



Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

Featuring collections from the Western Reserve Historical Society and
The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives

MS-4787: Abba Hillel Silver Papers, 1902-1989.

Series IV: Sermons, 1914-1963, undated.

Reel
166

Box
60

Folder
981

Fires in the Middle East, 1956.

Sunday Morning Service
The Temple
Cleveland, Ohio

November 4, 1956

"FIRES IN THE MIDDLE-EAST"

by

DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER

Things are moving so fast in the Middle East and in other parts of the world today that one's observation on them must of necessity be very tentative except, of course, as regards fundamentals. Usually, I am through with writing my address or sermon around ten or eleven o'clock Saturday night but I couldn't finish it this Saturday night. I was up till all hours of the morning listening in to the debate at the Special Assembly of the United Nations and at the Security Council, and was up again very early this morning to catch the latest news as I am sure many of you were.

The hour's a very fateful one fraught with tremendous possibilities for good or for evil, and the time calls for the wisest of statesmanship and the coolest of heads, and the greatest of devotion to the cause of humanity. I should like you this morning to weigh my comments, whatever I make, only in relation to the issues involved and not in relation to the present political campaign or to the candidates who are running for office. People have a way of doing it, of putting two and two together and getting sixteen. These issues which I am discussing this morning will be with us long after next Tuesday; and in Great Britain, and France, and Israel there are no elections at the moment, no election campaigns - and these are burning issues with their peoples, nevertheless. What we are discussing now are world issues which will have tremendous repercussions for many years to come, based on the manner in which these issues are finally resolved.

I have frequently, in the last few years, from this pulpit and from a hundred and one other platforms throughout the nation, discussed these issues and frequently found myself criticizing the present Administration or State Department in the handling of the Near East problems. In fact, I did so from this very pulpit, twice within the last month, and what has transpired during these last few tremendous and fateful days is, unfortunately, a complete validation of much of the criticism which I and others have felt constrained to make. The events proved to be the very consummation of the numerous acts of omission and commission on the part of our government and other governments against which we, and of course, many others warned.

And what has happened? Two closely co-related explosive situations, the Suez Canal seizure and the continuing Israeli insecurity finally blew up simultaneously. Israeli forces moved deep into the Sinai Peninsula in an effort to smash the nests and the centers of the commando raiders which for many months now have been invading Israeli territory and spreading terror and death among the inhabitants of the border settlements. These commandoes were launched under the authority and with the approval of the government of Egypt. The United Kingdom and France following an ultimatum to Israel and to Egypt, moved in, ostensibly to separate the Israeli and Egyptian fighting forces and keep them from endangering world shipping in the Suez Canal; but actually, to break dictator Nasser's grip upon the Canal which he seized illegally and imposed his sole control upon this most important international highway. In both of these cases, the continued Israeli insecurity and the threat to its existence, and the effort to restore international control over the Suez Canal, in both of these issues, the United Nations unfortunately has been pitifully ineffective. No sanctions were invoked against Nasser when he seized the Canal -- Nasser who never thought of appealing to the United Nations for permission to take over the Canal, but who is now appealing to the United Nations desperately to declare as aggressors those who are attempting to punish him for his acts of illegality.

In both cases our State Department, and here I should like to pause and say

that all Americans have been saddened by the news of the illness of Secretary of State Dulles and that we are all sincerely praying for his complete and speedy recovery. One may differ with him about policies; one never questioned his deep devotion to duty and his great patriotism. Unfortunately, our State Department in both of these tremendous issues which have now blown up into a global crisis, played a confused and blundering role which only served to strengthen the hand of the dictator and of Arab intransigence generally. It is, in my judgment, most fortunate that both of these actions took place almost simultaneously. It has been officially denied that this had been pre-arranged. I, of course, accept the official denials but I am glad that these purely coincidental events did take place coincidentally, for it gave Israel the opportunity to strike out at long last, to strike out at the ring of steel, which Nasser and his military allies had forged around Israel for its ultimate destruction.

I am happy that they succeeded, that these valiant fighters of Israel who had brought glory, not only to their country, but, in my judgment, to the whole free world -- that they succeeded in wiping out the centers of these mauraunders and fedayeen, ^{which had} ~~It should~~ cost many lives, and what is more important for the whole free world, that Israel was now able to smash the military might of this newest Hitler and practically to break his back -- the back of his infamous regime. The whole world will some day be grateful for the astounding military victories of ~~the~~ the Israeli forces which have now carried them to the shores of the Suez and have placed the whole Sinai Peninsula in their control.

It has been argued, before the Security Council, and before the Special Assembly of the United Nations, that these acts of the Israelis, of the United Kingdom and of France, constitute acts of aggression in violation of the Charter of the United Nations. Now, no one can justify aggression, but I asked myself what really is aggression and are all forms of self-defense -- and self-defense is permitted under the terms of the Charter -- are all forms of self-defense be branded aggression?

Suppose you had a home in a neighborhood where your neighbors were determined to make life unbearable for you, and suppose they beat^{up} your children, and tore up your garden, and smashed your windows, and you pleaded with them time and time again to desist. And suppose you had called in the police to protect you and the police were unable to protect you -- and suppose you heard that your hostile neighbors were now gathering material with which to burn down your house completely over your ears, and then an opportunity presented itself to you to pick out the strongest bully among your neighbors and to beat the daylight out of him and to break his power of further molestation, would you call this an act of aggression?

In his magnificent address before the Special Assembly of the United Nations last Thursday, Ambassador Eban, in an eloquent, dispassionate and supremely logical and effective manner catalogued the long series of belligerency on the part of Nasser by land and by sea, the endless series of raids and attacks and infiltration, the manner in which he was organizing military alliances against Israel and announcing to the world that his clear and certain purpose was to leap at the proper moment and strike and destroy Israel. What was expected of the people of Israel -- to sit there as clay-pigeons and to wait in helplessness until these threats were made good?

For eight long years Israel pleaded her case before the United Nations but nothing was done, nothing was done by the United Nations to put an end to these attacks which made life intolerable. Nothing was done by the United Nations to compel Nasser to permit Israeli shipping to pass through the Suez Canal, an international body of water which under the terms of basic international agreement was to be opened to the shipping of the whole world in times of peace or in times of war. Nothing was done to stop the boycotts which were organized by Egypt and all the Arab neighbors - continuing to this day against Israel, and nothing effective was done by other individual nations to help Israel. When Egypt obtained the staggering quantity of arms from Communist Russia, Czechoslovakia, nearly three hundred million dollars worth of the most modern tanks and Ilyushin bombers which could destroy the City of Tel Aviv in ten - fifteen minutes, and when the government

of Israel turned to our own government to enable it to procure - to purchase - not to obtain as a gift - to purchase defensive arms against this terrible threat and, if it had been done, if our government had the vision at that time to provide Israel with these arms, the wings of Nasser may have been clipped at that time, and his prestige in the whole Arab world may have sunk. We pleaded with our government, "nadan".

Surreptitiously our government said that it would intervene with other countries to provide Israel with some planes that it required. So Nasser continued with his plans and when he felt that the Suez Canal issue had been finally arranged to his complete satisfaction, he felt himself free now to move against Israel; and he completed just a few weeks ago a military alliance between Egypt, Jordan and Syria, and put their armies into one unitary command and they were getting ready for the slaughter. Egypt became the arsenal which provided weapons to all the Arab states. Nasser refused and refuses to this day to recognize the existence of Israel, but he has to recognize the existence of Israel now, naturally -- but I mean legally. The Armistice, he said, was no indication that Egypt had stopped its war on Israel. Now, under these circumstances, can one blame, really morally blame Israel for trying to put an end after eight years to this intolerable situation? ~~The United Nations~~ Can anyone blame Israel, that it finally determined to strike out for its survival!?

A very fine editorial appeared a day or two ago in The New York Times which cannot be accused, and I have never accused it of being Zionist at all, but the fact that these three nations, all bulwarks of freedom and democracy, and among our staunchest allies, should suddenly find themselves in the role of defendants, indicate that there is something wrong with this picture and there certainly is. The picture is warped because too little attention has been paid to two factors which once examined give a different aspect to the situation.

One of these factors is that however deplorable the military actions may be, they cannot be considered in a vacuum; rather, they must be viewed against their background as represented by the whole Middle Eastern situation and that back-

ground makes it plain, as President Eisenhower has pointed out, that they have been preceded by grave Egyptian provocations which threatened the national existence of Israel and imperiled the Suez life-line of Britain and France. If the military actions of Israel, Britain and France are violations of the United Nations Charter, then so are the prior actions of Egypt. There is thus involved in this case, the right of these nations to self-defense, a right recognized by the Charter. The United States, strong and rather distant from the scene, sees the remedy in moral and economic pressure which is preferable, but admittedly would take time. The question is whether hard-pressed Israel, and following the outbreak of hostilities, Britain and France could afford the time, they had decided that they could not and their judgment in matters of life or death for them merits consideration.

The other factor is that, except in the case of Korea, the United Nations has never been able to enforce its decision when flouted by dictator regimes - and that is especially true in the case of Israel. The United Nations created Israel, but when the new State was attacked by the Arab coalition, it had to fight alone, and subsequently ^{to} resist alone. Now, if there was a strong and powerful United Nations, which, after arriving at its decision, could enforce its decision, these things would not be happening in the world today. But the United Nations has never been permitted to become strong by the powerful nations which constitute its backbone.

It is most interesting to note the succession of steps which have taken place within the last few days in the Security Council and in the United Nations - the gradual shifting to a new point of view, to a new outlook, to a more promising and constructive program in relation to these matters on the part of the United Nations. The first step was taken by our government in the Security Council when a hard and almost brutal resolution was introduced, practically branding Israel as the aggressor; calling no attention at all to the provocations which preceded it; calling upon the nations of the world to deny Israel all economic and financial assistance; in other words, to begin at once to impose punitive sanctions upon Israel and a resolution containing absolutely no recommendation for the future

— for a permanent settlement.

Mr. Walter Lippman, in a very brilliant editorial a few days ago, called attention to this amazing resolution which was introduced in the Security Council by our government. He writes, "when the Israeli army struck on Monday the President and his advisors decided quite rightly to take the affair to the United Nations, but there were two ways to taking it to the United Nations and they chose the wrong way. One way -- one was to seize the whole border problem, to recognize that it is a two-sided problem and to call for measures to restrain the Egyptian raids as well as the Israeli reprisals. The other way was the one which the President and Secretary Dulles took -- this was to ignore the Egyptian raids -- to treat Israel as the aggressor and Egypt as the innocent victim". This was a grave mistake of policy, indefensible in principle and in fact entirely unrealistic and impractical. It was indefensible to ignore and thus to condone the extreme provocations of the Egyptian raids.

The resolution which Mr. Lodge submitted to the United Nations would, had it been adopted, have guaranteed the Egyptians behind their frontier but not the Israelis behind theirs. It would have made the Egyptian territory a United Nations sanctuary to which the fedayeen, these commando raiders, could operate without fear of reprisal. Almost certainly the explanation of this policy decision is that those in authority did not realize what it meant; that there was a little panic in Washington and no cool deliberation.

Fortunately, the attitude of our government did not stop with this resolution. When this resolution was vetoed by the United Kingdom and France in the Security Council, the matter was referred, under the Unity of Peace Resolution of 1950 to the Assembly. Whenever the Security Council fails to act in cases involving a breach of the peace, it is possible by a motion in the Security Council upon which no veto can operate, to refer this matter to the whole Assembly and that was done. In the Security Council the United States introduced another resolution. In the meantime a period of cooling had taken place and the new United States resolution no longer placed sole responsibility on Israel. It called

attention to the frequent disregard of the terms of the Armistice by the parties, plural. It urges all parties to refrain from breaking the terms of the Armistice, and there is no reference to economic pressure upon Israel.

What happened? Well, cooler and wiser judgment prevailed between Tuesday and Thursday. The President of the United States spoke to the American people, and in his speech, ^{which was a} ~~with~~ noble utterance, a magnificent statement in my judgment, a new note was introduced. There was no bitterness in that speech, no recriminations, no charges. Here the head of our government saw the whole picture and even though he did not approve of what the Israelian, the United Kingdom and France had done, even though he felt that they had acted in error, ^{for} he believed that force is not wise for a proper instrument for a settlement, nevertheless, he was able to tell the American people the whole story. We have considered it a basic matter of United States policy to support the new State of Israel and at the same time to strengthen our bonds both with Israel and with the Arab countries. But unfortunately, through all these years, passion in the area threatened to prevail over peaceful purpose and in one form or another there has been almost continuous fighting.

This situation recently was aggravated by Egyptian policy including rearmament with Communist weapons. We felt this to be a misguided policy on the part of the government of Egypt. It was the first time that it was said by our government. The State of Israel, at the same time, felt increasing anxiety for its safety, and Great Britain and France feared more and more the Egyptian policies threatened their life-line of the Suez Canal. Well, that is a new approach to what took place. And so a third step was taken. Soon after this more generous and understanding resolution was introduced which was approved by the Assembly, which called for a cease-fire -- an immediate cease-fire -- and what nation could really vote against a cease-fire -- against the shedding of blood.

When that motion was adopted on Thursday evening - Friday morning as the ^{even} case may be, that motion was clearly understood/by those who voted for it as not being adequate. It called for a cease-fire but it did not touch the basic

causes which brought about this critical situation. And many of those who spoke in favor of the resolution, or some of those who refrained from voting, like Prime Minister of Canada, Lester B. Pearson, one of the wisest minds in the United Nations, pointed out forcefully to the Assembly that this isn't it, this won't solve the problem, this may be temporary patchwork -- in six months you will be going back to the same situation - unless you do something to remedy the basic causes.

And so last evening the fourth step was taken. A resolution was introduced again by the United States -- two resolutions really, which had in mind the long-range solution of the problem. A Committee was to be formed immediately, composed of five nations, which would make a thorough study of how to bring about peace in the Middle East, and to present their findings to the interested parties and to the Assembly and to the Security Council. And another Committee was to study how the Suez Canal issue could be solved fundamentally.

Here there is a real hope. Here our own State Department has come back to the classic highway of leadership in international affairs. No action has as yet been taken on these resolutions of the United States. Two other actions were taken early this morning -- one to send an international police force into the troubled area to maintain peace until final settlements are reached, and the other to make another appeal to the nations involved to comply with the Resolution of November 2nd for a cease-fire and withdrawal of forces.

My dear friends, Israel does not want war. Israel never wanted war. Hundreds of thousands of the present citizens of the State of Israel are refugees from war. They saw what happened to their families in war. All that they are interested in is to be permitted to build their country -- to live their lives in peace and security. Israel is not interested in obtaining territory from Egypt or from any of its neighbors. And it said so even before the smashing victory of a few days ago.

On Tuesday of this week, I was asked by someone in Washington whose request is almost a command, to get in touch with the Prime Minister of Israel, Mr. David

Ben Gurion, immediately, and to present to him the attitude of our Government as expressed in these resolutions. Now that the immediate objectives of smashing the fedayeen nests has been accomplished, to withdraw the Israeli forces. It took me some hours before I was able to establish communication by telephone with the Prime Minister. I presented these views as clearly as I could. The Prime Minister said, "I can't tell you everything over this telephone, the enemy is listening in but you will receive from me within the day a communication which will enable you to present to those who requested my views to you, our present views". In the meantime I requested the friends who asked me to do this service to restrain themselves from any sharp action or sharp words that may be spoken, because it had been announced that the President of the United States would be on the air Wednesday evening. This is the gist of the message which I received, and I, of course, promptly conveyed these messages -- these words to the proper sources.

The Prime Minister, after expressing the hope that the President will not regard Israel's present action as an impediment to the friendship between the United States and Israel; their friendship is among the most precious assets of the government and the people of Israel. Israel is deeply appreciative of the great political, spiritual and material assistance which she has received from the United States and well understands the measure in which her interests are bound up in the United States, and Israel will always be zealous in her efforts to strengthen her relations with the United States. Nasser frustrated a serious and supreme effort made this year by the President of the United States to bring peace to the region. It is clear that if Israel were to leave the area under discussion without Nasser having made an agreement of peace, he would organize his murder groups against Israel with increasing intensity, both from Egypt and from Arab countries, would strengthen his maritime blockade in the Suez Canal and in the Gulf of Akaba, would re-enforce his army, extend his hold on other Arab States with the aim of liquidating Israel.

The Prime Minister said in his communication to me, he is ready to propose to his government the withdrawal of Israeli forces, ~~if~~ (mind you, this was before

the great victory) - the Prime Minister was ready to propose to his government the withdrawal of Israeli forces if Nasser signs a clear undertaking ^{to} ~~of~~ abstaining from hostile acts against Israel, including undertakings for liquidating the fedayeen, abolishing the blockade in the Gulf of Aqaba and the Suez Canal, and abstaining from military alliances directed against Israel. The withdrawal of our forces from the area concerned without the signature of such undertaking by Nasser would be suicidal, especially since we have so far eliminated only some of the fedayeen nests. There was more to this communication, but this is the final thought -- in this fateful crisis for our region, the Prime Minister appeals to the government of the United States to study these developments from the view-point of possibilities of strengthening all those in the region who seek peace and stability. By adopting such an approach, the government will render an historic service to the peoples of the region and the Prime Minister hopes that the government will regard these developments from the view-point of the prospect of achieving permanent settlement of the area problem. Israel ^{was} ~~is~~ prepared to stop - to withdraw its forces - before it cleaned up Nasser's full army in the Sinai Peninsula, provided these simple, elementary precautions would be taken.

Personally, I am one who always believed in the United Nations, and I am hoping that this matter will finally be taken over and handled in a competent and decisive manner by the United Nations. The permanent security of Israel, my good friends, the permanent security of Israel, lies first of all in its own power of fighting for its defense, but even that is not enough. The permanent security of Israel - of all small nations, lies, in my judgment, in a United Nations, not in any momentary arrangements of convenience with this or that major power. At the moment we are working together with Great Britain. We may have trouble with Great Britain tomorrow, as we have time and again in the past. Time and again in the past we had great assistance from Great Britain. I may remind you that last Friday was the 39th Anniversary of the Balfour Declaration. Great Britain ^{has} ~~and~~ her own interest ~~is-served-~~ to serve in that part of the world and they are not always parallel or identical with the interests of the State of Israel.

The security of Israel lies in collective security and I am for one very much more concerned with maintaining and preserving the historic friendship between Israel and the United States than any other country.

Israel is growing strength - has been -- economic strength, financial strength, not only from the Jews of the United States, not only from the friendly non-Jewish citizens of the United States but all along - and the long view - from the government of the United States. The government of the United States helped to establish the State of Israel and was the first to recognize it. That friendship must not be impaired. It is in the interest of the whole world to strengthen the United Nations. Unfortunately, great powers turn to the United Nations only when their own purpose is served and when it is not, they ignore it or through veto power, as is the case with Russia at the moment, making it impossible for the Security Council to operate.

A new deal, my good friends, is called for. The Armistice arrangement in the Near East is outlived, is antiquated, has not produced peace, cannot be returned to. The peace settlement must now be insisted on. And if the moral pressure of the free world will finally come to realize how serious this problem is and how urgent it is, they can force the reluctant Arab governments to sit down around the conference table with the willing representatives of the Israeli government to talk over their common problems and to reach an agreement -- an agreement can be reached. There is nothing insurmountable. There are no problems that cannot be solved by a process of give and take and goodwill. And Israel wants it. Israel knows that it lives in the midst of an Arab world, and will continue to live in the midst of an Arab world and is seeking the friendliest opportunities for contact and cooperation, and upbuilding of the whole region through cooperation with the Arab neighbors.

And I hope that through the new insight and wisdom which have come to the leaders of the great governments as a result of this thing which has happened, constructive solutions, permanent solutions will now be sought which will do justice to Israel and justice to the Arab peoples, and which will bring about a condition

of peace and stability in that important section of the world where instability and continued conflict may bring about that which no one wants, which everyone craves.

I am hoping that out of this situation which is now developing, which will take some weeks, perhaps some months to develop, the United Nations will emerge tested by the fires of the moment, strengthened and empowered to serve the cause of humanity in the interest of peace.



Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver

FIRES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Things are moving so fast in the Middle East and in other parts of the world today that one's observation on them must of necessity be very tentative except, of course, if it guards fundamentals. Usually, I am through with writing my address or sermon around ten or eleven o'clock Saturday night but I couldn't finish it this Saturday night. I was up till all hours of the morning listening in to the debate at the Special Assembly of the United Nations and at the Security Council, and was up again very early this morning to catch the latest news as I am sure many of you were.

The hour's a very fateful one fraught with tremendous possibilities for good or for evil, and the time calls for the wisest of statesmanship and the coolest of heads, and the greatest of devotion to the cause of humanity. I should like you this morning to weigh my comments, whatever I make, only in relation to the issues involved and not in relation to the present political campaign or to the candidates who are running for office. People have a way of doing it, of putting two and two together and getting sixteen. These issues which I am discussing this morning will be with us long after next Tuesday; and in Great Britain, and France, and Israel there are no elections at the moment, no election campaigns - and these are burning issues with their peoples. Nevertheless, what we are discussing now are world issues which will have tremendous repercussions for many years to come, based on the manner in which these issues are finally resolved.

I have frequently, in the last few years, from this pulpit and from one hundred and one other platforms throughout the nation, discussed these issues and frequently found myself criticizing the present Administration or State Department in the handling of the Near East problems. In fact, I did so from this

very pulpit within the last month and what has transpired during these last few tremendous and fateful days is, unfortunately, a complete validation of much of the criticism which I and others have felt constrained to make. The events proved to be the very consummation of the numerous acts of omission and commission on the part of our government and other governments against ^{which} we and, of course, many others warned.

And what has happened? Two closely co-related explosive situations, the Suez Canal seizure and the continuing Israeli insecurity finally blew up simultaneously. Israeli forces moved deep into the Sinai Peninsula in an effort to smash the nests and the centers of the commando raiders which for many months now have been invading Israeli territory and spreading terror and death among the inhabitants of the border settlements. These commandos were launched under the authority and with the approval of the government of Egypt. The United Kingdom and France following an ultimatum to Israel and to Egypt, moved in ostensibly to separate the Israeli and Egyptian fighting forces and keep them from endangering world shipping in the Suez Canal. But, actually to break Dictator Nasser's grip upon the Canal which he seized illegally and imposed his sole control upon this most important international highway. In both of these cases, the continued Israeli insecurity and the threat to its existence, and the effort to restore international control over the Suez Canal, in both of these issues, the United Nations unfortunately has been pitifully ineffective. No sanctions were invoked against Nasser when he seized the Canal--Nasser who never thought of appealing to the United Nations for permission to take over the Canal, but who is now appealing to the United Nations desperately to declare as aggressors those who are attempting to punish him for his acts of illegality.

In both cases our State Department and here I should like to pause and say that all Americans have been saddened by the news of the illness of Secretary of State Dulles and that we are all sincerely praying for his complete and

speedy recovery. One may differ with him about policies; one never questioned his deep devotion to duty and his great patriotism. Unfortunately, our State Department in both of these tremendous issues which have now blown up into a global crisis, played a confused and blundering role which only served to strengthen the hand of the Dictator and of Arab generally. It is, in my judgment, most fortunate that both of these actions took place almost simultaneously. It has been officially denied that this has been pre-arranged. I, of course, accept the official denials but I am glad that these purely coincidental events did take place coincidentally for it gave Israel the opportunity to strike out at long last, to strike out at the ring of steel which Hasser and his military allies had forged around Israel for its ultimate destruction.

I am happy that they succeeded, that these valiant fighters of Israel who had brought glory not only to their country but, in my judgment, to the whole free world, that they succeeded in wiping out the centers of these marauders and fedayeen. It should cost many lives and what is more important for the whole free world, that Israel was now able to smash the military might of this newest Hitler and practically to break his back - the back of his infamous regime. The whole world will one day be grateful for the astounding military victories of the Israeli forces which have now carried them to the shores of the Suez and have placed the whole Sinai Peninsula in their control.

It has been argued before the Security Council, before the Special Assembly of the United Nations, that these acts of the Israelis, of the United Kingdom and of France constitute acts of aggression in violation of the Charter of the United Nations. Now, no one can justify aggression, but I asked myself what really is aggression and are all forms of self-defense - and self-defense is permitted under the terms of the Charter - and all forms of self-defense, be branded aggression. Suppose you had a home in a neighborhood where your neighbors were determined to make life unbearable for you, and suppose they beat up your children and tore up your

garden, and smashed your windows, and you pleaded with them time and time again to desist. And suppose you had called in the police to protect you and the police were unable to protect you -- and suppose you heard that your hostile neighbors were now gathering material with which to burn down your house completely over your ears, and then an opportunity presented itself to you to pick out the strongest bully among your neighbors and to beat the daylight out of him and to break his power of further molestation, would you call this an act of aggression?

In his magnificent address before the Special Assembly of the United Nations last Thursday, Ambassador Eban, in an eloquent, dispassionate and supremely logical and effective manner catalogued the long series of belligerency on the part of Nasser by land and by sea, the endless series of raids and attacks and infiltration, the manner in which he was organizing military alliances against Israel and announcing to the world that his clear and certain purpose was to leap at the proper moment and strike and destroy Israel. What was expected of the people of Israel - to sit there as clay-pigeons and to wait in helplessness until these threats were made good?

For eight long years Israel pleaded her case before the United Nations but nothing was done, nothing was done by the United Nations to put an end to these attacks which made life intolerable. Nothing was done by the United Nations to compel Nasser to permit Israeli shipping to pass through the Suez Canal, an international body of water which under the terms of basic international agreement, was to be opened to the shipping of the whole world in times of peace or in times of war. Nothing was done to stop the boycotts which were organized by Egypt and all the Arab neighbors - continuing to this day against Israel, and nothing effective was done by other individual nations to help Israel. When Egypt obtained the staggering quantity of arms from Communist Russia, Czechoslovakia, nearly three hundred million dollars worth of the most modern tanks and

ilysheun bombers which could destroy the City of Tel Aviv in ten - fifteen minutes, and when the government of Israel turned to our own government to enable it to procure, to purchase, not to obtain as a gift - to purchase defensive arms against this terrible threat and, if it had been done, if our government had the vision at that time to provide Israel with these arms, the wings of Nasser may have been clipped at that time and his prestige in the whole Arab world may have sunk. We pleaded with our government "nadam".

Surreptitiously, our government said that it would intervene with other countries to provide Israel with some planes that it required. So Nasser continued with his plans and when he felt that the Suez Canal issue had been finally arranged to his complete satisfaction, he felt himself free now to move against Israel; and he completed just a few weeks ago the military alliance between Egypt, Jordan and Syria, and put their arms unto one unitary command and they were getting ready for the slaughter. Egypt became the arsenal which provided weapons to all the Arab states. Nasser refused and refuses to this day to recognize the existence of Israel but he has to recognize the existence of Israel now, naturally - but I mean legally. The Armistice, he said, was no indication that Egypt had stopped its war on Israel. Now, under these circumstances, can one blame, really morally blame Israel for trying to put an end after eight years to this intolerable situation? The U.N. blamed Israel and finally it determined to strike out for its survival.

A very fine editorial appeared a day or two ago in The New York Times which cannot be accused, and I have never accused it of being Zionist at all, but the fact that these three nations, all bulwarks of freedom and democracy, and among our staunchest allies, should suddenly find themselves in the role of defendants, indicate that there is something wrong with this picture and there certainly is. The picture is warped because too little attention has been paid to two factors which once examined give a different aspect to the situation.

One of these factors is that however deplorable the military actions may be, they cannot be considered in a vacuum; rather, they must be viewed against their background as represented by the whole Middle Eastern situation and that background makes it plain as President Eisenhower has pointed out that they have been preceded by grave Egyptian provocations which threatened the national existence of Israel and imperiled the Suez life-line of Britain and France. If the military actions of Israel, Britain and France are violations of the United Nations Charter, then so are the prior actions of Egypt. There is thus involved in this case, the right of these nations to self-defense, a right recognized by the Charter. The United States, strong and rather distant from the scene, sees the remedy in moral and economic pressure which is preferable but admittedly would take time. The question is whether hard-pressed Israel and following the outbreak of hostilities, Britain and France could afford the time. They had decided that they could not and their judgment in matters of life or death for them merits consideration.

The other factor is that, except in the case of Korea, the United Nations has never been able to enforce its decision when flouted by dictator regimes - and this is especially true in the case of Israel. The United Nations created Israel but when the new State was attacked by the Arab coalition, it had to fight alone and subsequently resist alone. Now, if there was a strong and powerful United Nations which, after arriving at its decision, could enforce its decision, these things would not be happening in the world today. But the United Nations has never been permitted to become strong by the powerful nations which constitute its backbone,

It is most interesting to note the succession of steps which have taken place within the last few days in the Security Council and in the United Nations - the gradual shifting to a new point of view, to a new outlook, to a more promising and constructive program in relation to these matters on the part of the United Nations. The first step was taken by our government in the Security Council when

a hard and almost brutal resolution was introduced practically branding Israel as the aggressor; calling no attention at all to the provocations which preceded; calling upon the nations of the world to deny Israel all economic and financial assistance; in other words, to begin at once to impose punitive sanctions upon Israel and a resolution containing absolutely no recommendation for the future for a permanent settlement.

Mr. Walter Lippman, in a very brilliant editorial a few days ago, called attention to this amazing resolution which was introduced in the Security Council by our government. He writes, "when the Israeli army struck on Monday the President and his advisors decided quite rightly to take the affair to the United Nations but there were two ways of taking it to the United Nations and they chose the wrong way. One way - one was to seize the whole border problem, to recognize that it is a two-sided problem and to call for measures to restrain the Egyptian raids as well as the Israeli reprisals. The other way was the one which the President and Secretary Dulles took - to ignore the Egyptian raids, to treat Israel as the aggressor and Egypt as the innocent victim". This was a grave mistake of policy, indefensible in principle and in fact entirely unrealistic and impractical. It was indefensible to ignore and thus to condone the extreme provocations of the Egyptian raids.

The resolution which Mr. Lodge submitted to the United Nations would, had it been adopted, have guaranteed the Egyptians behind their frontier but not the Israelis behind theirs. It would have made the Egyptian territory a United Nations sanctuary to which the fedayeen, these commando raiders, could operate without fear of reprisal, and almost certainly the explanation of this policy decision is that those in authority did not realize what it meant; that there was a little panic in Washington and no cool deliberation.

Fortunately, the attitude of our government did not stop with this resolution. When this resolution was vetoed by the United Kingdom and France in the

Security Council, the matter was referred, under the Unity of Peace Resolution of 1950, to the Assembly. Whenever the Security Council fails to act in cases involving a breach of the peace, it is possible by a motion in the Security Council upon which no veto can operate, to refer this matter to the whole Assembly and that was done. In the Security Council the United States introduced another resolution. In the meantime a period of cooling had taken place and the new United States resolution no longer placed sole responsibility on Israel. It called attention to the frequent disregard of the terms of the Armistice by the parties, plural. It urges all parties to refrain from breaking the terms of the Armistice, and there is no reference to economic pressure upon Israel.

What happened? Well, cooler and wiser judgment prevailed between Tuesday and Thursday. The President of the United States spoke to the American people and in his speech, with noble utterance, a magnificent statement in my judgment, a new note was introduced. There was no bitterness in that speech, no acrimony, no charges. Here the head of our government saw the whole picture and even though he did not approve what the Israelis, the United Kingdom and France had done, even though he felt that they had acted in error, he believed that force is not wise for a proper settlement instrument for the settlement. Nevertheless, he was able to tell the American people the whole story. We have considered it a basic matter of United States policy to support the new State of Israel and at the same time to strengthen our bonds both with Israel and with the Arab countries. But unfortunately through all these years passion in the area threatened to prevail over peaceful purpose and in one form or another there has been almost continuous fighting.

This situation recently was aggravated by Egyptian policy including rearmament with Communist weapons. We felt this to be a misguided policy on the part of the government of Egypt. It was the first time that it was said by our government. The State of Israel at the same time felt increasing anxiety for

its safety, and Great Britain and France feared more and more the Egyptian policies threatened their life-line of the Suez Canal. Well, that is a new approach to what took place. And so a third step was taken soon after this more generous and understanding resolution was introduced which was approved by the Assembly, which called for a cease-fire - an immediate cease-fire; and what nation could really vote against a cease-fire - against the shedding of blood.

When that motion was adopted on Thursday evening - Friday morning as the case may be, that motion was clearly understood by even those who voted for it as not being adequate. It called for a cease-fire but it did not touch the basic causes which brought about this critical situation. And many of those who spoke in favor of the resolution or some of those who refrained from voting - the Prime Minister of Canada, Lester B. Pearson, one of the wisest minds in the United Nations, pointed out forcefully to the Assembly that this isn't it, this won't solve the problem, this may be temporary patchwork - in six months you will be going back to the same situation unless you do something to remedy the basic causes.

And so last evening the fourth step was taken. A resolution was introduced again by the United States - two resolutions really - which had in mind the long-range solution of the problem. A Committee was to be formed immediately composed of five nations which would make a thorough study of how to bring about peace in the Middle East, and to present their findings to the interested parties and to the Assembly and to the Security Council. And another Committee was to study how the Suez Canal issue could be solved fundamentally.

Here there is the real hope. Here our own State Department has come back to the classic Highway of leadership in international affairs. No action has yet been taken on these resolutions of the United States. Two other actions were taken early this morning - one to send an international police force into the troubled area to maintain peace until final settlements are reached, and the other to make another appeal to the nations involved to comply with the Resolution of November 2nd for a cease-fire and withdrawal of forces.

My dear friends, Israel does not want war/ Israel never wanted war. Hundreds of thousands of the present citizens of the State of Israel are refugees from war. They saw what happened to their families in war. All that they are interested in is to be permitted to build their country, to live their lives in peace and security. Israel is not interested in obtaining territory from Egypt or from any of its neighbors. And it said so even before the smashing victory of a few days ago.

On Tuesday of this week, I was asked by someone in Washington whose request is almost a command, to get in touch with the Prime Minister of Israel, Mr. David Ben Gurion, immediately, and to present to him the attitude of our government as expressed in these resolutions; now that the immediate objectives of smashing the fedayeen nests has been accomplished, to withdraw the Israeli forces. It took me some hours before I was able to establish communication by telephone with the Prime Minister. I presented these views as clearly as I could. The Prime Minister said, "I can't tell you everything over this telephone, the enemy is listening in but you will receive from me within the day a communication which will enable you to present to those who requested my views to you, our present views". In the meantime I requested the friends who asked me to do this service to restrain themselves from any sharp action or sharp words that may be spoken because it had been announced that the President of the United States would be on the air Wednesday evening. This is the gist of the message which I received, and I, of course, promptly conveyed these messages, these words to the proper sources.

The Prime Minister, after expressing the hope that the President will not regard Israel's present action as an impediment to the friendship between the United States and Israel; their friendship is among the most precious assets of the government and the people of Israel, Israel is deeply appreciative of the great political, spiritual and material assistance which she has received from the United States and well understands the measure in which her interests are bound up with the United States, and Israel will always be zealous in her efforts to strengthen her relations with the United States. Nasser frustrated a series

of supreme efforts made this year by the President of the United States to bring peace to the region. It is clear that if Israel were to leave the area under discussion without Nasser having made an agreement of peace, he would organize his murder groups against Israel with increasing intensity both from Egypt and from Arab countries, would strengthen his maritime blockade in the Suez Canal and in the Gulf of Akiba, would re-enforce his army, extend his hold on other Arab States with the aim of liquidating Israel.

The Prime Minister said in his communication to me he is ready to propose to his government the withdrawal of Israel forces, mind you, this is before the great victory. The Prime Minister is ready to propose to his government the withdrawal of Israeli forces if Nasser signs a clear undertaking of abstaining from hostile acts against Israel including undertakings for liquidating the fedayeen, abolishing the blockade in the Gulf of Akiba and in the Suez Canal, and abstaining from military alliances directed against Israel. The withdrawal of our forces from the area concerned without the signature of such undertaking by Nasser would be suicidal, especially since we have so far eliminated only some of the fedayeen nests. There was more to this communication but this is the final thought in this fateful crisis for our region. The Prime Minister appealed to the government of the United States to study these developments from the viewpoint of possibilities of strengthening all those in the region who seek peace and stability. By adopting such an approach, the government will render an historic service to the peoples of the region and the Prime Minister hopes that the government will regard these developments from the view-point of the prospect of achieving permanent settlement of the area problem. Israel is prepared to stop, withdraw its forces before it cleaned up Nasser's full army in the Sinai Peninsula, provided these simple, elementary precautions would be taken.

I am one who always believed in the United Nations, and I am hoping that this matter will finally be taken over and handled in a competent and decisive manner by the United Nations. The permanent security of Israel, my good friends,

the permanent security of Israel lies first of all in its own power of fighting for its defense, but that is not enough. The permanent security of Israel of all small nations lies, in my judgment, in a United Nations, not in any momentary arrangements of convenience with this or that major power. At the moment we are working together with Great Britain. We may have trouble with Great Britain tomorrow as we had time and again in the past. Time and again in the past we had great assistance from Great Britain. I may remind you that last Friday was the 39th Anniversary of the Balfour Declaration. Great Britain and her own interest is served in that part of the world and they are not always parallel or identical with the interests of the State of Israel. The security of Israel lies in collective security and I am for one very much more concerned with maintaining and preserving the historic friendship between Israel and the United States than any other country.

Israel is growing strength, has been - economic strength, financial strength - not only from the Jews of the United States, not only from the friendly non-Jewish citizens of the United States but all along - and the long view from the government of the United States. The government of the United States helped to establish the State of Israel and was the first to recognize it. That friendship must not be impaired. It is in the interest of the whole world to strengthen the United Nations. Unfortunately, great powers turn to the United Nations only when their own purpose is served and when it is not, they ignore it or through veto power as is the case with Russia at the moment, making it impossible for the Security Council to operate.

A new deal, my good friends, is called for. The Armistice arrangement in the NearEast is outlived, is antiquated, has not produced peace, cannot be returned to. The peace settlement must now be insisted on, and if the moral pressure of the free world will finally come to realize how serious this problem is and how urgent it is, they can force the reluctant Arab governments to sit down around the conference table with the willing representatives of the Israeli government to talk over their common problem and to reach an agreement - an agreement can be reached.

There is nothing insurmountable. There are no problems that cannot be solved by a process of give and take and goodwill, and Israel wants it. Israel knows that it lives in the midst of an Arab world, will continue to live in the midst of an Arab world and is seeking the friendliest opportunities for contact and cooperation, and the upbuilding of the whole region through cooperation with the Arab neighbors.

And I hope that through the new insight and wisdom which have come to the leaders of the great governments as a result of this thing which has happened, constructive solutions, permanent solutions will now be sought which will do justice to Israel and justice to the Arab peoples, and which will bring about a condition of peace and stability in that important section of the world where instability and continued conflict may bring about that which no one wants, which everyone craves. I am hoping that out of this situation which is now developing, which will take some weeks, possibly some months to develop, the United Nations will emerge tested by the fires of the moment, strengthened and empowered to serve the cause of humanity in the interest of peace.

