little enclave about which I had heard so much, but which  
3 had never been described properly to me, the Weizmann Insti-  
4 tute. We went on to the Plaza that was built in honor of  
5 Chaim Weizmann and we went to his simple grave. And then he  
6 took us to the laboratories, and he showed us the atom-  
7 smasher, and he showed us various of the other scientific  
8 experiments that were going on. Then he took me into a room  
9 that is not much larger than twice the size of this little  
10 table in front of me.

11 He said, "You listen." The scientist who was there  
12 put the tone arm of a record player on a record. It was a  
13 record of Paul Robeson. And he said, "Come here. I want to  
14 show you." It said, "RCA." He turned it on. The record  
15 player started to play and Paul Robeson on this record began  
16 to sing.

17 It was just glorious. The room resounded to this  
18 beautiful voice of Mr. Robeson's. I said, "So?" I asked,  
19 "So what?"

20 "Now wait, Mr. Wallace," he said, "and you will see  
21 that I am going to turn this lever," and it said -- I have  
22 forgotten what it said, but he turned the lever while the  
23 record was playing, to Israeli sound. The Weizmann Institute,  
24 in addition to its various pure research jobs, is also work-  
25 ing on electronic and technological improvements that can be



1 put to use, that can earn money, and the Institute of scien-  
2 tists is not just working in atom-smashing and atomic research  
3 and chemical research, but also in research that can be made  
4 to redound to the financial, immediate financial benefits of  
5 Israel.

6 And he turned from the RCA sound to the Israeli  
7 sound that they had developed there, and the only way that I  
8 describe to you the difference in the sound is that it was as  
9 though the RCA sound, which I had thought so glorious and  
10 faithful when the Israeli sound came on, it made the RCA  
11 sound as though it had been filtered through three blankets.  
12 It was really an astonishing thing to hear.

13 I am in the business of sound and I have heard a  
14 good deal of it, and I know a little bit about Hi-Fi, but I  
15 had never, in my life, heard the sound that was as beautiful  
16 as this particular sound.

17 And I asked, "Well, is it being marketed commer-  
18 cially?" And I was told it was, that royalties have now been  
19 granted to various countries around the world, and that this  
20 is going to bring in money in royalties to Israel, to the  
21 Institute and to the State of Israel.

22 I tell this story only for this reason: That one  
23 of the qualities of the Israeli, one of the things that is  
24 bound to make Israel succeed and flourish is the ingenuity,  
25 is the brainpower, one of the greatest resources of that  
little country is the brainpower. Perhaps they don't have all



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1 of the natural resources that we here have, that the Russians  
2 have, that various more fortunate countries, small countries,  
3 have, but what a wonderful natural resource they have in  
4 their brainpower, and over succeeding years, one cannot  
5 doubt that other devices, electronic devices, industrial  
6 devices, will be developed that will help Israel similar to  
7 this one, help Israel to be a viable economic community, that  
8 it will help Israel to succeed.

9 So one feeling that you get from Israel is that  
10 of brainpower, ingenuity. While I was there, the man who  
11 took me around (and I know that a good many of you ladies and  
12 gentlemen who are here tonight probably know this man, he  
13 was the Consular General in Los Angeles and worked in New  
14 York as the Consulate, too, his name is Rubin Daffney, he  
15 is a dear and brave man) -- in Israel everybody has a personal  
16 story that would turn one's hair gray compared to the pedes-  
17 trian lives we here in the United States live. He has an  
18 extraordinary story that I won't tell you now because it is  
19 a long one. There is no better man to take a new visitor to  
20 Israel. There is no better man to take him around that  
21 country. He has been there for 24 years, off and on. And he  
22 loves, really loves that country, and knows every blade of  
23 grass and every clod of dust that is there.

24 He took us through the Galilee on a three-day trip.  
25 We were in Safed one morning and he said to my wife and me,



1 "You know, what I would like to do is to prove to you about  
2 the optimism of this country." This is another quality that  
3 those people have. Some of you who are here in Washington  
4 heard me tell this story last week, so I hope you will bear  
5 with me. "I have to show you something, Mike," he said,  
6 "which will show you something of the optimism of these people.  
7 It is crazy, unbelievable optimism. We don't know where it  
8 comes from and why it is, but let me show you."

9 I said, "Fine. Take me." He said, "Come with me."  
10 And we drove in the car outside of Safed about five miles.  
11 Suddenly, he turned off on a rugged road up a fairly steep  
12 hill and, as we were driving up the hill, I saw the top of  
13 the hill and what seemed to be some kind of a tower. As we  
14 came closer and closer, I saw what it was. It was simply a  
15 forest ranger's tower, the kind that you will see in Franconia  
16 Notch or out in Yosemite. And when we came closer to it, I  
17 saw what a beautiful forest ranger tower it was, made out of  
18 logs, clean logs, obviously new, 75 feet in the air.

19 He said, "You see?" I said, "What do you mean?  
20 What is so optimistic about a forest ranger tower?"

21 He said, "Mike, look around you." I did. There  
22 besides the forest ranger tower were thousands of trees, none  
23 of them over 2 feet high. "Only the Israeli," he said,  
24 "could prepare for forest fires 25 years ahead of time."

25 [Laughter]



So, indeed, this underlies the wonderful optimism of the Israeli people. And, of course, the Israeli are a brave people, indifferent to hardship, determined that they are going to succeed. I don't know how many of you have been to a little place called Engev, which is on the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. That is Rubin Daffney's kibbutz. And he told me the story of Engev. Twenty-three years ago a group of 200 Israeli men, Palestinians at that time, determined that they were going to need the waters of the Sea of Galilee, Lake Tiberius, in order to irrigate the southern part of what they hoped eventually would be their country.

And the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee at that time was absolutely barren, not a blade of grass, inhabited only by nettles and various insect pests, and no one believed that anybody could survive on that, and in addition, it was about 800 yards from the Syrian border, and the Syrian border was up on a mountain looking down on this property.

But after making the proper plans, at five o'clock one morning, 200 Israeli men loaded onto trucks and jeeps and onto boats, because the Sea of Galilee in that spot is 9 miles wide, the materials to build a stockade, a watch tower and a cabin, and at five o'clock in the morning they left and surprised the people on the other side; that is, the Syrians, who were looking down on them, and by noon that day, the stockade was up, the watch tower was in the process of



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1 construction and by the time night fell that night, they were  
2 there and dug in and ready to stay at what was eventually to  
3 be the kibbutz of Engev. Twenty-three years ago -- in the  
4 intervening 23 years, 18 of the original 42, who slept there  
5 that night, have died in battle, but today Engev is a commun-  
6 ity of 500 souls. It is a self-sufficient kibbutz. It is  
7 not there to till great fields, it is not there to foster  
8 great industry. It is there in the shadow of the Syrian  
9 border to insure the integrity of the waters of the Sea of  
10 Galilee for Israel.

11 It is a beautiful kibbutz now. Eucalyptus trees  
12 that they planted 23 years ago, when they were there, are  
13 now great eucalyptus trees. Underneath Engev now is a rabbit-  
14 warren, subterranean city, where, if it should become neces-  
15 sary, the entire population, 500 people of Engev, could go  
16 underground and live for three months, if an attack should  
17 come.

18 Two months ago the Syrians did attack a mile and  
19 a half down the road. All the children in Engev went down  
20 in the subterranean tunnel and did indeed live there for  
21 ten days until the United Nations stepped in and stopped it.

22 That spot of all spots in Israel has been chosen  
23 for the largest concert hall in all of the State of Israel.  
24 It seats 3000 people, given by the Esco Foundation of New  
25 York. And when Leonard Bernstein or Isaac Stern -- while we



1 were there the Philippine group was there -- come, that is  
2 a must-see spot. Each of them performed there on the beauti-  
3 ful shores of the Sea of Galilee, just across from where  
4 Christ made his sermon on the Mount, and it is a beautiful  
5 kibbutz and a tribute to the bravery and the indifference  
6 to hardship of the Israeli people.

7 So when people say to me: What did you feel in  
8 Israel, I tell these stories over and over again -- the  
9 optimism, the ingenuity, the brainpower, the bravery. These  
10 are the things that, as I say, made me really, for the first  
11 time, feel a real kinship and a real desire to participate  
12 in some small way in the future of that country.

13 Just one further thing before I sit down, and that  
14 is: What role will Israel play in the future in the Middle  
15 East and the future of the world? While I was there I had  
16 an interview with Goldie Meier and one of the questions on  
17 my mind was this one: Why does Israel, with so many problems  
18 of its own, with resources that are so limited, why does  
19 Israel spend its brainpower and its small treasure and its  
20 effort in sending technical assistance missions to West African  
21 countries like Ghana or to far eastern countries like Burma?  
22 Isn't there enough to do right at home? Why send Israel's  
23 people around the world when they are needed so much at home?

24 And Mrs. Meier said, that, of course, one of the  
25 motives is that Israel wants and very much needs friends around



1 the world. It is a selfish motive and an understandably  
2 selfish motive. Israel cannot, it seems, be friends with its  
3 neighbors, and it has had the hand of friendship extended  
4 from various large powers, but it needs markets and friends  
5 around the world as well. That, of course, was understand-  
6 able, but then she said something that to me was much more  
7 important. She said that Israel owed a debt not so much to  
8 the large powers, which had helped that country, although  
9 that obligation is an obvious obligation. Rather, she said,  
10 Israel owes a debt to countries less fortunate than Israel.

11 I asked what does she mean by "less fortunate"?  
12 She said, "Well, we have been getting help and we do have  
13 intellectual resources. What about the countries that are  
14 searching for their freedom, that are searching for economic  
15 viability, and that do not have large countries or large  
16 Jewish communities, like the community in England or the  
17 United States or France, to help? What better way can we  
18 repay the faith that has been placed in us than by turning  
19 around and helping countries that, indeed, are less fortunate  
20 than ours?"

21 I have a hunch (and this may be 'way off base, but  
22 I believe it) that in the future Israel's help is going to  
23 go to countries not as far away as Burma or Ghana, but  
24 rather to its neighbors across its borders, close by. I think  
25 that it is going to be impossible for the Arab countries long



1 to resist the examples set by Israel, whether it be the simple  
2 planting of trees or irrigation of the desert, whether it be  
3 the stability of an institution like the Hebrew University of  
4 Jerusalem or the word of the scientific and cultural and  
5 economic developments that will increasingly take place. I  
6 believe that the word of advances in individual freedom, of  
7 scientific breakthroughs and cultural accomplishments, little  
8 by little, are going to seep through to Israel's neighbors  
9 and Israel's example, remote as this possibility may seem to  
10 us all right now, will indeed affect the whole region of the  
11 Middle East. Israel's enemies say that Israeli expansionism  
12 is what they fear most. Well, I think the time is going to  
13 come (and it is not too far off) when Israeli expansionism  
14 is going to be welcomed, not territorial aggrandizement, not  
15 land grabs, but it will be the expansionism of an idea, the  
16 idea of political self-expression, of cultural self-expression,  
17 of economic self-realization for all of the peoples of the  
18 Middle East, sparked by the hardy and the brave and the  
19 optimistic and the hard-working people of Israel. And certainly  
20 that is an end toward which every one of us -- Jew and  
21 non-Jew, scientist and non-scientist -- can work in helping  
22 the state of Israel to succeed.

23 Thank you very much. [Applause]

24 MR. DUBINSKY: Mr. Wallace, the audience has made  
25 it perfectly obvious they enjoyed your remarks, and I am sure



1 you have given them a message that they will carry back to  
2 their communities.

3 Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Wallace has just notified  
4 me he has a plane connection to make. Let's give him a  
5 round of applause as he leaves. [Applause]

6 It is an honor and a privilege to present the  
7 next speaker. I go back in history to the year of late 1947.  
8 The gentleman whom I am about to introduce had a very beloved  
9 father who lived in St. Louis most of his life. His father  
10 was aware of the fact that I had intended to visit Palestine.  
11 In his very humble way one morning he walked into my office  
12 and asked if I would be kind enough to carry out a mission  
13 for him. He asked me to visit with his mother who would be  
14 our speaker's grandmother, who was then living in Jerusalem.  
15 This was one of the typical and, I think, one of the first  
16 delegations that visited the DP camps, and then moved into  
17 Palestine right before the War of Independence. When we  
18 arrived in Jerusalem, I inquired. I had the street number.  
19 I inquired as to where this little lady -- sweet lady --  
20 lived, and I was told that she was very, very close to the  
21 Arab quarters, and in this immediate spot anyone living there  
22 lived in great danger.

23 Early in the morning I had my little visit with her  
24 and she was then, I would say, in her early nineties. I asked  
25 if she needed any financial assistance, and she told me, "No."



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1 I pleaded with her because I knew that within a very few  
2 weeks Jerusalem would be surrounded. I pleaded with her to  
3 allow me the privilege of making arrangements to take her  
4 back to Tel-Aviv, and she said, "No." She said, "This is  
5 my home and I came here to live, and this is where I am going  
6 to live, and I am going to stay in Jerusalem as long as I  
7 live."

8 This little old lady lived through the siege of  
9 Jerusalem, lived many months afterwards and then died a  
10 perfectly normal death. She was perhaps in advance from  
11 her few points as to why we are motivated to carry on and  
12 to help the sort of people that we are helping overseas  
13 today.

14 The grandson of this little old lady, sweet lady,  
15 is the head of Brandeis University, a great Jewish-created and  
16 supported center of learning, dedicated to the education and  
17 cultural advancement of Americans of every race and creed.

18 A pioneer in the Hillel movement among our univer-  
19 sities, a noted author and historian, Dr. Sachar is one of the  
20 intellectual leaders of our generation.

21 It is no secret that Brandeis University's phenomenal  
22 rise can be attributed to Dr. Sachar's dedicated efforts. Yet,  
23 despite his heavy academic duties, Dr. Sachar has never lost  
24 sight of the primacy of the needs of Jewry overseas and our  
25 generation's obligations to Israel. That is why he is here



1 tonight and that is why it is my pleasure to call upon him  
2 now. Dr. Sachar. [Applause]

3 DR. SACHAR: Mr. Chairman, our many distinguished  
4 guests, ladies and gentlemen, perhaps it was inadvertent that  
5 your committee prepared your program so that you could have  
6 the testimony first of a man who comes out of the heart of  
7 American life, like Mike Wallace, who frankly and candidly  
8 confesses that he has not been deeply moved, that his destiny  
9 didn't bring him into the inner fabric of Jewish life and  
10 its nationalist ideology, that he spoke not as a passionate  
11 partisan, nor a zealous crusader, but in the few episodes that  
12 he described, he indicated very clearly what an impact is made  
13 at once, even on the person who comes for two weeks, sets  
14 down no beachhead, but goes through as if it were a commando  
15 raid.

16 And then the second half of your program, as my  
17 dear and cherished friend, Melvin Dublinsky points out, comes  
18 from someone who is deeply dedicated, committed in his own  
19 lifetime and in his ancestry. Melvin, you brought back many  
20 nostalgic touches. My father's mother came to what was then  
21 Palestine many years before the state was established. My  
22 mother was born in Jerusalem. The founders of Petatikva are  
23 my family. And I have never known in my childhood a period  
24 when Eretz Yisroel wasn't the ultimate fulfillment for the  
25 completion of Jewish life.



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1 You will get two sides of the story, therefore,  
2 tonight, and when I speak of the responsibility that those  
3 of us have, that those of us who have been born here and brought  
4 up here have, it is a compelling responsibility, and we face  
5 one of the greatest dangers in the fact that sensitiveness  
6 ultimately gets blunted by the repetition of our responsibility.

7 I find (I imagine that Herb Friedman and others  
8 who are here as dedicated leaders and all of you who are the  
9 cotter pins in your community, you find) that the chief hazard  
10 that you have to overcome now is the great tiredness in the  
11 American Jewish community, where the financial needs of Israel  
12 are concerned.

13 Every year the campaign is planned, and then in the  
14 middle of the year a kind of semicampaign is planned. The  
15 whole philanthropic life of a community rotates around the  
16 United Jewish Appeal campaign. It is always the same few  
17 people. We haven't sufficiently democratized this so the  
18 burdens are borne equally and equitably, so that it is always  
19 the same few people who must carry the responsibility for  
20 giving of their own resources and then giving of their time  
21 and then pounding away on the emotions of the community.

22 And how many times are you heartsickened by the  
23 cry that comes back from the people whom you approach, when  
24 are you going to stop this? When will we be relieved of the  
25 necessity of siphoning out, channelling the chief resources of



1 a community for the sake of Israel?

2 It is a perfectly natural reaction. It doesn't  
3 come from people who are bad. It doesn't come from people  
4 who are stingy. It doesn't come from people who are greedy.  
5 It comes from people whose sensitivities ultimately get  
6 blunted and calloused as you build a wall of imperviousness  
7 by the continuous repetition of a story. It can be dramatic  
8 in 1948. It can still have a touch of drama in 1951. It  
9 can be stimulated and prodded further when you have Polish  
10 refugees or Hungarian refugees or North African refugees  
11 to speak about. But a day comes in 1960, when your chief  
12 problem is once again to stimulate the emotions of a community  
13 that has been worn out psychologically by the continuous  
14 discussion of emergency.

15 They are tired out, aren't they? Well, ladies and  
16 gentlemen, there is one place where there is an even greater  
17 tiredness about these campaigns, and that place is in  
18 Israel. They dream of the day when it will no longer be  
19 necessary to have you meet in conferences such as this.  
20 They dream of the day when it will no longer be necessary  
21 for them to ask you to go back to your communities and siphon  
22 out your resources for them. They dream of the day when they  
23 won't have to be dependent any longer. These custodians of  
24 a kind of Marshall aid not for themselves, they would long ago  
25 have stopped asking you for themselves, but they take new



responsibilities upon themselves each year as they keep lowering their standard of living, because others have to come in and nobody is ever turned back, not the sick, not the infirm, not those that are psychologically unhinged, not those that are ignorant, not those who come out of the 12th century on a magic carpet and fly in thirty minutes from Yemen into 20th century reality. They are all welcome. You, the givers, are weary. Well, those who are taking on behalf of others are even more desperately weary.

Well, then I meet so many Americans, when they come back from Israel and they say, "I have had an unfortunate experience there. What makes the Israeli so ungrateful? Why are they so crude? Why don't they recognize the assistance that is coming from America?"

They are not rude. They are not ungrateful. A sensitive people that hates to be beholden to anybody, that craves the day of complete independence, when they don't have to ask you to "shnor" on their behalf, expresses itself in this way.

Dependence never breeds politeness, and this is all that it is. It is a psychological reaction to being trapped by the need for dependence for another little while. You see, to the Israelis, dependence is an obsessive nightmare. They talk about freedom, they are grateful for it, but it doesn't mean freedom of speech or freedom of the press or



1 freedom of assembly, it means freedom from dependence.

2 They have a very long memory, especially those who  
3 were there as survivors, they have a very long memory of the  
4 meaning of dependence. They remember not so long ago the  
5 dependence of a whole Jewish community that stood hat in  
6 hand to wait for the smile, depending upon the caprice or  
7 the whim of someone whose smile had so much to do with their  
8 destiny. They remember San Remo in 1920 when the Balfour  
9 Declaration was to be confirmed and Chaim Weizmann stood  
10 outside in the corridor, as he tells us in his autobiography.  
11 He stood there for hours. And this incident represents some  
12 of the most moving pages of his autobiography. There was  
13 no place even to sit down. This was just a hall. And the  
14 lords of the earth were on the inside. They were making the  
15 determination. Weizmann had no standing. He represented  
16 nobody. There were millions and millions of people who  
17 belonged to him and he belonged to them, and there were much  
18 smaller nations whose heads were sitting on the inside and they  
19 were making the determination of his fate, and he walked up and  
20 down like a parent waiting for a baby to be born.

21 Balfour was pleading his case, and the case of  
22 his people, and then the door opened at last, and Balfour  
23 came out, and his face was worried, and he looked harrassed.  
24 And Weizmann said to Mr. Balfour, "Is the news so bad?" And  
25 Balfour said, "No, Dr. Weizmann, the news is very good. They



1 have confirmed the Balfour Declaration, but my tennis partner  
2 is late." [Laughter]

3 But his tennis partner was late. Balfour was a  
4 friend of the Jewish people. But he had other worries on  
5 his mind. There was a coal strike in Britain and the Irish  
6 were in rebellion and El Glubb Pasha was creating difficulties  
7 in Egypt, and there were problems with Ghandi in India, and  
8 his tennis partner was late, and the fate of a whole Jewish  
9 community hung upon the fact that this friend of the Jews  
10 had to plead for them, because they couldn't plead for them-  
11 selves, because there was only diplomatic dependence then,  
12 and the Israelis have a long memory of that.

13 And they remember the long debates that took place  
14 in the United Nations as to whether or not there would be  
15 partition. And we had no say-so. Little Santo Domingo,  
16 little Guatemala did. And we had to pull strings behind the  
17 scenes. We had to get hold of Kleins of Holland. We had  
18 to get to Granados of Guatemala. We had to have long sessions  
19 in chambers and smoke-filled rooms to see if enough votes  
20 couldn't be obtained so the two-thirds majority could be put  
21 through. But we stood on the outside, and it was nip and  
22 tuck. And when partition came and our destiny was determined,  
23 it came because of certain diplomatic convolutions which we  
24 could never have expected when, for the first time and almost  
25 the only time, Russia and the United States voted side by side



1 and Russia at that time only to get the British out of the  
2 Near East.

3 In the years that have passed since Israel became  
4 a sovereign state, they haven't won independence. They still  
5 aren't emancipated to the point where they no longer need to  
6 depend upon outsiders. Well, no state is independent in that  
7 sense. No state in our interrelated world can do without  
8 alliances and without coalitions which are the fulcrum of  
9 power. But at least every state and Israel now too has  
10 some elementary leverage, it can take into its own hands a  
11 large area of its own destiny. It is not completely free.

12 Israel is encircled today. It is a tiny people among  
13 40 million hostile neighbors. It hasn't got the leverage  
14 that Nasser has. He can play the East against the West, be-  
15 cause you never know which way he will go. I am afraid the  
16 forecast of our good friend, Mike Wallace, and his optimism  
17 about the early time when Arabs and Israelis will sit down  
18 together is a very commendable hope, but it is a hope to be  
19 long deferred, because Nasser will not yield until his  
20 blackmail potentialities have been completely exhausted, but  
21 we haven't got that kind of leverage. We can only go to the  
22 West. We have no more leverage today, than we had in the  
23 days when Germany was on one side and Britain was on the other.  
24 We couldn't side with the Nazis. We had no place to go.  
25 We couldn't say, "If you don't want to do what we want you to



1 do, we will go to the other side."

2 Nasser can play one side against the other, and  
3 we lose bargaining power. But at least there is an element  
4 of sovereignty even if we may have our leverage so completely  
5 curtailed. We don't have to ask anybody's by-your-leave about  
6 immigration. The Israeli state was created as an independent  
7 state primarily because we wanted to have control over immi-  
8 gration. It is no longer dependent upon the caprice of a  
9 white paper or a black paper. It no longer depends upon  
10 who happens to be the British Foreign Minister. We no longer  
11 have to beg a statesman here or approach a politician there  
12 for a few thousand miserable trucks so that we can exchange  
13 them for 100,000 just in order to satisfy the culpitude of  
14 Eichmann or Himler, and, incidentally, it is very touching  
15 now to note how very much concerned so many of the nations  
16 of the world are about ever last legality to be fulfilled with  
17 reference to this master of carnage, this custodian of  
18 murder, when 6 million Jews didn't arouse this kind of  
19 reaction.

20 I dislike and I get sick to my stomach when I  
21 read of this ballet of steril legalism that nations now go  
22 through with reference to Eichmann. It is one of the reasons,  
23 I suppose that we have extremists today in Israel who are  
24 tired of the procedures of profitless respectability. But  
25 my point is that, even though there may not be complete



1 independence diplomatically, Israel is no longer a cockleshell  
2 and it has reached the point that it has, emancipated itself  
3 from being just a pawn. Oh, being a pawn has been so humili-  
4 ating!

5 And it calls upon you and your communities to  
6 broaden the area of independent action by helping it to build  
7 its military strength and its economic strength. It isn't  
8 nearly as much frightened by the hazards of brinkmanship as  
9 it is frightened by the humiliations of pawnship. And it  
10 will welcome the day when it can have even greater relief  
11 from this kind of dependence.

12 I said it has a long memory. Diplomatically it  
13 has a very long memory, economically as well. The exigencies  
14 of the creation of the state, the crushing military burden  
15 that it has to carry which even a big state would find dif-  
16 ficult, the need to settle hundreds of thousands of impecunious  
17 immigrants, the enormous demands to establish health standards  
18 and educational standards, all of these have rendered little  
19 Israel vulnerable, and what they accept through the great  
20 United Jewish Appeal campaigns is really not for themselves,  
21 but in order to keep the lands open for the only spot on  
22 earth where every Jew is immediately welcome and where there  
23 are no restrictive immigration acts to hold them off, and they  
24 yearn for the day when the doors may be even wider opened  
25 and the full cost absorbed by them and by their economy, which



1 by then will perhaps become completely self-sufficient.

2 I was very much interested in Mike Wallace's discus-  
3 sion of Ghana and Ethiopia and Burma. Sure, their pride in  
4 having established economic relationships with these emerging  
5 states is not only for the gratifying impact that that will  
6 have on the balance between exports and imports, but because  
7 such relationships with these new emergent states that trust  
8 Israel, because they are not afraid to call them in, they  
9 know there will be no colonialism; as a result of that contact  
10 with such states, it will ultimately lead to economic inde-  
11 pendence, and this is a cherished goal.

12 Ladies and gentlemen, this, then, is the task for  
13 today and for the immediate future, where we in this country  
14 are concerned. We haven't got any right to become tired,  
15 for we are not shoring up a country that is unwilling to  
16 carry any sacrifices itself. We are making available the  
17 tools of an ultimate self-sufficiency, so that a gallant  
18 little people, our kith and kin, heirs with us to a common  
19 destiny, may emancipate themselves from the humiliations of  
20 dependence.

21 They have the back-breaking burden with their Air  
22 Force alone and their army, often referred to as the best  
23 little army in the Near East. Well, they do it very under-  
24 standably. They have taken to heart "Hap" Arnold's famous  
25 statement that in a crisis a second best Air Force is like



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1 a second best poker hand. It has no meaning at all. They  
2 can't be second best. And they have the back-breaking burden  
3 of building the very best both for defense and as a deterrent.  
4 And they know how much time counts. They learnt that in 1947  
5 and in 1948. They didn't win that war because of a Maccabean  
6 spirit. They didn't win that war because they had better  
7 morale. I have read, I suppose, just about all the books  
8 in English at least that tell the story of the wars of '47  
9 and '48, and there is a lot of sentimentality there and a lot  
10 of poetry and a lot of drama. That war was won by timing.

11 The Arabs didn't worry because they had statistics  
12 on their side. They outnumbered the Israeli 40 to 1, there-  
13 fore the big, fat pashas and the effendi could sit on their  
14 moneybags and they didn't have to do anything because 40 to  
15 1 meant that they would win.

16 The Israeli didn't rely on statistics. They  
17 relied on having the proper gunpower and the proper tankpower  
18 and the proper air power. Oh, surely, they had to have a  
19 Maccabean spirit! Oh, surely, they had to have better morale!  
20 Morale and spirit aren't enough to win a modern war. They  
21 appealed to just everywhere in the world to take over some  
22 of their responsibility. Some of you went to the banks and  
23 you signed notes on your personal recognizances and money  
24 was forthcoming, so that you could take care of immigration  
25 and you could take care of the purchase of dunams of land and



1 you could take care of health and educational standards, and  
2 they could devote their manpower and their money to military,  
3 and they had the firepower that was needed at the time it was  
4 needed, and they won the war with that.

5 They know that today. Timing is of the essence.  
6 And this alone will give them the opportunity to emancipate  
7 themselves from dependence. That is why the still appeal  
8 to you to carry a responsibility, not to raise their standard  
9 of living. They are not asking you for that, not to give  
10 them luxuries that they don't even crave. They are still  
11 frontier people. Only to help to make them independent  
12 militarily and economically, so that the day may come when  
13 they can have the self-respect of self-sufficiency.

14 And that is little enough to ask of an American  
15 Jewish community that, with all of its generosity, has not  
16 really given from blood and bone, but only from fat.

17 As a matter of fact, if I were to speak now from  
18 the perspective of a historian, I would say that this is  
19 an extraordinary privilege that has been given to us which  
20 has been given to no other generation. It wasn't granted  
21 to Bar-Kochba, whose generation died in vain to maintain  
22 the independence of the Judean state. Oh, if they had  
23 only had the privilege of making a modest contribution to  
24 win independence! Bar-Kochba never had that.

25 It wasn't given to Judah ha Levi, whose compatriots



1 would gladly have by-passed the privileges of the Golden Age  
2 of Spain for a resurgence in the Holy Land.

3 It wasn't given to Herzl who welded and flattered  
4 and cajoled his way through the chancellories of the world,  
5 begging for just a half hour to present his case, upon which  
6 2000 years of history rested and waited. I see him before  
7 Abdullah Hamid, the Damned, whom he called Ali Baba sitting  
8 among his 40 thieves. I see him with Van Bulow and the Kaiser  
9 in Germany asking for a half hour to explain why it was  
10 important to get a charter for a homeland.

11 I see him with Plehve in Russia, whom he described  
12 as a long, lean, senuous panther, who was very much interested  
13 in Herzl because it might get a lot of Jews out of Russia,  
14 make Russia Judenrein, cleansed of Jews, as if he were talking  
15 of cockroaches, or Goluchowski of Austria, or the Pope.

16 Herzl, making this Odyssey, if only he had had the  
17 opportunity that our generation has! None of them had it in  
18 the past. Only we have it. We have the proxy for all of  
19 those who went before. And we are asked to use the proxy  
20 with dignity and with responsibility, and, if we fail to use  
21 it properly and reasonably, we acknowledge not only our own  
22 moral bankruptcy, but we betray all of us who came before,  
23 all of the previous generations who prayerfully have handed  
24 us this proxy for us to use in this generation.

25 Some of us may not rise to the occasion because



we are called upon to do something that isn't really dramatic. It isn't really heroic when we talk historically about voting the proxy for Bar-Kochba or Judah ha Levi or Herzle or any of those who came before, we are asked to vote the proxy by raising funds. That is a terrible letdown, a terrible anticlimax, isn't it? It is easier to ask for courage and sacrifice when you are on the battlements, when you have to do what my grandmother did, who says she will stay in Jerusalem during a siege and does. Then your reserves are called up, because this is something that you can understand, it is courageous, it is dramatic.

The biblical story tells us of the Syrian general Nemen, who was stricken with leprosy and no physician could cure him. He was in despair until someone suggested there was a Hebrew prophet in little Palestine who was known to perform miracles, and his cures were magnificently dramatic.

Nemen made the journey with his retinue and he found the prophet Elijah by the banks of the Jordan. The prophet's prescription to Nemen was a very simple one: "Go wash yourself in the waters of the Jordan."

This infuriated the Syrian. He was infuriated because he was ridiculously being asked to bathe in a tiny little river, when there were so many more impressive ones in Syria itself, and then he cried out in those words that ring through the ages, "If the prophet had only asked me to



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1 do some great thing!" He was humiliated because the emergency  
2 asked for nothing heroic. He was called upon to do a very  
3 unglamorous, routine act.

4 And we often feel this kind of letdown when our  
5 task in America is outlined. We are at the crossroads of  
6 history and in one of the greatest theaters of all time, and  
7 a little state has become the epitome and crystallization of  
8 all of our hopes and all of our aspirations, and we are  
9 called upon to vote the proxy for all the past and to vindicate  
10 their sorrows and their martyrdom, and then we are asked  
11 to free this little state from its diplomatic vulnerability  
12 and from its economic thralldom by continuing with campaigns,  
13 knocking on doors, ringing doorbells, raising budgets, and we  
14 cry out, "Oh, if the prophet had only asked us to do some  
15 great thing!"

16 Well, this is the greatest thing that we can do.  
17 We have to rise above any temporary tiredness. We have to  
18 rise above any understandable exhaustion, because what is  
19 at stake is the ability and the capacity of the heirs of all  
20 the ages to become the masters of their own destiny, to become  
21 the captains of their own souls.

22 And when they do, then the humiliating miasma of  
23 dependence will be dissipated and then men of the moment will  
24 never again be able to challenge a people of eternity.

25 [Applause]



1 MR. DUBINSKY: Again, ladies and gentlemen, let me  
2 say that Dr. Sachar is catching a plane that leaves within  
3 forty minutes, and he certainly deserves another round of  
4 applause. [Applause]

5 Ladies and gentlemen, we now have a wonderful  
6 thrill to look forward to in the concluding part of our  
7 program. The play we are going to see tonight comes from a  
8 literary masterpiece, the Old Testament, our Bible.

9 Some of it is written by the ancient prophets of  
10 Israel thousands of years ago. These words have renewed  
11 meaning today when the people of new Israel are making the  
12 prophecies of the Bible come true.

13 And now, the meaning is clear in the answer of the  
14 great fundamental question the Lord asked the prophet Ezekiel,  
15 the question which is the title of our play CAN THESE BONES  
16 LIVE?"

17 The author who brought these immortal words to  
18 contemporary life is David Mark. The director is Michael  
19 Shillo, who appears in the cast, together with Aviva Gor  
20 and Harold Gary. The accordionist is Jonathan Zock. The  
21 stage manager is Benjamin Caim. The songs, dances and  
22 pantomime are done by Abraham Elber, Rachel Hadass, and Hava  
23 Kohav.

24 Now, if you will just simply turn in the other  
25 direction, the show is on.



[Dramatic presentation: CAN THESE BONES LIVE?]

[Whereupon the meeting adjourned to reconvene at  
9:00 o'clock a.m., Sunday, June 19, 1960.]

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AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES



The logo of the American Jewish Archives is centered on the page. It consists of a shield-shaped emblem. At the top of the shield is a Star of David. Below the star, the words "AMERICAN JEWISH" are written in a serif font, followed by "ARCHIVES" in a larger, bold serif font. Below the text is a menorah with seven branches. At the base of the menorah is a circular seal containing Hebrew text.



1 NATIONAL MIDYEAR LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

2 UNITED JEWISH APPEAL

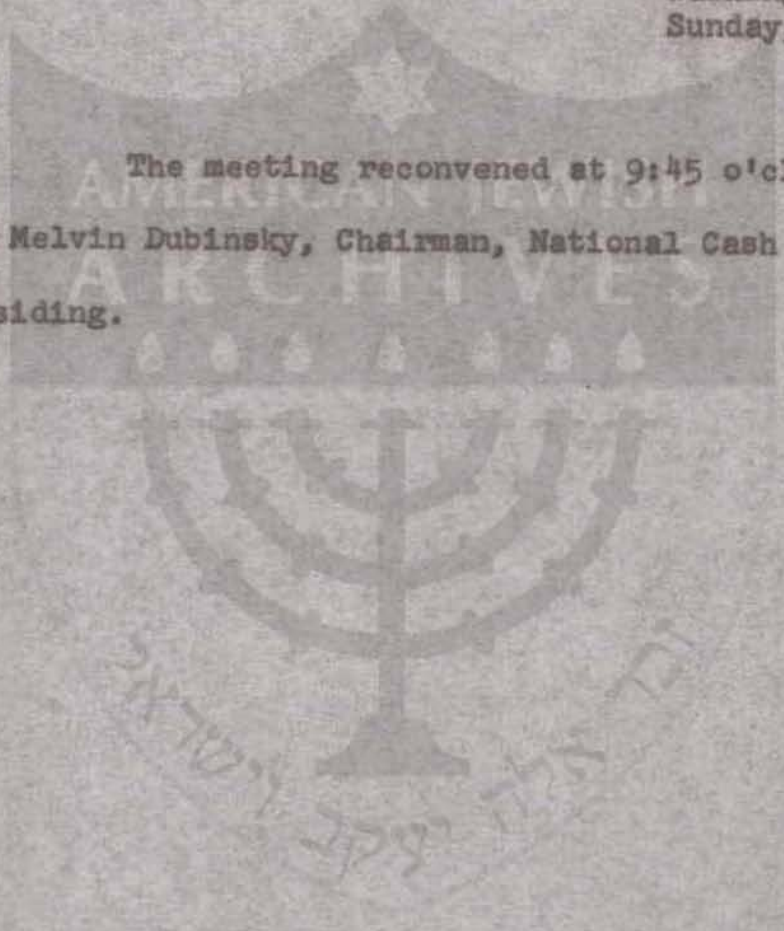
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6 The Shoreham Hotel,  
7 Washington, D. C.  
8 Sunday, June 19, 1960

9 The meeting reconvened at 9:45 o'clock a.m.,  
10 Mr. Melvin Dubinsky, Chairman, National Cash Committee,  
11 presiding.  
12





P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. DUBINSKY: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

I know that many of the ladies and gentlemen in the audience have come long distances and they have checks to present, and we expect this meeting to adjourn exactly at twelve o'clock, because I know that many of the participants who are here today are expecting to catch planes to go back to their respective homes.

Two of the co-chairmen, namely, Gordon Borowsky of Philadelphia and Paul Kapelow of New Orleans, will be happy to receive your checks at the opposite end of the room.

Now, if you will kindly line up on the left side of the room, line up on the left side of the room, in one single line here, they will be there to welcome you with open arms.

I think also you will be interested in knowing that we have many people who spoke to us last night about the possibility of returning to their respective cities to spend Father's Day with their families. Being very greedy and knowing that they brought their cash with them, we excused them from this morning's session, minus their checks. So some of our good delegates from around the country have left and are on their way home this morning. Some of them, as a matter of fact, left last night.

Paul, Gordon, how about the line forming on the left?



[Presentation of checks.]

MR. DUBINSKY: Could I have your attention, please?

You have been relieved of your checks, you have had your breakfast, your eyes are open, and now we will start the official part of the meeting.

I have a total before me which includes numerous checks that we received last night. Our total cash to date is \$33,150.00. [Applause]

I believe it is appropriate that I first again express the appreciation of all of the officers of the United Jewish Appeal for the splendid cooperation we have received from our four co-chairmen, our Committee of Fifty, the various welfare fund and federation presidents around the country, the executive directors of many of the federations, and last but not least, to men of our own staff, our national staff, particularly Sam Abramson. Sam, are you here? This man did a wonderful job. Take a bow, Sam. [Applause]

Remain standing. I want you to turn around and take a good look at him, because he is going to bother you for the balance of the year. Our job is half finished. We will be back in the summer and fall months, asking you for your indulgence in assisting us in raising the additional 50 per cent that will be forthcoming the last six months of the year.

At this time, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to



1 introduce our first speaker, Mr. Moses A. Leavitt, Executive  
2 Vice Chairman of the Jewish Distribution Committee. Mr.  
3 Leavitt is truly one of the great authorities in Jewish life  
4 on the problems of assisting and aiding Jews throughout the  
5 world who are in need of assistance. For the past fifteen  
6 years he has directed the Jewish Distribution Committee's  
7 worldwide relief and rehabilitation program. He himself has  
8 personally directed the immigration programs that have brought  
9 hundreds of thousands of homeless people to Israel and to the  
10 United States.

11 I consider it a distinct privilege and honor at  
12 this time to give you -- Mr. Moses A. Leavitt. [Applause]

13 MR. LEAVITT: Thank you, Mel.

14 Ladies and Gentlemen: I would like to feel, as if  
15 we are sitting in a living room, a small group of us, and I  
16 can talk and chat to you about the problems of the Jews of  
17 the world. I would like to feel, too, that what I am saying  
18 is off the record, and I hope that any reporters who are here  
19 will take note of it.

20 The campaigns are over. The tumult is dying down.  
21 What is the situation? What is the situation that we are  
22 called upon year in and year out to face? I am not going to  
23 give you many figures, but I do think that you ought to have  
24 a few in your mind so that you can see the magnitude of the  
25 problem.



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1           There are in the Moslem lands, North Africa and  
2 Iran, about 475,000 Jews. There are in Western Europe 525,000  
3 Jews. In other words, between Western Europe and the Moslem  
4 countries you have 1 million Jews, totally different, no com-  
5 parison between the two groups. Then you have behind the  
6 Iron Curtain in Eastern Europe, exclusive of Russia, about  
7 330,000 Jews. That gives you 1 million 330 thousand Jews,  
8 exclusive of Russia.

9           The Jewish Distribution Committee announces every  
10 year that it helps 220,000 people a year. There is one figure  
11 we don't announce, and we don't add that figure to the 220,000  
12 and that is the figure of the Jews of the countries behind  
13 the Iron Curtain that we help. And out of 330,000 Jews that  
14 live in those communist lands, we are able to reach 120,000  
15 people, who are in need, and some of them get only two or  
16 three food parcels a year, some get six, some get funds, some  
17 get the facilities to be Jews and remain Jews. And we spend  
18 a substantial sum of money, one of the biggest programs of the  
19 Jewish Distribution Committee is spent in this work that we  
20 carry on among Jews who are bitterly in need, Jews in Rumania,  
21 and in Hungary, and in Poland, and in Czechoslovakia, Jews  
22 who have no future and whose only hope is to get out.

23           Fortunately, many are getting out. If we can keep  
24 quiet long enough, we can get substantial numbers out of there.  
25 But I want you to know that if you add this 120,000 people --



1 men, women and children -- to the 215,000, you have 335,000  
2 people in this complex, the three complexes of which I spoke,  
3 that you are helping.

4 What does our help mean? It means that 40,000  
5 children in the Moslem lands eat every single day. They get  
6 a glass of milk and a piece of bread and jam in the morning.  
7 They get a hot, nourishing meal at lunchtime, and another  
8 glass of milk and a piece of chocolate and a piece of bread  
9 in the afternoon. And for all of the children, or most of  
10 them, that is the food they get, because, when they come  
11 home into the poverty and malaise of those countries, there  
12 are brothers and sisters who don't get that food, and they  
13 have a priority, because they say, "You have eaten. The  
14 others haven't eaten."

15 And you have some 475,000 Jews in those areas. That  
16 is a big thing. It is a fundamental thing. I don't speak  
17 of the medical care work. I don't speak of the curing among  
18 these people of tinea, phobus, curing them of trachoma and  
19 tuberculosis, but I do want to speak of the educational pro-  
20 gram, because here our children, some forty to fifty thousand  
21 children, are getting a minimum education.

22 You know what an education means, what it means to  
23 be literate. This has been the big, great distinguishing  
24 characteristic of the Jewish people, surely, first the  
25 piece of bread, but, secondly, the book. And that is the



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1 reason why we are called the People of the Book. And to the  
2 Jews of North Africa, the schools that these children attend,  
3 and the various Talmud Torahs that we support, those are the  
4 essence of the Jewish life in those countries. And that is  
5 important, because, without a school there is no hope, and  
6 we are giving these tens of thousands of children hope for  
7 the future. Eventually, they will be able to utilize this  
8 education. It is a Jewish education, it is not only a secular  
9 education, it is a Jewish education as well.

10 Hebrew is taught. We have set up a Hebrew normal  
11 school to teach teachers how to teach Hebrew in North Africa.  
12 It is a vast network of schools, and it goes on quietly.  
13 Nobody says anything about it. It has its problems. Don't  
14 think for a moment that everything goes smoothly in those  
15 lands. And we are faced with those problems all the time,  
16 and we just keep our fingers crossed, because the situation  
17 in those countries is explosive so far as the Jews are con-  
18 cerned. They are a tiny minority in a sea of Arab national-  
19 ism. Out of that description I must except Iran. Iran does  
20 not have any Arab nationalism. It is not an Arab country and  
21 it has a very friendly feeling toward the Jews. The Jewish  
22 population in Iran is about seventy to seventy-five thousand.  
23 It is a very poor population, but it is a population which  
24 at least lives without fear.

25 Why do we help people in those countries? Aren't



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1 these Jews as well off as their neighbors? Why should we  
2 pick out the Jews in these countries? The answer is that they  
3 aren't as well off as their neighbors. When you come to a  
4 country like Morocco, which is the largest in the number of  
5 Jews, over 200,000, where you are today running through a  
6 very bad economic situation, who feels it the most? Who feels  
7 it first? It is the Jew.

8 If there are too many workers, the Jews get fired  
9 first. When jobs are offered, the Jews get the jobs last.  
10 Arabs deal in the Arab shops. If they can, they don't deal  
11 with Jewish shops. There has been a tremendous deterioration  
12 in the economic position of the Jews of North Africa, and they  
13 live on a slice of bread.

14 It is a problem, it is a great problem, it is a  
15 problem in which we perhaps more than anybody else must be  
16 concerned because in this country we have the means and the  
17 resources and we have shown we have had the imagination to  
18 deal with problems as great as those.

19 In Europe you have the largest Jewish community in  
20 Western Europe, of 525,000 Jews. More than half live in  
21 France, a strong community of 350,000 Jews. And it is growing.  
22 It is a growing Jewish community. It is growing because  
23 France, with its traditional humanitarianism, allows all  
24 refugees to come in and gives them an opportunity. Particularly  
25 Jews are permitted to come into France with or without visas.



1 One of the reason (and I am not stating this in derogation of  
2 France at all) is that they know that there is a Jewish com-  
3 munity that will see to it that these people get along, not  
4 that France herself doesn't help. She does.

5 We have had the most extraordinary generosity in  
6 the reaction from France, and the French government, in the  
7 treatment of the Egyptian refugees, thousands of them that  
8 came into France. They have helped us. They have put up  
9 money for housing. And they permitted them to get jobs.

10 But there are others who haven't got the same  
11 closeness to France -- Hungarian refugees, Rumanian refugees,  
12 Polish, North African refugees. There isn't a day that goes  
13 by that Jews don't come into France, searching for a little  
14 bit of security and a haven and there is a Jewish community  
15 now, and it is an organized community, and it has the various  
16 institutions of communal aid, from family welfare services  
17 to refugee aid groups. They have organized themselves and  
18 with our help.

19 They are now raising among themselves 40 per cent  
20 of their needs. There was a time when we gave 100 per cent  
21 of the needs of the French Jewish community. Today our  
22 contribution is 60 per cent. We hope in the next year or  
23 two it will drop to 50 per cent, and that is a very great  
24 advance, because, first, the French Jews never had been  
25 educated to give the way American Jews have been educated



1 to give and, secondly, because they don't have the same tax  
2 laws, as they are quick to point out to you when you talk to  
3 them about giving more, as we keep talking to them all the  
4 time. But they are making tremendous progress.

5 Holland is self-supporting. There is a little,  
6 sturdy Jewish community in Holland and it takes care of its  
7 own. It is a dedicated community, it is a small community.  
8 It lost over 100,000 of its Jews in the great catastrophe.  
9 But they are proud. And seven, eight years ago they said,  
10 "Thank you very much" to us. "We don't need your help any  
11 more. We will take care of our own."

12 It was the first Jewish community that did it.  
13 Others are getting close to it, and we are making progress  
14 all the time, but what was our greatest lack was the lack  
15 of leadership. We lost the best and the finest of the Jews.  
16 Hitler and his crowd made it a point to seek out the Jewish  
17 leaders, the rabbis, and the communal workers and the profes-  
18 sional people, the lay leadership, as well as the professional  
19 leadership, and we were faced with nobody. We had nobody  
20 to work with. And you can't organize a community without  
21 people, without leaders. And gradually there came to the fore  
22 natural leaders. We developed others. And there is in every  
23 community today the beginnings of a leadership.

24 It will take time. You cannot recover from the  
25 effects of a catastrophe of the size that we have witnessed



1 in one generation. It won't be cured in one generation. It  
2 will take two and three generations before you can replace  
3 the leadership and the Jewish life that existed.

4 One thing we will never replace, one thing is gone  
5 forever, and that is the great Polish community, the great  
6 Polish civilization. It was the heartbeat, the heart blood  
7 of the Jewish people. That is gone. It is gone, never to  
8 be recreated. Thirty to thirty-five thousand Jews are left  
9 in Poland, and they are going out in steady numbers. There  
10 will remain a remnant, surely. There is always a remnant  
11 left behind in every country. But the bulk of the Jewish  
12 people in Poland in the next two or three years will have  
13 gone. And with that will die probably the greatest Jewish  
14 civilization of modern times that we have had up to today.

15 Fortunately, a new Jewish civilization is arising  
16 in the Middle East, and I want to say just a few words about  
17 Israel. We went into Israel ten years ago, eleven years ago,  
18 not that we ever left Israel or were not present in Israel.  
19 We were always fond of saying that the first official act of  
20 the Jewish Distribution Committee in 1915 (we were organized  
21 in November of 1914), the first act was the sending of a  
22 steamship, the S.S. VULCAN, to Israel, loaded with food for  
23 the Jews of Palestine. That was the first act. It was a  
24 symbolic act of the Jewish Distribution Committee. And we  
25 remained there and we helped in Palestine year in and year



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1 out on a small scale, first with orphans, and then with  
2 malarial control and with various other things, and then  
3 continuously, of course, in the field of Yeshiva, the field  
4 of the higher institutions of learning. We have stayed with  
5 the Yeshiva and we have rebuilt the European Yeshiva in  
6 Israel.

7 And then, when the thousands and tens of thousands  
8 of Jews entered Israel, after 1948, when the hospitals and  
9 the homes for the aged and the insane asylums of Europe and  
10 North Africa and Iran were emptied and people were put on  
11 ships and were taken off on stretchers into Israel, when  
12 this struggling country, besieged by the armies of its  
13 neighbors and accepting hundreds of thousands of new immigrants,  
14 8 per cent of whom they estimated were social cases, we were  
15 asked to come in: Can we take over this most difficult of  
16 all people, the shattered remnants of the people who were not  
17 capable of working?

18 They said, "You have had the experience over all these  
19 years in dealing with these people. Come in and help us."  
20 And we did. We set up a network of institutions in Israel,  
21 and many of you must have seen them, the institutions of the  
22 Malbey. Today we help some 50,000 Jews a year, not only through  
23 these institutions, like homes for the aged and homes for the  
24 chronically ill and the hospitals, but outside in the community,  
25 in trying to meet the problem of the aged people, in trying to



1 meet the problem of the handicapped, in trying to bring back  
2 to life and to productive live some of the hurt and mutilated  
3 Jews who came to Israel.

4 It has been not only a humanitarian act. It has  
5 been an economically productive act for Israel. So many of  
6 them have become producers instead of just consumers. We  
7 are proud of Malbey. We are proud, because we think we have  
8 led in many aspects in the care of the aged and the chronical-  
9 ly ill and the rehabilitation processes which we have experi-  
10 mented with. And today we are going into a field which was  
11 sadly and tragically neglected, the field of the mentally  
12 ill, the field of the deranged, the field which was the last,  
13 that had no priority in Israel, but it is now getting priority.  
14 And we hope that we can bring the same measure of help to  
15 this lost segment of Jews in Israel, so that for the rest of  
16 their lives they can either be kept decently with dignity and  
17 with safety or brought back among the living and the working.

18 This is our problem. This is the problem of our  
19 generation. It is not going to be over in 1960. It is not  
20 going to be over in 1961 or the years coming. It is our  
21 duty. If we don't do it, nobody is going to do it. And we  
22 have done too much. We already have invested too much in the  
23 Jews of the world. We have taught how it is to help one  
24 another, and what we have taught them they will never forget.

25 Israel will be on its own long before Jews in the



1 other countries will be. We will see the spectacle (and I  
2 hope in our lifetime where Israel will be helping the under-  
3 privileged Jews of the world.

4 My friends, it is a good thing to sit back and  
5 think of what you are doing, all of the heartaches of cam-  
6 paigning are translated into human beings, into food, medical  
7 care and schooling and hope and life.

8 Thank you. [Applause]

9 MR. DUBINSKY: Moe, it is perfectly obvious that  
10 the audience this morning has enjoyed your dissertation and  
11 at this time, my friends, we wonder and we think about all of  
12 the sea voyages and naval battles which have shaped the face  
13 of the globe and changed the course of history, the voyages  
14 of Columbus and Magellan gave new dimensions to the little  
15 planet we live on. Some of the great sea battles of the past,  
16 Trafalgar, the Nile, Jutland, the Coral Sea, helped assure the  
17 development of the free world we live in today.

18 When an obsolete liner left the coast of Europe in  
19 1947 with 4500 displaced persons, illegally bound for Pale-  
20 stine, no one could foresee that this vagrant of the sea would  
21 change the course of Jewish history. No one could guess at  
22 the time it made a landfall off the coast of Palestine, a  
23 battered victim of the lost battle, that a world, shaken with  
24 revulsion, would act within a few short months to create the  
25 State of Israel.



1 The ship was the EXODUS, and the man who commanded  
2 her is here on the dais as our next speaker, Captain Itzhak  
3 Aronowicz.

4 This young man trained for his historic assignment  
5 as a seaman and an officer in Britain's wartime merchant  
6 marine. After the EXODUS he commanded many other ships flying  
7 the Israeli flag. Now he has given up the sea to complete  
8 his studies on port management in Columbia University's  
9 Graduate School of Business Administration.

10 I know you will give Captain Aronowicz a warm  
11 welcome. Captain Aronowicz. [Applause]

12 CAPTAIN ARONOWICZ: Friends: I think I couldn't  
13 start speaking today without giving some expression to the  
14 mixed feelings with which I came away last night. It was a  
15 feeling both of being privileged and of inadequacy. It is  
16 not that I am being privileged or feel privileged to speak  
17 here. That is the part of inadequacy. But I feel privileged  
18 for having heard two Jews yesterday who, in such different  
19 ways, gave expression to what this is all about.

20 The first, Mike Wallace, spoke about the achieve-  
21 ments, about the positive and optimistic side of Israel. And  
22 I think that this is the side that makes converts. And I  
23 think that it is right that not an Israeli should speak about  
24 this, although I would have loved to speak about this. Instead  
25 I was asked to speak about an old story, which, on first sight,



1 seems to be not at all connected with our problems today. I  
2 think that we Israelis sometimes are so involved in what we  
3 are doing that we don't realize that this is but a link in  
4 a chain. And Dr. Avram Sachar yesterday gave expression  
5 better than most Israelis could to this fact.

6 To us it takes sometimes an event such as the  
7 capture of Eichmann to realize what this is all about. And  
8 then I was privileged to hear about a story that I knew, but  
9 to hear about it in a factual way from Mr. Leavitt today.  
10 I have met the Jewish Distribution Committee people during  
11 the years in various places, but to hear again what is left  
12 to do and what is being done every day, not in a dramatic  
13 way, to me this is a privilege, too.

14 The story that I am about to tell I won't be able  
15 to tell it chronologically, because it is a long story, the  
16 story of the ship EXODUS. By the way, I don't want you to  
17 identify the facts and the people that I talk about from a  
18 book you have all read, I assume. Leon Uris had to combine  
19 and to modify certain facts and that is his privilege as a  
20 novelist, as long as the historic truth is preserved, and it  
21 is. And I think it is again by not a convert, there is no  
22 harm done. But still it is not easy for me to compete with  
23 this popular literary version and with Preminger's techni-  
24 color edition, which is imminent, and I ask you to bear with  
25 me. I am incapable to compete with these means of mass



1 communication. So with this handicap in mind, let me try  
2 and get under way.

3 It is thirteen years ago that we started out in  
4 this country, in the Port of Baltimore, with a Jewish-  
5 American volunteer crew and with an old ferry boat, a battered  
6 ship which was to become the EXODUS, and when I came in here  
7 and saw the picture, it brought again back to me very vividly  
8 this old story.

9 Since then the State of Israel has become a reality,  
10 the War of Liberation, the Sinai campaign, the years of  
11 incessant struggle, all these have put this story rightly in  
12 the background. To bring it up again, to focus again on that  
13 time today, we have to remember what we were fighting for in  
14 those times. At that time, we concentrated our fight around  
15 three objectives, which were all strictly forbidden by the  
16 book. The first one was to break open the gates of Palestine  
17 to Jewish immigration. And then our privilege to settle the  
18 empty lands. Also, this was forbidden. And then to build  
19 up our defenses for the Haganah. These three were the  
20 essentials of <sup>Aliyah</sup> Halhi, <sup>Haganah</sup> Hanah and <sup>Utyashvut</sup> Teshvut.

21 At that particular time, we concentrated our fight  
22 on the first of these three objectives, namely, Jewish  
23 immigration. We knew that in fighting for immigration, we  
24 wielded a weapon against which the British were helpless.  
25 Here we needed no military superiority. No British armies or



navies could deter those hundreds of thousands of Jews whose need to come back home was invincible. There was no navy in the world that could frighten the graduates of Auschwitz and Maidanek.

When I think of those days today, the thing that is most vivid in my mind is that fateful July morning when we were escorted by the British Navy into Haifa. It is this picture which brings it back to me here. To me that day, that moment was a moment of defeat. To me this was complete failure. What we had set out to do, to break the blockade, to defy the Navy and to land the people ashore, all this had failed. The subtle way in which this defeat turned into victory, a victory more far-reaching than we had ever hoped for, this is the story of the EXODUS in essence.

Up to that time there were scores of vessels which had run the blockade. They were all boarded by the British Marines and after a fight of resistance, they were put into concentration camps on Cyprus. There were only a few vessels, the very small ones which had gotten through undetected. But there had never been one ship which had broken the blockade openly and landed the people on shore. We on the EXODUS knew, we were convinced that we could do this. There were many good reasons for our belief. The first was that on that ship there had been gathered a crew of Jewish volunteers which was, by far, the best we had ever had. We had learned the



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1 techniques of the British on all the previous ships very care-  
2 fully, and we knew how to apply the lessons. And then there  
3 was the ship itself, which was, by far, the largest ship we  
4 ever had, although it looks to you not exactly like a ship,  
5 to us, this was the biggest we had. It had the best speed of  
6 any ship we had ever had, and it had a shallow draft, which  
7 allowed us to beach it in waters in which no British destroyers  
8 could follow us.

9 It also had a high superstructure which would enable  
10 us to keep off the British boarding parties within the short  
11 3-mile territorial stretch, stretch of territorial waters, where  
12 the British would attack the ships. They had never attacked  
13 a ship much further out than that because legally they would  
14 not be able to justify this.

15 We had prepared everything very carefully. Our  
16 plan was to beach the ship about a hundred yards off Tel-Aviv's  
17 coast in shallow water. Palmach, the fighting force of the  
18 Haganah, was to take over the roads leading into the town  
19 until our people would get off and get away.

20 On the ship we had prepared everything so that we  
21 could quickly debark the people. We had rubber rafts and  
22 lifelines. We had also prepared everything to hold the  
23 British off. We had such things as fire hoses connected to  
24 fuel lines with which we planned to pour hot fuel on the  
25 British. We had rigged our lifeboats and anchors and rafts



1 so that we could dump them onto any ship that could come close.  
2 We had also installed a spare steering device on the aft part  
3 of the ship in case the British would take the bridge. The  
4 bridge itself was fortified by sandbags against machine gun  
5 fire.

6 I know that this today sounds very naive, but you  
7 must understand that our means of resistance were limited to  
8 so-called passive means. We couldn't afford to have fire-  
9 arms. That would have given the British an excuse to sink  
10 the ship altogether.

11 But we must have been naive indeed. The British  
12 had been following us since Baltimore. And they knew that  
13 this ship indeed could break the blockade. And they decided  
14 that they must break illegal immigration once and for all  
15 with this ship.

16 They knew if we would succeed, there would be many  
17 others to follow and to improve. This decision of theirs of  
18 leaving aside legalities is what finally, I think, brought  
19 about their downfall. They had been following since Baltimore  
20 our ship and when we came to Europe, they were hounding us  
21 from port to port, from anchorage to anchorage. For four  
22 long months we tried to get away. What was worse, they  
23 achieved not to let any authority in Europe give us any fuel  
24 or any supplies. And even more serious, we couldn't hope  
25 anywhere to embark 4500 people before we would be found out



1 and prevented from sailing.

2 To make a long and weary story short, we finally  
3 managed to get away and to slip into the port of Marseilles  
4 in Southern France, and we were now racing against time to  
5 embark these people and to get out.

6 Late in the morning after we had embarked all the  
7 passengers, a French boarding party came aboard and arrested  
8 the ship. We soon found out what the circumstances were. At  
9 that time there was a conference held in Paris dealing with  
10 the Marshall Plan and such people as Bevin and Ramadier and  
11 Bidaut and distinct leaders were present. Bevin, who had  
12 followed the ship from Baltimore very carefully, found out  
13 by our being in Marseilles, and he threatened to walk out of  
14 the conference unless the French would immediately arrest us.

15 The French had to give in, although they didn't like  
16 it. They were now preparing to get the people off by force.  
17 We were moored inside the harbor in a place from which it  
18 would be almost impossible to get away without pilot and tug-  
19 boat, and really we didn't see much hope. I remember when  
20 my people asked me if I can get the ship out of there, I didn't  
21 know what to answer, since I had never taken a ship from  
22 anywhere without a pilot. My experience was limited to some  
23 six years at the time. I had never had a command. And this  
24 may look very wild to you today, that I was entrusted with  
25 this kind of a job, but we simply had no other people to do



1 this job. We didn't have captains with experience. I think  
2 at that time, like in many other cases later, the fact that  
3 we didn't know enough to be careful helped us to win out.

4 [Applause]

5 I may only add, if I were asked today if that  
6 was possible, I would have flatly said, "No." In any case,  
7 I won't bother you with the way we got out of there. We cut  
8 the mooring lines and we got the Frenchmen drunk and we sailed.  
9 Not before we beached the ship once and rammed the breakwater,  
10 etc.

11 Once we were out at sea, we were immediately escorted  
12 by six British destroyers and by the cruiser AJAX, which is  
13 so well-known for the Graf Spee battle, and which now was  
14 preparing for a different kind of battle. These ships kept  
15 with us til Haifa.

16 Again I must cut short the story of the voyage.  
17 We sailed along the African coast and on the sixth night we  
18 cleared the entrance of the Suez Canal. We planned to come  
19 up on the Palestine coast at a distance of about 10 miles,  
20 at which we were convinced that nobody would dare to attack,  
21 and to beach the ship at Tel-Aviv, as I told you.

22 The merchant ships that saw us at sea were all  
23 bewildered at this strange sight of a ferryboat which would  
24 not be seen anywhere at sea in normal times at all, surrounded  
25 by this magnificent task force of the British Navy.



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1 On this night we were all very tense. We planned  
2 to beach the ship the next morning at nine o'clock when there  
3 would be plenty of swimmers on the beaches, so our people  
4 could intermingle, so that they wouldn't be able to identify  
5 them later.

6 On this night we also got our last instructions,  
7 and we were renamed. The PRESIDENT WARFIELD of Baltimore  
8 became the EXODUS 1947.

9 At one in the morning, Bill Bernstein, the maiden  
10 watch, was with me on the bridge. Bill Mann from Boston was  
11 on the wheel and Abe Siegel from New York was on the look-  
12 out.

13 Suddenly, the blacked out destroyers put on their  
14 powerful blue searchlights and the loudspeakers they had  
15 blared out the message that we were now entering the territorial  
16 waters of Palestine. We were at that time not far from Egypt,  
17 about 41 miles away from the coast. They indeed must have  
18 had good navigators. They didn't give us much warning. They  
19 started to machine gun our bridge and two destroyers now  
20 closed in on us. They rammed us from either side and Marines  
21 swung on board our ship from ropes from their mast. They  
22 stormed into the wheelhouse, armed with guns and clubs and  
23 tear gas bombs, and they threw us out of there, and before we  
24 had time to think about what had happened.

25 We really didn't expect this until many hours later.



1 Bill Bernstein was clubbed over the head. He tried again to  
2 break in, but he was again thrown out. We had to carry him  
3 into my cabin where he died a day later of brain concussion.

4 Meanwhile, our fighting squads, most of them boys  
5 of 14 to 18, had come out on deck and the real fight began.  
6 The destroyers kept on ramming us for hours. They did it  
7 in pairs. Every time they rammed us, they landed a few  
8 Marines on board, most of whom we threw overboard. Those  
9 that stayed had to barricade themselves in our cabins.

10 The Marines in the wheelhouse were barricaded in-  
11 side, but they didn't dare to come out. They shot at anybody  
12 who tried to come in. Bill Mann was shot through his jaw.  
13 This fight went on for hours. The destroyers also didn't get  
14 off with nothing. They were badly damaged. Their holds  
15 were filled with Marines. Their superstructures were covered  
16 with fuel oil.

17 By the morning we had scores of wounded. Three of  
18 these later died. One was a boy of 14 who had been shot  
19 through his lungs. Many of our wounded would survive only if  
20 they were brought ashore quickly. We now received instructions  
21 or orders from Haganaah to call for a truce. This to us was  
22 a bitter pill to swallow. We knew that we could carry on  
23 for a long time. We had transferred our steering gear to the  
24 aft steering wheel, and we were navigating the ship in full  
25 command, although our wheelhouse was filled with Marines. But



we had to give in. A boarding party was now allowed to come aboard and to take over the wheelhouse, and to escort us into Haifa. The Port of Haifa was filled with tanks and soldiers, when we came along the pier, and we noticed a few civilians who turned out to be the United Nations Special Commission of Palestine. There were such people there as Granados and Fabricant and Saandstrom. These distinguished people were sent to Palestine by the United Nations to investigate the question of Palestine. I think that what they saw there gave them a good idea of what the question was about.

I shall never forget this moment. Our upper decks were crowded with thousands of immigrants. Someone started a song, and soon all the thousands joined in. They were singing the song of the Jewish partisans in the forests of Poland. The first line of the song goes:

Do not say this is our last road.  
We shall yet return.

The people were now dragged off the ship forcibly and put on to three British deportation ships, which were to take them to Cyprus. It was announced that the next morning they would arrive in Cyprus.

But these ships never arrived there. The British had decided to break this attempt for the last time. They decided to carry it to the bitter end. For six days the world did not know where the ships were. Finally, some



1 newspapermen who had chartered a plane, spotted them as they  
2 approached France. The British now went to the Port of  
3 Marseilles and anchored the ships there. They now put pres-  
4 sure on the French to get the people off in the same country  
5 that they had embarked.

6 In the meantime, world opinion became a pressure  
7 not less strong than the British. The French agreed only  
8 that anybody who would come ashore voluntarily could come  
9 into France. In addition, they tried to persuade people by  
10 giving a promise that anybody who would come ashore would  
11 be given French citizenship.

12 I don't know today if you realize what it meant to  
13 a DP in 1947 to be a French citizen. I think that now was  
14 the time that the real heroes of the EXODUS played their role.  
15 These ships were anchored for five weeks off the port. It  
16 was one of the hottest summers in Europe. Men and women and  
17 children were caged in the hold. The British used every  
18 means of terror and of persuasion to get them off. And they  
19 didn't budge. These people were not soldiers. They were  
20 simple civilians who had gone through hell already. Many of  
21 them were pregnant. In fact, we had kept back most of the  
22 pregnant women to put on to this ship because it was more  
23 comfortable than the others we had had. We did not figure  
24 that the voyage back would take another two months. There  
25 were 41 births on the deportation ships. This sounds



1 unbelievable, but this was a fact.

2 After four weeks a hunger strike broke out and  
3 this the British couldn't take any more. They heaved up  
4 their anchors and they sailed again. Again destination  
5 unknown. They cleared Gibraltar. They passed through the  
6 English Channel, and finally it dawned on the world that they  
7 were bound for Germany. The world press was in an uproar.  
8 The ships docked in Hamburg and British occupation forces  
9 again dragged the people off with Germans looking on indif-  
10 ferently and probably wondering who had come to finish the  
11 job which they hadn't had time to finish.

12 Bevin had carried his decision to a stupid and  
13 cruel end and it boomeranged. Two months after landing in  
14 Germany, the United Nations on November 29, 1947, decided to  
15 establish a Jewish state in Palestine. I think that whoever  
16 named this ship EXODUS must have been possessed of a sense of  
17 prophecy.

18 The second Book of Moses, EXODUS, tells the story  
19 of the emergence of our people from slavery to freedom. The  
20 sequence of that story was the covenant of the people and the  
21 conquest of the land of Israel and the birth of our nation.  
22 The EXODUS 1947 was to be a prelude to a very similar story.  
23 The state and the fight for it was yet to come. We were not  
24 handed it on a silver platter. The War of Liberation justly  
25 put this story in the background, but I think that there can be



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1 no doubt that the vanguard in this struggle or maybe the  
2 unknown soldiers were those hundreds of thousands of Jews whose  
3 need to return home was invincible.

4 Since then the ship EXODUS has become a symbol for  
5 us in Israel, a symbol of the mass exodus of Jews to Israel,  
6 this exodus which was to be the midwife to our independence.  
7 I think it is not a mere coincidence that this ship was  
8 bought and outfitted by Jews from this country, that it was  
9 manned by a Jewish-American volunteer crew. These fellows,  
10 most of them, had not had any Zionist background. They were  
11 asked to do a job and they came out to do it. They felt that  
12 they were tied with bonds to Jews everywhere they fought and  
13 suffered.

14 I think that what Avram Sachar said yesterday, that  
15 this community gives only fat, is not exactly true. Bill  
16 Bernstein gave his life, the first life of an American in our  
17 struggle for independence. Since then our gates have been  
18 wide open. More than a million have returned. But our mission  
19 is not complete. Let us not forget that what we were fighting  
20 for in 1948 was not merely statehood. We fought for the end-  
21 ing of the suffering and the oppression of the Jewish people.  
22 We fought for the right of every Jew who so needed and wanted  
23 to come to Israel, to build it and to be rebuilt as a nation.

24 The problems that were with us in '48 are still  
25 very much the problems that we have today -- immigration;



1 settling the land, and building our defense force. There is  
2 no significant difference between the British fighting immi-  
3 gration and today's reality where modern Pharoahs are not  
4 letting our people go. There is no essential difference  
5 between the British fighting Haganah and today's embargo of  
6 the east and the west which enables Nasser to get plenty of  
7 what we cannot get. I have come across people who seem to  
8 think (I have come across them recently) that the response of  
9 Jews to our problems is a factual headline when there is a  
10 war or liberation or a Sinai battle, Sinai campaign or mass  
11 immigration, that is when some people think Jews will rally.

12 Some seem to think that today the problem revolves  
13 itself to the absorption of those Jews in Israel that are not  
14 yet absorbed. I think this is not true at all. I think Jews  
15 understand much more about what we are up to. I think that  
16 today we are facing in Israel the most decisive hour since  
17 our independence.

18 This may not seem so at first sight. The world  
19 which was going to relax until the Summit, and this Summit  
20 has in the meantime ended in a debacle, but that relaxation  
21 even at that time had not reached the Middle East. Khrushchev's  
22 only gesture at disarmament had been a mass dumping of arms  
23 in the countries of our neighbors. MIG's, MIG-19s, the latest  
24 type, submarines, tanks -- I am afraid I cannot agree on this  
25 point with Dr. Sachar. We do not have the first-class air



1 force or navy or army in this area, not as far as equipment  
2 is concerned. When they have the MIG-17, we got the Mystere.  
3 When the got the MIG-19, we are looking for what to get,  
4 and we don't know where we will get them. The situation in  
5 Israel today maybe it is not making headlines, but Sinai  
6 today is again an arsenal bristling with weapons. Sinai is  
7 one of the most fortified areas in this world. And what is  
8 more, Nasser has succeeded in solving many of his logistic  
9 problems of moving his forces to our border by building  
10 modern jet airfields and roads. The efficiency and the speed  
11 with which Nasser moved his armies to our border only two  
12 months ago (and you must have read about it in the papers),  
13 this is not what we faced in 1956. The Suez Canal is still  
14 blocked. The threat to block the Gulf of Eilat has not been  
15 removed. The Arab boycott is very efficient.

16 Facing this strategy of strangulation, we cannot  
17 but give up economic means that should have been sacred to  
18 the absorption of Jews in this hated race. We know we can  
19 lick any attack today, but we must keep this deterrent  
20 strength in case Nasser might make a mistake in thinking that  
21 he could succeed.

22 We wish to avoid nothing more than an attack, even  
23 one from which we will emerge victoriously. Wars have  
24 created more problems than they have solved, even for those  
25 who are victorious. And there is yet another problem which



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1 seems perhaps less imminent, the problem of a hypocritical  
2 peace offensive. Our country has been divided twice, once  
3 in 1920, when the British created Trans-Jordan, and took  
4 away three-fourths of the area that was delimited by the  
5 Balfour Declaration. A second time was by the United Nations  
6 in 1948, a situation which our neighbors rejected. We have  
7 accepted this verdict. We know that we can make place for all  
8 the Jews that will come in this little area, but most of this  
9 area is still empty. The Negev is still an empty vacuum. The  
10 Galilee, the Western Galilee, is only sparsely settled, mostly  
11 by Arabs. These vacuums call for Nasser to fill them. He will  
12 try by attack, if he thinks he has a chance, and he will try  
13 by pressure at the peace table if he thinks he has a chance  
14 this way. Any retreat on our part will only be followed by  
15 more blackmail. We can't afford to give up an inch. This  
16 area has been given into our guardianship for those who will  
17 come. The only guarantees against this threat is to fill  
18 these vacuums quickly, to fill them with settlements. In our  
19 modern short history settlements, such as Telkai and Negbar,  
20 have always proved much more effective than armies. We must  
21 fill these vacuums and fill them fast. We must fill them  
22 and build settlements for those Jews who are yet to come and  
23 those who are today in transit camps.

24 This we cannot achieve alone. For this we need  
25 the help of all the Jewish people. I know that you know our



1 situation, and I don't say anything new here. But if we try  
2 and draw up a balance sheet on how we stand, we will see  
3 soon that we are outnumbered 40 to 1. In area we are 5000 to  
4 1. In arms, their arsenals are filled to the saturation point.  
5 They don't know what to do with their arms. They don't have  
6 the people even to handle them. Geopolitically, the East and  
7 the West and the neutral countries all vie for Nasser's  
8 graces. There is only one area in which we have superiority.  
9 There is only one source of strength. And that is the human  
10 element. That is the social climate which we have created  
11 in Israel, giving every newcomer the feeling that he is one  
12 of us, that he can contribute, that he can give as much as  
13 everybody gave before. Every newcomer from Iraq or Morocco  
14 or Iran or Poland or seventy other countries must have this  
15 feeling.

16 I don't want to tell you about the transit camps  
17 and about the settlements that are still not self-sufficient.  
18 You know this. I think the main issue here is that we cannot  
19 afford to have this second-class Israel. It is more than  
20 only a human material, we cannot afford to have transit camps,  
21 to have all these social ills which are a product of this kind  
22 of existence. If we fail in this, we lose our only source of  
23 strength that we have. These are then the issues, the security  
24 issues, the political issues, these we in Israel have to solve  
25 ourselves as well as we can, knowing that we are not alone in  
ourselves



1 this. The issue of giving the people that come there first  
2 elementary needs, this is one that we cannot do ourselves.  
3 These people don't need charity, they need to be given the  
4 means to stand on their own legs. We have to help them to  
5 take this last step to self-sufficiency. It is said today  
6 that there is less immigration and this may be true. Some-  
7 thing has been said about it by Mr. Leavitt.

8 Let me tell you there has been illegal immigration  
9 in the days of the British. There is also something called  
10 illegal immigration, and I won't talk about it. The Curtain  
11 today is open only a crack, but it will rise I have had the  
12 opportunity of being in Rumania and of bringing immigrants from  
13 there, and I saw the way in which they sorted out the immi-  
14 grants on the key, where my ship was lying. Part was allowed  
15 to go on board and part was sent back. I am sure they will  
16 come.

17 I have also been in Odessa and I have spoken and  
18 seen Jews there. To me this has been the most heartrendering  
19 experience that I have had. There is no more unstable diaspora  
20 or exile or what you want to call it, than that, and I am  
21 sure these will also come.

22 The Curtain will rise. The fact that it is not open  
23 today, this is not a lack of issue. To us this in itself is  
24 the most bitter issue. Until then we must prepare ourselves  
25 and you must help us to wipe out the bitter backlog of those



1 Jews that are not as yet absorbed and that are in Israel today.  
2 And let me wind up with one thought. Not long ago a book  
3 was written, EXODUS. I don't wish to indulge in speaking  
4 about the book. I am not a literary critic. What I want so  
5 speak about is something that to me meant far more than the  
6 book, and I was witnessing it yesterday again, when Mike  
7 Wallace spoke. And that is the mass upsurge of the Jews in  
8 this country, that mass identification as a result of this  
9 book, this unequalled curiosity about what we are doing, even  
10 on the part of those who never cared before. To me this was  
11 an eye-opener. I think we Israelis must have failed you  
12 and ourselves miserably to carry this message to you until  
13 it came from your own midst. We in Israel know all these  
14 years about your selfless help, and it is not true that we  
15 are not grateful. But I think we have to change our idea, at  
16 least this is what I feel. To me this is not only help, to  
17 me it is a complete identification with what we are doing.

18 We have lost in our time a great part of our nation,  
19 the wonderful European civilization, and the Eichmann capture  
20 has brought back very poignantly. We in Israel felt for a  
21 long time that we were orphaned. We felt that we were left  
22 alone. But I think that this, what I might call, EXODUS  
23 fever to me proves more than anything else that the Jewish  
24 people are very much alike. What you have been doing here for  
25 years to me is not merely philanthropy, however noble



philanthropy it might be. To me it is a complete identification of rebuilding the Jewish nation, of carrying the burden together, and I am sure that you will carry this burden together with us as long as it will be. [Applause]

MR. DUBINSKY: Wonderful!

Ladies and gentlemen, we have gathered together this short week-end, this Father's Day week-end. The time has passed very fast. I have sat here today and last evening and I tried to analyze what we have had in the past few hours. We had an intellectual approach to our problem that was given by Dr. Sachar. We had human interest stories that relate themselves to our problems by Mike Wallace. We had a dramatic skit last night with all of its implications. We had a factual report given by Moses Leavitt this morning. We had an emotional story of the EXODUS told by Captain Aronowicz, and I must say Captain Aronowicz, at this time, I know you are a very humble man, and know that when the history of the creation of Israel is written, there will be many chapters devoted to your contribution to the history that you helped make, not only through the EXODUS, but many other feats in the past years. I know you are a symbol, really you are humble, but you are a symbol of the spirit of the people of Israel today. This is what is important to us as Americans, and this is why we feel humble in your presence, and I feel you deserve another round of applause for your stirring



1 message. [Applause]

2 We have had all of this for the last two sessions.  
3 And we are about to leave by train and by plane for our  
4 respective homes. I think we must go home with some sort of  
5 a combined message and here is what I have to say to you.

6 Aside from merely expressing our appreciation  
7 you and I together share in knowing that we have reached a  
8 total for the first half year of \$33,150,000. You know there  
9 is a certain amount of glory in fund-raising that takes place  
10 in the spring, and 80 per cent of our campaigns are concluded  
11 by June 1st. We have done very well in the first 80 per cent  
12 of the funds that were raised, this year, in this country.  
13 There is glory, there is excitement, in fund-raising. But I  
14 must say to you who are here today, there is a certain satis-  
15 faction that we derive together, all of us, in converting the  
16 pledges that were made in the spring to cash. You have acted  
17 nobly. You have been the instrumentality for converting  
18 pledges into cash to the tune of \$33,150,000. I must say to  
19 you who are here this morning, let's not rest on our glory.  
20 Our job is just half finished, half done, and I must say to  
21 you the first half is always the easiest. We have another six  
22 months to go.

23 It is important, it is very important to all of us  
24 that you go back to your communities, many of you who haven't  
25 actually really gotten your teeth into the technique of creating



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1 cash collection committees within your community, appoint a  
2 good, stalwart as a chairman of this effort. Give him the  
3 best support that you have, so that he in the coming months  
4 and his committee respectively can convert the pledges that  
5 we have succeeded in obtaining in the spring months into  
6 cash, so that for the next sixth months by putting our shoul-  
7 ders to the wheel together, whether you are on the East  
8 Coast, West Coast, North or South, it makes no difference,  
9 let's put our shoulders to the wheel and give this thing a  
10 shove and if we shove together and we pull together and we  
11 push together, I can assure you who are here today, to whom  
12 I am eternally grateful, if we will do this together, we will  
13 succeed in our second half cash drive and raise thirty-three,  
14 thirty-four, thirty-five million dollars that is still out-  
15 standing, that must be collected this coming year.

16 Again I say in behalf of all the officers of the  
17 United Jewish Appeal: Thank you for giving us this week-end,  
18 especially the Father's Day week-end. You have been a wonder-  
19 ful audience. You have been very receptive. You have been  
20 very kind. God bless you and a pleasant journey home.

21 [Whereupon, at 11:15 o'clock a.m., the meeting  
22 adjourned.]  
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