



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
168

Box
61

Folder
1068

The State of Israel after Fifteen years, 1963.

Reel # 96
No. 989

Sermon 989

SUNDAY MORNING SERMON

April 21, 1963

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver

7:15 PM

עברנו מנסן - best friend of the land -

- a present. a little silver, a little money, space + my son, wife and

THE STATE OF ISRAEL AFTER FIFTEEN YEARS

Admitted

Twile

This year we spent our Spring vacation in England, Israel and Rome. It was only partly a vacation -- for in England I was on a busman's holiday. I made speeches. I addressed the opening campaign dinners in behalf of the Joint Palestine Appeal. I spoke in London, Manchester and Leeds.

The meetings were very successful. More money was raised than in any previous year. My reception was very warm. This intrigued me; for I had been led to believe that it would not be too cordial since the prevailing notion over there has been that I had been the arch opponent and critic of Dr. Weizmann; and England is, of course, Weizmann territory.

But I was most agreeably surprised. My reception was not only cordial, but enthusiastic. And I left England with very pleasant memories -- memories like those which I carried away with me twenty years ago during the war when I spoke in ten of its cities, some of them blitzed and badly done up, with the nights made darker by a universal black-out -- memories of a warm welcome and response, and of generous, courageous and loyal Jewry.

In Israel we arrived at its loveliest time of the year between Purim and Pesach, when "the flowers appear on the earth; and the time of singing is come". And what a relief that was after the long months of ice and snow in Cleveland! Evidently many others were attracted to the warmth and

sunshine of that beautiful land. The country was full of tourists. Israel was expecting 225,000 tourists this year. They had 183,000 last year. They are anticipating 370,000 in 1966. Tourism has become a major industry in Israel. Hotels are being rapidly built to accommodate this large influx -- some of them as sumptuous as any you will find in Miami -- and, I must say, as expensive.

Israel is fast becoming a tourists' paradise. Incomparable scenic beauty, 4000 years of history, the holy land for both Jew and Christian, the drama and excitement of a pioneering nation forging a new life, all this is proving to be an irresistible magnet for an increasing number of tourists and pilgrims.

I have visited Israel many times, and when it was yet Palestine, and every time I find something new to see which I have not seen before. I visited this year the excavations which are being carried out at Caesarea, as impressive as any along the historic Mediterranean shores. Caesarea was at one time a city of a quarter of a million inhabitants. It was a city in which Roman, Greek and Jew lived side by side. Caesarea in the 7th century was conquered by the Arabs and in the 11th century by the Crusaders. It was laid waste by the Sultans who expelled the Crusaders from Palestine and since that time and for over 600 years it has lain in ruins, buried under mountains of sand. What was not buried by the sand was a vast malarial swamp.

Caesarea is now being excavated and remarkable finds have already been brought to light -- the remains of synagogues, pagan temples, and churches, mosaics, statues and ancient and medieval fortifications. A complete Roman amphitheatre with stage and tiers of stone seats has been unearthed. Two years ago, as part of an International Music Festival held in Israel, the

world-famous 85-year-old Pablo Casals, gave a cello recital in that very theatre.

Similar excavations were being carried out in other parts of the country. We visited another in the 5000-year-old city of Bet Shean in the Valley of Jezreel not far from the Jordan. Canaanite, Egyptian, Greek and Roman, and many others had in turn conquered and ruled that city. It was in the valley before that city, at the foot of Mt. Gilboa, that King Saul and Jonathan were slain in the battle with the Philistines and it was on the walls of Bet-Shean that their bodies were hung. When we were there, Israeli archaeologists were completing the excavation of another magnificent Roman amphitheatre, in an area where excavations had been carried on for 40 years.

We visited, for the first time, the remarkable catacombs in Beth-Shearim -- not far from Haifa, which Professor Maza discovered and explored. Beth-Shearim was a noted city in the time of the Mishna, the seat of the Sanhedrin, where the compiler of the Mishna, Judah Hanasi lies buried. These catacombs with their many underground rooms, corridors and sarcophagi of every description, reveal so much of the civilization, the art, wealth and social customs of these early centuries.

✓ The land of Israel is a veritable treasure-house of antiquities. The past, as well as the teeming present, has much to intrigue the tourist.

✓ I found Israel prosperous, growing, expanding. Everywhere you turn you see new buildings springing up -- apartments, private dwellings, public buildings, schools, hospitals, shops and factories. In fact, one hears occasionally a voice raised cautioning against excessive investment in building.

✓ The population is increasing, not only as a result of the normal birth increase, but through immigration. (Last year 70,000 new immigrants entered the country from many parts of the world, but especially from North Africa.)

✓ There is no unemployment. In fact, there is an actual labor shortage. New cities have been established, especially in the Negev and old cities have been expanded. The very old cities of Tiberias and Nazareth, for example, have built on the hills overlooking them large and modern suburbs where thousands live in comfortable houses and apartments. They have their schools, their super-markets, their synagogues, their parks, their cinemas and their community centers.

Jerusalem, which, because of its history and location, is one of the most attractive cities of the world, is adding to its physical beauty many new and imposing edifices -- the new Art Museum, which is in the process of completion, the new Parliament building, which the Rothschilds gave as a gift to the State, the Yad Vo-Shem, the impressive memorial to the millions of Nazi victims, the expanding beautiful campus of the Hebrew University, the imposing Hadassah Hospital and the Medical School -- and the new School for Bible Study and Archaeology which was erected by the Hebrew Union College, whose dedication we ~~and the Leo Neumarks~~ attended.

✓ What impresses one is the tempo of the country's progress, the speed of construction, the élan, the dynamo. What today is a dream, a project, a prospectus is tomorrow a reality.

We visited Ashdod. Until recently it was little more than a stretch of sand-dunes along the Mediterranean some 40 miles south of Tel-Aviv. It was

decided to build a new port there to serve as an outlet for the agricultural and industrial products of the central and southern parts of Israel. (With a loan of 52 million dollars from the World Bank, they proceeded to build the port.) When we were there two years ago, we could see no more than a few houses and a central office building where a group of engineers and architects were working on blue-prints. When we returned, two years later, half of the port was completed; 12,000 people were living in homes and apartments, a school had been built, a shopping center, a cinema, a lovely park with fountains had been laid out, and a power station was in operation supplying electricity to the port city and the outlying regions. They assured me that in a few years Ashdod would have 400,000 inhabitants -- and I believed them.

On the occasion of my visit, they made me the first honorary citizen of Ashdod. An honorary citizen is one who has all the privileges of citizenship but does not have to pay taxes. I am sure that Sir Winston Churchill took that into consideration when he accepted honorary citizenship in the United States.

✓ Industrially, too, the country is making marked progress. The emphasis today is upon industry, for Israel's agricultural development is nearing the saturation point. New industries have been established. Its exports are increasing. It is ^{engaged} ~~trying~~ ⁱⁿ now to ^{ing} ~~negotiate~~ a trade agreement with the European Common Market so that it will be able to export its products to the European market on favorable terms. / Israel has had a break this year, in that a new oil-well was brought in near Ashkelon, the most important oil discovery to date which may make the country self-sufficient in fuel requirements. One hundred million pounds have been invested so far in oil prospecting in Israel.

Experiments in the desalination of water to supply ^{sweet} water cheaply for agriculture are being energetically carried on. South of Haifa, a 250-acre solar-energy pool will be completed this year which will absorb and concentrate the energy produced by the sun.

✓ There are problems, of course, a-plenty in the country -- social, educational, religious, international, I shall speak of one or two of them in a moment. I do not wish to give the impression that everything in Israel is in apple-pie order. The good Lord has never been that good to His people. He never spoiled His people by over-indulging them in ease or tranquility. But the spirit of the land delighted me, the enterprise, the courage, the pride, the hopefulness.

One day we climbed in a bumpy jeep a rugged mountain in lower Galilee. After a long and hard climb, we reached the top of the ~~mountain~~ where a group of 23 Sabras, native-born young Israeli men and women were building a new Kibbutz. Their quarters were primitive, their equipment rudimentary, their food of the simplest. They were there to establish a new settlement in a wild part of the Galil. "Why did you choose this particular spot?" I asked one of the young men. He pointed to a hill not far from where we stood. There is "Yudpat", he said. Yudpat was the last stronghold in Galilee where the Jewish forces under their commander, Josephus, held out against the Romans who besieged them -- and when they could no longer hold out, they killed themselves rather than surrender. "They killed themselves in that very cave in the side of that hill." And so within sight of that cave, these Sabras, 19 centuries later, were resolved to build a new settlement -- a new Judean stronghold!

(Chicago)

That spirit -- proud, undefeated, resolute, is what delighted me, and gave me confidence.

- Chicanery -

The day before we left Israel, I read in the Israeli press that a group of young Israeli celebrated a torch-light Seder atop the ancient fortress of Massadah, on the shores of the Dead Sea -- the first Seder since that mountain fell to the Romans in the last days of the revolt. Those who know the heroic story of Massada will appreciate the dramatic symbolism of this torch-light Seder. It linked the generations of free-born and undefeated men across the chasm of the centuries....

There are problems in present-day Israel!

✓ The presence of hundreds of thousands of Arab refugees on the borders of Israel and the matter of national security continue to be the major problems which engross the attention of the government, and to a lesser degree, of the people. The people are continuously aware of the problems, but they are in no way alarmed by them, nor deflected from whatever tasks they are engaged in. They know the facts of life under which they are building their homeland. They are surrounded by unreconciled and numerically superior neighbors whose leaders are repeatedly avowing their intention to exterminate them. ^(Border incidents) Some of these neighbors, especially Egypt, have been receiving heavy military equipment and the most modern weapons, as well as technical advice and training from the Soviet Union, even as Cuba has been receiving them from the same source. The generous financial aid which Egypt has been receiving from the United States, for non-military purposes, to help the people of Egypt whose standard of living is among the lowest in the Middle East, helped Nasser to divert much of his country's revenues to military purposes.

Egypt has been employing German scientists -- erstwhile Nazis -- to build Jet-fighters and to develop ground-to-ground rocket missiles, which are intended, of course, to be used against Israel.

While we were abroad, an Israeli security agent was arrested in Switzerland on the charge of threatening the daughter of a German scientist, Goercke, who has been working in Egypt on Nuclear weapons. ~~f~~ The Israeli Knesset was aroused. It met in special session and adopted a unanimous resolution:

✓ " The Knesset resolves that the activity of German scientists and experts working in Egypt on the manufacture of weapons of mass destruction to be used against Israel, is a grave danger to the security of Israel and its population.

✓ "The German people cannot absolve itself of the responsibility for the continuation of this vile work. It is the duty of the German government to put an immediate end to this dangerous activity of its citizens and to take all steps required to prevent this cooperation with the Egyptian government.

✓ "The Knesset calls upon enlightened world public opinion to exercise its influence without delay in order to put a stop to this activity of German experts, whose aim is to expose to destruction the State of Israel, the home of the remnants of our people who have survived the Nazi holocaust. "

✕ No formal action on the part of the German government has as yet been taken, though sympathy with the Israeli position has been widely expressed in government circles.

~~An Attempt~~ ^{5. 6. 61} ~~was again~~ ^{again and again} made ~~recently~~ to unite the Arab world. ^{The cement-hothead} Previous ^{Grand} attempts had failed. The Arab League which was formed in 1945, after the Second World War, failed in its efforts to achieve common action among the

Arab states, due to national, personal and group rivalries. The United Arab Republic, which Nasser established in 1958 by uniting Egypt and Syria, fell apart. It lasted just a little over three years. (Now a new political union - a tri-state federation -- has been formed composed of Egypt, Syria and Iraq. How long this federation will last no one can foretell. The inner rivalries and party strife have, of course, not been eliminated from among the several Arab states. Will this federation inaugurate an era of stability in the Middle East, or an era of aggression and military adventure? That is very difficult to know in advance.) It is generally acknowledged that the Arab states, separately or jointly, at this moment, are not able economically or militarily to undertake a military campaign against Israel unless they are materially aided by a foreign power.

An attack upon Israel is not likely to remain an isolated event or one which can be regionally contained. It may lead to a global conflict which neither East nor West wishes or is likely to permit. The Arab governments also know that Israel is not defenseless or without friends, that it can give as much as it can take, and that the distance for missiles and jet-fighters and bombers to fly is the same from Tel Aviv to Cairo, as from Cairo to Tel Aviv. But the danger is there.

✓ In the sober knowledge of all this, the people of Israel are going about the business of building their homeland with singleness of purpose and unafraid. Though hoping for support from the free world, they are relying primarily upon themselves and their own defenses. Recently, Major-General Moshe Dayan, who took the Sinai Peninsula away from the Egyptians in 1956 and led the Israeli forces to the very shores of the Suez Canal, ^{in 100 days} stated:

"In the era of rockets with conventional and unconventional warheads, President Nasser would be deterred from starting a war, primarily by the might of Israel's defense forces. We must diligently develop those weapons so that we do not lag."

✓ The Israeli are reconciled to a long Arab-Israel stalemate. The Arab states are evidently not interested in solving the refugee problem except on the condition of the liquidation of the State of Israel. / Writing in the April issue of "Foreign Affairs" on "The Arab Refugees", Don Peretz, the author of "Israel and the Palestine Arabs", states:

"As for the political problem of Palestine, we must reconcile ourselves to seeing it continue for a generation or more. It is an unpleasant fact of international life that the Arab-Israel conflict has progressed beyond a stage where some new blueprint can help. The best that can be hoped for under existing circumstances is to contain the conflict through the efforts of the United Nations and the larger member states. Although conciliation is no longer possible, agencies such as the U. N. Truce Supervision Organization and Emergency Force can continue to limit border tensions and can prevent them from erupting into major warfare.!!

✓ The Israelis know that this is true and they are reacting accordingly. Their expenditures for national security constitute a terrific drain upon their limited national income, but they know that, for the time being, it cannot be helped, and they are paying heavy taxes for their security. Things may change, of course, and on the international political checker-board they often do change -- and in the most unexpected ways. But the people of Israel cannot and will not permit themselves to live in a fool's paradise.

(Watching this desperate game which Nasser is playing, our own government seems to be undisturbed. It is satisfied that a balance of power exists in the Middle East and that, therefore, the security of Israel is not endangered. One finds it difficult to follow the reasoning of Under-Secretary-of State, W. Averell Harriman, who does not at all seem to be critical of the work which the German missile scientists are doing in Egypt. "For", he says, "if it were not German scientists who were doing it, Soviet scientists would be there to do the same work." We wonder whether this is all the wisdom and statesmanship which our State Department can bring to bear upon this perilous situation which is developing in the Near East? One would like to hear a clear-cut statement on the part of our government regarding its deep concern for the continued security of Israel. One would like to hear a word of rebuke to the Arab governments who are so shamelessly threatening to destroy a peaceful and sovereign state which the American government has recognized and which, in point of fact, it helped to bring into existence.

I found the people of Israel deeply concerned and troubled by this cool, formal, stand-offish attitude of our State Department in a situation which calls for action and leadership.)

We left Israel during the week of Passover, the Festival which celebrates Israel's birth as a nation some thirty three hundred years ago. We arrived in Rome by plane a few hours later. Rome -- the center of the Christian world -- was preparing to celebrate Easter, the Festival which commemorates the resurrection of Christendom's Messiah -- Jesus, the Jew, who lived in Palestine some two thousand years ago. We spent a few days

in Rome. We visited again the Forum and its stately ruins and we stood again before the imposing Arch of Titus, the Arch which was erected to celebrate the triumph of Titus over the Judaeen State in 70 A. D. We saw the bas-relief under the Arcade which shows the Procession of Jewish Captives carrying the spoils of the Temple which Titus had laid waste, the Golden Table, the Seven-branched Menorah and the Silver Trumpets. All about us were ruins, all that was left of the grandeur of ancient imperial Rome -- the proud conqueror of ancient Judea. I had just come from that ultimately unconquered land of Judea and with my own eyes I had seen the ultimately undefeated children of Judea planting the seeds of a new life amidst the ancient ruins. I had seen legions of Jewish Halutzim rebuilding what the legions of ancient Rome and those of subsequent empires had destroyed. The sounds of the Easter bells were ringing throughout the city and as they reached my ears they told me that it was not Rome that conquered Judaea, but a humble Jew from Judea who conquered Rome. What a strange and baffling people these Jews were! -- Conquered time and again, but out-living all their conquerors!

I thought of many things that Easter week in Rome. I thought of the theme of that Festival of Resurrection. I thought of Israel, the risen people of the immemorial Crucifixion. I thought of the resurrection of the ancient land of Israel which was so long consigned to death and desolation. I reflected upon the death of all the Caesars and the crumbling into dust of the empires which they built. And then I thought also of immortality, of the deathlessness of truth and faith and the spirit of man and the word of God, which endures forever. And so in Rome I thought again of Jerusalem -- Jerusalem which I saw rising from its ruins, and of the mountains which surrounded it, even as the Lord has surrounded and sheltered His People through all the grim and dolorous centuries.

Thus, my few days in Rome proved to be a heartening supplement and commentary and fitting epilogue to all that I had seen and experienced in the old-new land of Israel.

My dear friends: It is now fifteen years since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. This marked a decisive turning point in Jewish history -- a breakthrough -- ; the tremendous consequences of which only the future will fully reveal. ✓

These fifteen years have been tremendous years for our people in Israel, glorious in planning, glorious in achievement, glorious in defense. No age in Jewish history is quite comparable to it. So many fears have been proved groundless, so many hopes have been exceeded, so many myths have been exploded.

These fifteen prologue years have been years of testing. We had wrested from a reluctant world the right to become once again a free and sovereign people in its own home. Now it was up to us to demonstrate our talent and endowments for the new role in which we were now cast. The world and we, ourselves, waited to see whether the Jewish people possessed the capacity, the courage, the perseverance which are requisite for the building of a state. Through these fifteen years, the world and we, ourselves, witnessed with mounting wonder and admiration the unfolding drama of a people's ingathering and of a national reconstruction such as mankind had seldom, if ever, witnessed.

During these years, Israel made good, and in a breath-taking way, on land, on sea, and in the air, in city, town and village, in swamp and wilderness, in

schools and academies, in social services, in the revival of a language and a literature. Israel also made good on the battle-field, to the amazement of its friends and the confounding of its enemies.

And the young state, by its faithful allegiance to the free world, the development of its educational system and its institutions of higher learning, its advanced social legislation, the aid which it has extended to the newly emergent states of Africa and Asia, has revealed to the world the ground-tone of its chosen way of life, its fundamental purposes and dominant interests as a nation. All this has filled us with inestimable pride. It has been for us a rarer gift than the gold which we have given to make its foundations strong.



SUNDAY MORNING SERMON

April 21, 1963

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver

THE STATE OF ISRAEL AFTER FIFTEEN YEARS

This year we spent our Spring vacation in England, Israel and Rome. It was only partly a vacation -- for in England I was on a busman's holiday. I made speeches. I addressed the opening campaign dinners in behalf of the Joint Palestine Appeal. I spoke in London, Manchester and Leeds.

The meetings were very successful. More money was raised than in any previous year. My reception was very warm. This intrigued me; for I had been led to believe that it would not be too cordial since the prevailing notion over there has been that I had been the arch opponent and critic of Dr. Weitzmann; and England is, of course, Weitzmann territory.

But I was most agreeably surprised. My reception was not only cordial, but enthusiastic. And I left England with very pleasant memories -- memories like those which I carried away with me twenty years ago during the war when I spoke in ten of its cities, some of them blitzed and badly done up, with the nights made darker by a universal black-out -- memories of a warm welcome and response, and of generous, courageous and loyal Jewry.

In Israel we arrived at its loveliest time of the year, between Purim and Pesach, when "the flowers appear on the earth; and the time of singing is come". And what a relief that was after the long months of ice and snow in Cleveland! Evidently many others were attracted to the warmth and

sunshine of that beautiful land. The country was full of tourists. Israel was expecting 225,000 tourists this year. They had 183,000 last year. They are anticipating 370,000 in 1966. Tourism has become a major industry in Israel. Hotels are being rapidly built to accommodate this large influx -- some of them as sumptuous as any you will find in Miami -- and, I must say, as expensive.

Israel is fast becoming a tourists' paradise. Incomparable scenic beauty, 4000 years of history, the holy land for both Jew and Christian, the drama and excitement of a pioneering nation forging a new life, all this is proving to be an irresistible magnet for an increasing number of tourists and pilgrims.

I have visited Israel many times, and when it was yet Palestine, and every time I find something new to see which I have not seen before. I visited this year the excavations which are being carried out at Caesarea, as impressive as any along the historic Mediterranean shores. Caesarea was at one time a city of a quarter of a million inhabitants. It was a city in which Roman, Greek and Jew lived side by side. Caesarea in the 7th century was conquered by the Arabs and in the 11th century by the Crusaders. It was laid waste by the Sultans who expelled the Crusaders from Palestine and since that time and for over 600 years it has lain in ruins, buried under mountains of sand. What was not buried by the sand was a vast malarial swamp.

Caesarea is now being excavated and remarkable finds have already been brought to light -- the remains of synagogues, pagan temples, and churches, mosaics, statues and ancient and medieval fortifications. A complete Roman amphitheatre with stage and tiers of stone seats has been unearthed. Two years ago, as part of an International Music Festival held in Israel, the

world-famous 85-year-old Pablo Casals, gave a cello recital in that very theatre.

Similar excavations were being carried out in other parts of the country. We visited another in the 5000-year-old city of Bet Shean in the Valley of Jezreel not far from the Jordan. Canaanite, Egyptian, Greek and Roman, and many others had in turn conquered and ruled that city. It was in the valley before that city, at the foot of Mt. Gilboa, that King Saul and Jonathan were slain in the battle with the Philistines and it was on the walls of Bet-Shean that their bodies were hung. When we were there, Israeli archaeologists were completing the excavation of another magnificent Roman amphitheatre, in an area where excavations had been carried on for 40 years.

We visited, for the first time, the remarkable catacombs in Beth-Shearim -- not far from Haifa, which Professor Maza discovered and explored. Beth-Shearim was a noted city in the time of the Mishna, the seat of the Sanhedrin, where the compiler of the Mishna, Judah Hanasi lies buried. These catacombs with their many underground rooms, corridors and sarcophagi of every description, reveal so much of the civilization, the art, wealth and social customs of these early centuries.

The land of Israel is a veritable treasure-house of antiquities. The past, as well as the teeming present, has much to intrigue the tourist.

I found Israel prosperous, growing, expanding. Everywhere you turn you see new buildings springing up -- apartments, private dwellings, public buildings, schools, hospitals, shops and factories. In fact, one hears occasionally a voice raised cautioning against excessive investment in building.

The population is increasing, not only as a result of the normal birth increase, but through immigration. Last year 70,000 new immigrants entered the country from many parts of the world, but especially from North Africa.

There is no unemployment. In fact, there is an actual labor shortage. New cities have been established, especially in the Negev and old cities have been expanded. The very old cities of Tiberias and Nazareth, for example, have built on the hills overlooking them large and modern suburbs where thousands live in comfortable houses and apartments. They have their schools, their super-markets, their synagogues, their parks, their cinemas and their community centers.

Jerusalem, which, because of its history and location, is one of the most attractive cities of the world, is adding to its physical beauty many new and imposing edifices -- the new Art Museum, which is in the process of completion, the new Parliament building, which the Rothschilds gave as a gift to the State, the Yad Vo-Shem, the impressive memorial to the millions of Nazi victims, the expanding beautiful campus of the Hebrew University, the imposing Hadassah Hospital and the Medical School -- and the new School for Bible Study and Archaeology which was erected by the Hebrew Union College, whose dedication we and the Leo Neumarks attended.

What impresses one is the tempo of the country's progress, the speed of construction, the élan, the dynamo. What today is a dream, a project, a prospectus is tomorrow a reality.

We visited Ashdod. Until recently it was little more than a stretch of sand-dunes along the Mediterranean some 40 miles south of Tel-Aviv. It was

decided to build a new port there to serve as an outlet for the agricultural and industrial products of the central and southern parts of Israel. With a loan of 52 million dollars from the World Bank, they proceeded to build the port. When we were there two years ago, we could see no more than a few houses and a central office building where a group of engineers and architects were working on blue-prints. When we returned, two years later, half of the port was completed; 12,000 people were living in homes and apartments, a school had been built, a shopping center, a cinema, a lovely park with fountains had been laid out, and a power station was in operation supplying electricity to the port city and the outlying regions. They assured me that in a few years Ashdod would have 400,000 inhabitants -- and I believed them.

On the occasion of my visit, they made me the first honorary citizen of Ashdod. An honorary citizen is one who has all the privileges of citizenship but does not have to pay taxes. I am sure that Sir Winston Churchill took that into consideration when he accepted honorary citizenship in the United States.

Industrially, too, the country is making marked progress. The emphasis today is upon industry, for Israel's agricultural development is nearing the saturation point. New industries have been established. Its exports are increasing. It is trying now to negotiate a trade agreement with the European Common Market so that it will be able to export its products to the European market on favorable terms. Israel has had a break this year, in that a new oil-well was brought in near Ashkelon, the most important oil discovery to date which may make the country self-sufficient in fuel requirements. One hundred million pounds have been invested so far in oil prospecting in Israel.

Experiments in the desalination of water to supply water cheaply for agriculture are being energetically carried on. South of Haifa, a 250-acre solar-energy pool will be completed this year which will absorb and concentrate the energy produced by the sun.

There are problems, of course, aplenty in the country -- social, educational, religious, international. I shall speak of one or two of them in a moment. I do not wish to give the impression that everything in Israel is in apple-pie order. The good Lord has never been that good to His people. He never spoiled His people by over-indulging them in ease or tranquility. But the spirit of the land delighted me, the enterprise, the courage, the pride, the hopefulness.

One day we climbed in a bumpy jeep a rugged mountain in lower Galilee. After a long and hard climb, we reached the top of the mountain where a group of 23 Sabras, native-born young Israeli men and women were building a new Kibbutz. Their quarters were primitive, their equipment rudimentary, their food of the simplest. They were there to establish a new settlement in a wild part of the Galil. "Why did you choose this particular spot?" I asked one of the young men. He pointed to a hill not far from where we stood. There is "Yudpat", he said. Yudpat was the last stronghold in Galilee where the Jewish forces under their commander, Josephus, held out against the Romans who besieged them -- and when they could no longer hold out, they killed themselves rather than surrender. "They killed themselves in that very cave in the side of that hill." And so within sight of that cave, these Sabras, 19 centuries later, were resolved to build a new settlement -- a new Judean stronghold!

That spirit -- proud, undefeated, resolute, is what delighted me, and gave me confidence.

The day before we left Israel, I read in the Israeli press that a group of young Israeli celebrated a torch-light Seder atop the ancient fortress of Massadah, on the shores of the Dead Sea -- the first Seder since that mountain fell to the Romans in the last days of the revolt. Those who know the heroic story of Massada will appreciate the dramatic symbolism of this torch-light Seder. It linked the generations of free-born and undefeated men across the ^{chasm of the} centuries....

There are problems in present-day Israel!

The presence of hundreds of thousands of Arab refugees on the borders of Israel and the matter of national security continue to be the major problems which engross the attention of the government, and to a lesser degree, of the people. The people are continuously aware of the problems, but they are in no way alarmed by them, nor deflected from whatever tasks they are engaged in. They know the facts of life under which they are building their homeland. They are surrounded by unreconciled and numerically superior neighbors whose leaders are repeatedly avowing their intention to exterminate them. Some of these neighbors, especially Egypt, have been receiving heavy military equipment and the most modern weapons, as well as technical advice and training from the Soviet Union, even as Cuba has been receiving them from the same source. The generous financial aid which Egypt has been receiving from the United States, for non-military purposes, to help the people of Egypt whose standard of living is among the lowest in the Middle East, helped Nasser to divert much of his country's revenues to military purposes.

Egypt has been employing German scientists -- erstwhile Nazis -- to build Jet-fighters and to develop ground-to-ground rocket missiles, which are intended, of course, to be used against Israel.

While we were abroad, an Israeli security agent was arrested in Switzerland on the charge of threatening the daughter of a German scientist, Goercke, who has been working in Egypt on Nuclear weapons. The Israeli Knesset was aroused. It met in special session and adopted a unanimous resolution:

" The Knesset resolves that the activity of German scientists and experts working in Egypt on the manufacture of weapons of mass destruction to be used against Israel, is a grave danger to the security of Israel and its population.

"The German people cannot absolve itself of the responsibility for the continuation of this vile work. It is the duty of the German government to put an immediate end to this dangerous activity of its citizens and to take all steps required to prevent this cooperation with the Egyptian government.

"The Knesset calls upon enlightened world public opinion to exercise its influence without delay in order to put a stop to this activity of German experts, whose aim is to expose to destruction the State of Israel, the home of the remnants of our people who have survived the Nazi holocaust. "

No formal action on the part of the German government has as yet been taken, though sympathy with the Israeli position has been widely expressed in government circles.

An attempt was again made recently to unite the Arab world. Previous attempts had failed. The Arab League which was formed in 1945, after the Second World War, failed in its efforts to achieve common action among the

Arab states, due to national, personal and group rivalries. The United Arab Republic, which Nasser established in 1958 by uniting Egypt and Syria, fell apart. It lasted just a little over three years. Now a new political union - a tri-state federation -- has been formed composed of Egypt, Syria and Iraq. How long this federation will last no one can foretell. The inner rivalries and party strife have, of course, not been eliminated from among the several Arab states. Will this federation inaugurate an era of stability in the Middle East, or an era of aggression and military adventure? That is very difficult to know in advance. It is generally acknowledged that the Arab states, separately or jointly, at this moment, are not able economically or militarily to undertake a military campaign against Israel unless they are materially aided by a foreign power. An attack upon Israel is not likely to remain an isolated event or one which can be regionally contained. It may lead to a global conflict which neither East nor West wishes or is likely to permit. The Arab governments also know that Israel is not defenseless or without friends, that it can give as much as it can take, and that the distance for missiles and jet-fighters and bombers to fly is the same from Tel Aviv to Cairo, as from Cairo to Tel Aviv. But the danger is there.

In the sober knowledge of all this, the people of Israel are going about the business of building their homeland with singleness of purpose and unafraid. Though hoping for support from the free world, they are relying primarily upon themselves and their own defenses. Recently, Major-General Moshe Dayan, who took the Sinai Peninsula away from the Egyptians in 1956 and led the Israeli forces to the very shores of the Suez Canal, stated:

"In the era of rockets with conventional and unconventional warheads, President Nasser would be deterred from starting a war, primarily by the might of Israel's defense forces. We must diligently develop those weapons so that we do not lag."

The Israeli are reconciled to a long Arab-Israel stalemate. The Arab states are evidently not interested in solving the refugee problem except on the condition of the liquidation of the State of Israel. Writing in the April issue of "Foreign Affairs" on "The Arab Refugees", Don Peretz, the author of "Israel and the Palestine Arabs", states:

"As for the political problem of Palestine, we must reconcile ourselves to seeing it continue for a generation or more. It is an unpleasant fact of international life that the Arab-Israel conflict has progressed beyond a stage where some new blueprint can help. The best that can be hoped for under existing circumstances is to contain the conflict through the efforts of the United Nations and the larger member states. Although conciliation is no longer possible, agencies such as the U.N. Truce Supervision Organization and Emergency Force can continue to limit border tensions and can prevent them from erupting into major warfare.

The Israelis know that this is true and they are reacting accordingly. Their expenditures for national security constitute a terrific drain upon their limited national income, but they know that, for the time being, it cannot be helped, and they are paying heavy taxes for their security. Things may change, of course, and on the international political checker-board they often do change -- and in the most unexpected ways. But the people of Israel cannot and will not permit themselves to live in a fool's paradise.

Watching this desperate game which Nasser is playing, our own government seems to be undisturbed. It is satisfied that a balance of power exists in the Middle East and that, therefore, the security of Israel is not endangered. One finds it difficult to follow the reasoning of Under-Secretary of State, W. Averell Harriman, who does not at all seem to be critical of the work which the German missile scientists are doing in Egypt. "For", he says, "if it were not German scientists who were doing it, Soviet scientists would be there to do the same work." We wonder whether this is all the wisdom and statesmanship which our State Department can bring to bear upon this perilous situation which is developing in the Near East? One would like to hear a clear-cut statement on the part of our government regarding its deep concern for the continued security of Israel. One would like to hear a word of rebuke to the Arab governments who are so shamelessly threatening to destroy a peaceful and sovereign state which the American government has recognized and which, in point of fact, it helped to bring into existence.

I found the people of Israel deeply concerned and troubled by this cool, formal, stand-offish attitude of our State Department in a situation which calls for action and leadership.

We left Israel during the week of Passover, the Festival which celebrates Israel's birth as a nation some thirty three hundred years ago. We arrived in Rome by plane a few hours later. Rome -- the center of the Christian world -- was preparing to celebrate Easter, the Festival which commemorates the resurrection of Christendom's Messiah -- Jesus, the Jew, who lived in Palestine some two thousand years ago. We spent a few days

in Rome. We visited again the Forum and its stately ruins and we stood again before the imposing Arch of Titus, the Arch which was erected to celebrate the triumph of Titus over the Judaeen State in 70 A. D. We saw the bas-relief under the Arcade which shows the Procession of Jewish Captives carrying the spoils of the Temple which Titus had laid waste, the Golden Table, the Seven-branched Menorah and the Silver Trumpets. All about us were ruins, all that was left of the grandeur of ancient imperial Rome -- the proud conqueror of ancient Judea. I had just come from that ultimately unconquered land of Judea and with my own eyes I had seen the ultimately undefeated children of Judea planting the seeds of a new life amidst the ancient ruins. I had seen legions of Jewish Halutzim rebuilding what the legions of ancient Rome and those of subsequent empires had destroyed. The sounds of the Easter bells were ringing throughout the city and as they reached my ears they told me that it was not Rome that conquered Judaea, but a humble Jew from Judea who conquered Rome. What a strange and baffling people these Jews were! -- Conquered time and again, but out-living all their conquerors!

I thought of many things that Easter week in Rome. I thought of the theme of that Festival of Resurrection. I thought of Israel, the risen people of the immemorial Crucifixion. I thought of the resurrection of the ancient land of Israel which was so long consigned to death and desolation. I reflected upon the death of all the Caesars and the crumbling into dust of the empires which they built. And then I thought also of immortality, of the deathlessness of truth and faith and the spirit of man and the word of God, which endures forever. And so in Rome I thought again of Jerusalem -- Jerusalem which I saw rising from its ruins, and of the mountains which surrounded it, even as the Lord has surrounded and sheltered His People through all the grim and dolorous centuries.

Thus, my few days in Rome proved to be a heartening supplement and commentary and fitting epilogue to all that I had seen and experienced in the old-new land of Israel.

My dear friends: It is now fifteen years since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. This marked a decisive turning point in Jewish history -- a breakthrough -- ; the tremendous consequences of which only the future will fully reveal.

These fifteen years have been tremendous years for our people in Israel, glorious in planning, glorious in achievement, glorious in defense. No age in Jewish history is quite comparable to it. So many fears have been proved groundless, so many hopes have been exceeded, so many myths have been exploded.

These fifteen prologue years have been years of testing. We had wrested from a reluctant world the right to become once again a free and sovereign people in its own home. Now it was up to us to demonstrate our talent and endowments for the new role in which we were now cast. The world and we, ourselves, waited to see whether the Jewish people possessed the capacity, the courage, the perseverance which are requisite for the building of a state. Through these fifteen years, the world and we, ourselves, witnessed with mounting wonder and admiration the unfolding drama of a people's ingathering and of a national reconstruction such as mankind had seldom, if ever, witnessed.

During these years, Israel made good, and in a breath-taking way, on land, on sea, and in the air, in city, town and village, in swamp and wilderness, in

schools and academies, in social services, in the revival of a language and a literature. Israel also made good on the battle-field, to the amazement of its friends and the confounding of its enemies.

And the young state, by its faithful allegiance to the free world, the development of its educational system and its institutions of higher learning, its advanced social legislation, the aid which it has extended to the newly emergent states of Africa and Asia, has revealed to the world the ground-tone of its chosen way of life, its fundamental purposes and dominant interests as a nation. All this has filled us with inestimable pride. It has been for us a rarer gift than the gold which we have given to make its foundations strong.

