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Summer Institutes [Aspen, Colo.]. Miscellaneous Wexner
Heritage Foundation events. 1988.

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CONCLUDING SPEECH

SUMMER INSTITUTE, CAESAREA

July 15, 1988

by Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman

PROLOGUE

"And it came to pass after the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed, and the mountain in the south was conquered, and Akiba was flayed in Caesarea, that the chosen of the Lord were scattered over the waters and the continents of the whole earth. And they lived among many peoples for many centuries, so that no man really knew what would be their fate. God was silent, and there was no prophet who heard His voice, so there was no message nor help. The people whom he had brought out millenia before, carefully celebrated the exodus from Egypt, but they were uncertain whether the Brit still existed.

Twenty centuries after the Temple burned, there were other fires on earth, strange fires such as those glowing in the belly of the idol Moloch who swallowed live babies; strange fires which turned into ash the millions trapped by the vile unspeakable evil which was not resisted until it was too late.

And after these fires died down and the winds blew away the ash, God was still silent, and His people were silent in their sorrow and shock for they could not understand why they were so punished.

Then suddenly there came a great thunder, louder than had ever been upon the earth since it was created, accompanied by a huge colossal cloud that seemed to climb to heaven itself, and staggering waves of shock which tore down buildings, and scalding rays and steam and stones and glass rained down upon the people who died in their multitudes, in their places. It seemed as though a mysterious curse was now unleashed upon mankind for the unspeakable crime against God's people.

Somehow that people summoned its will, breathed strength into its sinews, charged its heart with courage and gathered itself to its land, once again to renew the covenant with its Rock and destiny. The songbirds perched on the trees bearing fruit, as sturdy men and women repopulated the waste places, tended the flocks and planted the grain. The enemies came - as did drought and locusts and hot desert winds. But slowly year after year the land flourished and the people taught their children that even though God was still silent, nonetheless He seemed to be sending a message through the very land itself which nourished the people into renewed strength and sovereignty.

Thus endeth the tale of the wanderings in the Diaspora and the Holocaust and the atomic explosion and the Return, and thus begins the story of the new era, now centered for the first time in two foci -- the ancient land, holiest of all places, as well as the new utopia across the seas."

SUMMER INSTITUTE THEME

The Problematics of Nationhood - An Analysis of Some
Major Issues Challenging Israel's Development

WHAT DID WE DO?

1. STUDIED JOSHUA AND JERUSALEM; chased Saul and David.
This is to underline the basic position of the Bible as the bedrock of Jewish knowledge.
2. STUDIED SOME HEBREW
This, to underscore the importance of your learning it. Each person on his own initiative, or in groups, must continue until you master it.
3. STUDIED SOME TEXTS, RELATED TO ISSUES
This is to get you into that habit. Reread them; always use that system with any person who teaches you. Demand original sources.
4. MADE SOME TRIPS
 - A. WEST BANK
 - a. Saw two towns in West Bank - Efrat and Ariel

B. ARAB TRIANGLE - two towns

- a. Is there discrimination? Should these citizens be treated better?
- b. Are they loyal to their citizenship, while sympathizing with their fellow Palestinians?

C. LAW SCHOOL

- a. To learn about the Constitution.

5. TALKED WITH SOME PEOPLE

Listened to many ideas and opinions - from secular left to ultra-religious right. You got an excellent spectrum - the best I have ever organized in 35 years of administrative authority.

| | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Amos Elon | Tom Friedman |
| Ezer Weizmann | David Hartman |
| Abba Eban | Avi Ravitsky |
| Meron Benvenisti | Eliezer Waldman |
| Uzi Landau | |

To say nothing of your faculty: Uri Simon

Pinhas Peli

Shlomo Riskin

Haim Shaked

The Hartman Fellows

Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman

Rabbi David Rosen

Rabbi Jonathan Porath

6. JUDEA AND SAMARIA

This, of course, is the major problem -and the most emotional, as well as complex. The Israelis must decide it in the upcoming 3 months. So must you. Let me try to put the problem into some sort of rubric, for the sake of helping to decide.

SHOULD WE AGREE TO A PALESTINIAN STATE OR NOT?

- A. If not, the consequences are:
1. continuation of military occupation
 2. continuation of intifada, possibly in escalated form
 3. expansion of Jewish settlements, as funds are available
 4. creeping annexation
 5. maintenance of two sets of laws in territory, as Barak explained
 6. expansion of Arab population
 7. demography, democracy and Jewish character of Israel all will demand a decision, later if not sooner - because status quo cannot be permanent.

B. If yes, the consequences:

1. Israel must decide some policies (examples below), before going into negotiations:
 - a. Security matters
 1. demilitarization
 2. radar on high ground to detect infractions
 - b. Boundaries
 - c. Rights for Jewish settlers who wish to remain
 - d. Sale of evacuated properties of those who wish to leave
2. Israel must decide:
 - a. with whom it will meet
 - b. whom it will invite as guests
(e.g. Camp David was signed in U.S., with American president as witness and guarantor)

7. SPEAKING OUT

- A. Dissent is not disloyalty
- B. As for speaking out publicly, do not be afraid that you are weakening Israel, or revealing to a Congressman that there is a difference of opinion. He knows there is a split opinion, inside Israel, so it's quite logical there should be the same in the Diaspora.

- C. Disagree with Israeli policies publicly, if you will, but under no circumstances defame Israel or attack Israeli politicians. That can hurt.

8. QUOTES

- A. George Shultz - "Too often people become convinced that only their dreams, or their causes, are legitimate, and they deny the rights of others." He said the Arab-Israeli conflict was a "competition between two national movements for sovereignty on one land"*, and he asserted that the conflict was "not a fault of one party or the other". Both sides must "lay aside prejudices, hatred and overblown dreams in favor of a negotiated settlement."
- B. OVADIA YOSEF, former Sephardic Chief Rabbi - speaking to the RCA (mostly graduates of YU) on "Territorial Concessions in the Light of Halacha" stated his belief that saving a life takes precedence over the commandment of settling the land of Israel. Just as one may call a doctor on Y.K. in order to save a life, so one may prevent the loss of life (through war or civil unrest) by giving up parts of Eretz Yisrael.

*Chaim Weizmann once said this was a conflict of "two rights, not one right and one wrong".

- C. RABBI AHARON SOLOVEITCHIK, brother of the famed Joseph S. in Boston, criticized orthodox leaders who were willing to make territorial concessions.
- D. RABBI AHARON LICHTENSTEIN, Joseph Soloveitchik's son-in-law, said to a group of Oz Veshalom and Netivot Shalom, that in a negotiated settlement it was inevitable that Israel must give up territory.

So - with all this disagreement among religious and political authorities, I certainly can understand the dilemma and confusion of many of you.

Do not be discouraged. Keep searching, thinking, and coming to a conclusion. That much, at least, you must do. Weigh, balance - but then decide. No fence sitting. Decide, and then attempt to persuade others.

EPILOGUE

"And it came to pass that after 40 years of sovereignty in the beautiful land of milk and honey, the children of Israel rested from the wars, gathered in their multitudes and their tribes, and prayed for a new Moses to lead them toward the future which Isaiah had prophesied so many centuries earlier when he said that the lion would lie down with the lamb.

The angel of the Lord then spoke through the clouds of confusion which had darkened the minds of the chiefs and priests and judges. The angel spoke in a clear voice so that every man and woman and child could hear and understand, saying:

"The children of Isaac and the children of Ishmael are both the children of Abraham. They shall dwell side by side in the Holy Land and no man shall lift his hand against another. Wise men shall sit at the gate and judge between them when there is a quarrel or case or an agreement to be reached.

Peace shall reign - peace with justice -

And when the angel finished, the still small voice of God could be heard, saying, - "Amen."

WEXNER HERITAGE FOUNDATION
Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman
Miami/ 1988-1989 Academic Year

Readings:

1. ORIM MAGAZINE
"The Politics of Covenantal Responsibility
Martin Buber & Hebrew Humanism"
by Paul Mendes-Flohr
pp. 7-21
2. Eugene Borowitz, Choices in Modern Jewish Thought
"The Challenge of Modernity & Judaism"
Chapter 1; pp. 3-26
3. Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman's Closing speech at Wexner
Heritage Foundation Summer Institute
at Caesarea, Israel.
4. The Jerusalem Post, "The Challenge of Leadership"
A speech by Shimon Peres; July 1987
5. Leadership Issues
6. Leadership Characteristics

HISTORY

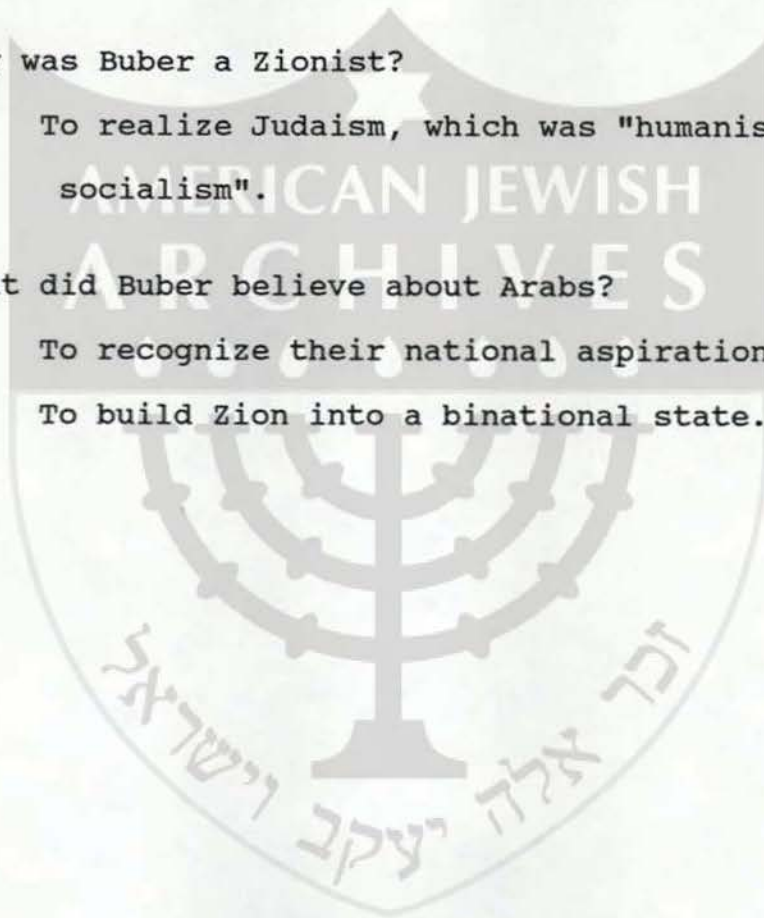
THOUGHT

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION - HISTORY

1. What is the purpose of learning history?
 - A. a) To feel bound to one's Volk.
 - b) Judaism is a community of faith -
Thus, more than a nation.

2. Why was Buber a Zionist?
 - A. To realize Judaism, which was "humanist socialism".

3. What did Buber believe about Arabs?
 - A. To recognize their national aspirations.
To build Zion into a binational state.



QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION - THOUGHT

Modernity is an Item in Thought

1. What was advantage of Emancipation?
 - A. Freedom and end to degradation.

2. What was disadvantage?
 - A. Loss of sure sense of self-identity.

3. What reforms became inevitable?
 - A. Religious worship
Education
General life style

4. When did community re-accept itself?
 - a. After WW II - diminution of anti-semitism
economic rise

5. When did self-conscious Jewish ethnicity develop?
 - A. After Six-Day War in Israel

6. How can one be modern an Jewish?
 - A. a) Come to terms with science.
 - b) Understand basic history as change.
 - c) Realize that democracy means people determine the social order in which they live.
 - d) Culture brigs music, painting, drama into life.

Conclusion: This all means that being modern means adopting stands in opposition to God-given truths.

7. How did Moses Mendelsohn, the first notable modern Jew, reconcile the problem?

A. In his book Jerusalem, he says Judaism has no dogma and man is free in his religious belief, but regarding his religious behavior he is not free to change.

* A Jew should be modern in ideas and culture, while being observant of the law revealed at Mt. Sinai.



HAF SUGGESTIONS FOR MIAMI - 9/7/88

HAF SUGGESTIONS FOR INDIANAPOLIS - 9/14/88

1. Stress that this is introduction. Start with session dynamics - each person introduce self, ending with me.
2. Cultural Literacy
3. Elements
 - I. Inspiration - My autobiography
 - a) Bring reform movement into mainstream
 - b) Chaplaincy - DP period
 - c) Haganah
 - d) UJA
 - e) Move to Israel
 - f) Effort to build school
 - II. Preview of Curriculum - History and Thought
 - a) Buber article - history
 - b) Borowitz article - thought
 - III. Leadership
 - a) Priority issues
 - b) Characteristics

NL SUGGESTIONS FOR MIAMI - 9/7/88

NL SUGGESTIONS FOR INDIANAPOLIS - 9/14/88

1. Use Woocher's Sacred Survival as springboard - Jewish civil religion depends on history and community.
2. We want you to learn two things - history and thought - these two elements will help guarantee survival. Give preview of our 2 year curriculum.
3. Administer cultural literacy test.

