

MS-763, Box 72, Folder 4 Transcription

Friedman, Herbert A. United Jewish Appeal address to the Des  
Moines Jewish Community. [Des Moines, Iowa]. [phonograph].

1968.

M: Eleven April, 1968, Herbert A. Friedman, executive vice chairman of the United Jewish Appeal, addressing the Des Moines, Iowa community via telephone hookup. The presentation is already in progress.

HERBERT A. FRIEDMAN: -- gangs, the Fatah gangs operating today are large, skillful, trained, organized, and supplied very well with both money from all the Arab states, and material from all the communist states. There have been discovered in these various raids that have taken place in the last few weeks, Russian, Czech, and Chinese weapons of all sorts, up to and including large mortars, large mines, and artillery pieces. We are not talking [00:01:00] about a simple, small, amateur, guerilla operation. You're talking about a big movement. And the fighting is daily. There is no cessation. Let Dick Levitt tell you the story of what happened one of the days last week in the city of Hebron, when one of the fellows in the Young Leadership Movement, Herb Garon, the chairman, was standing there when

the shooting started, and two guys just fell dead right in front of him, right in front of his feet. Two Israelis.

There are some people who say that King Hussein is the most moderate, and that Jordan is the most moderate, and that therefore, some hope possibly can come for peace from the Jordanian side. Gentlemen, let me also disabuse you of that. It's pure wasted speculation for us to try to analyze whether Hussein [00:02:00] is moderate or whether he isn't moderate, whether Jordan would like to make peace or she wouldn't like to make peace. The fact is that she doesn't. Nor does any Arab country. And the further fact of the matter is, that no matter what he would like to do, I think the time has arrived when he, King Hussein, has no power to do anything, because I think he has lost control of Jordan. Israel government and army simply cannot sit back quietly and allow the country to be invaded, the roads to be cut, villages to be attacked, mines to be laid, people to be killed, and do nothing about it. Just because maybe there's the chance that world public opinion will be offended. [00:03:00] No government, no army, nobody in authority can stand for a situation like that. The people demand protection, and the only possibility that the

government and the army have is to try to offer that protection in the best way they know how, which is to try to prevent the guerilla attacks from happening in the first place, if possible. And if not, then to go and chase the guerillas in hot pursuit, back across the line to their bases, and blow up their bases if they can, and destroy their supplies and their ammunition.

The government and the army have decided on this policy of hot pursuit, and gentlemen, that's it. I think that we have to understand, with patience and with fortitude, that this [00:04:00] is going to be the order of the day for the next foreseeable future of time. And that's the main thing that I wanted to say to you here today. Our line is -- so you should understand it, have no misunderstandings about it -- in Israel, the mood of the people is one of tremendous courage, fortitude, patience, disregard for anything but the pragmatic factors of existence, and how to protect life and minimize casualties, and knowledge on their part, just as sure as shooting, that each day is going to bring its share of difficulties, and never mind, we're going to go on doing our daily business. Now, if that's the attitude in Israel -- and believe me, it is, and

if anything I'm under-describing it, because it's really quiet heroic, it's quite courageous, it's quite brilliant, [00:05:00] it's firm as a rock. If that's the posture, that's the attitude, that's the psychological and moral position in Israel, then it seems to me that there must be exactly that equivalent position of morale among the organized Jewish communities here in this United States. The thing that I am asking for is the same kind of backbone, the same kind of patience, the same kind of understanding of the historic period through which we're living, so that there should be no whining and no weeping and no complaining, and nobody saying how long can this go on, and how long do we have to give this kind of support, and how long can the Israelis live this way? Look, gentlemen, the Israelis don't question. Let's us not question it.

Now, there's one other thing that you have to remember. All of the time [00:06:00] that we're talking about death and shooting and guerillas and helicopters, and more shelling tomorrow, and kids sleeping in bomb shelters every night, while that's going on, the real purpose for which Israel was formed and established in the first place is

also going on. Namely, the saving of Jewish life. You and I here, in all of the affluence which we have in America, cannot impose the double burden on the Israelis. It's not moral, it's not fair, it's not just. And by the way, gentlemen, it's not even necessary, because we've got the money. It isn't even necessary to impose the double burden on them. They'll fight the war. We'll take the immigrants. That's the split in responsibility. Now, they can't pay one cent, they can't divert [00:07:00] one pound to anything other than the security needs. And your duty and my duty, and your responsibility and my responsibility, is to come in with a measure of support here which will take over the part of the job that we are supposed to do anyway. That's the glue to the matter. We're supposed to do it anyway, whether there were a war or not, which were soaking up all their resources.

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