



Daniel Jeremy Silver Collection Digitization Project

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

MS-4850: Daniel Jeremy Silver Papers, 1972-1993.

Series II: Subject Files, 1956-1993, undated.

Reel
32

Box
10

Folder
450a

Union of American Hebrew Congregations, Lebanon,
correspondence, newspaper clippings, and sermons, 1982.

L. Y. RAHMANI

14, Emek Rephaim Street
Jerusalem, Israel

Jerusalem, 24. August 1948

Dear Daniel,

Many thanks for your kind letter of the 5th. Sincere congratulations to the appearance of your book. I am very much looking forward to it.

Any war - through all ages - brings out all the evil - Death and the Devil constantly riding with the Knight - as in Dürer's etching. The present war may, on the Real-Politik level, bring larger dividends to the Christians of the Lebanon, who did not participate at all, and to the Americans, who get there a foothold against the Russians. That America and the Europeans should raise such a shout against the Jews as "again" being the executioners of the "Innocent Children" is not so surprising: it fits very old Christian concepts and assuages / guilt-feelings of these nations about having kept silent throughout the Holocaust of the Jewish People.

What really concerns me, is what this war is doing to the souls of my own people here - these who have to do the job and get used to it. About the Jewish nature of this state of ours I am I concerned, about it's not becoming - as in fact at present it is - a sort of Rhodesia, with cheap native labour; and first and foremost, about the refusal of my people to come and live here, in that Holy Land of Zion and Jerusalem, when they now can freely do so, beyond pestering the Lord to bring them here. Indeed what worries me further is, how far all those Jews who will remain in the Diaspora, shall remain Jewish at all (though I think some at least will) and how they will exist, if this State, even and just without wars, slowly dwindles down to a sort of Tyre to Djunia Maronite 'Petit Liban'. But all these are the normal Jiddische Zores, which you can read up as from the sayings of some of our Sages since the 3rd century and probably even earlier.

The enclosed may interest both Adele and you - perhaps also prove useful to you in discussion with museum- and other people, who tend to see the PLC as a friendly Liberation Army.

All the very best to all of you for the New Year - Love to you all

Yours

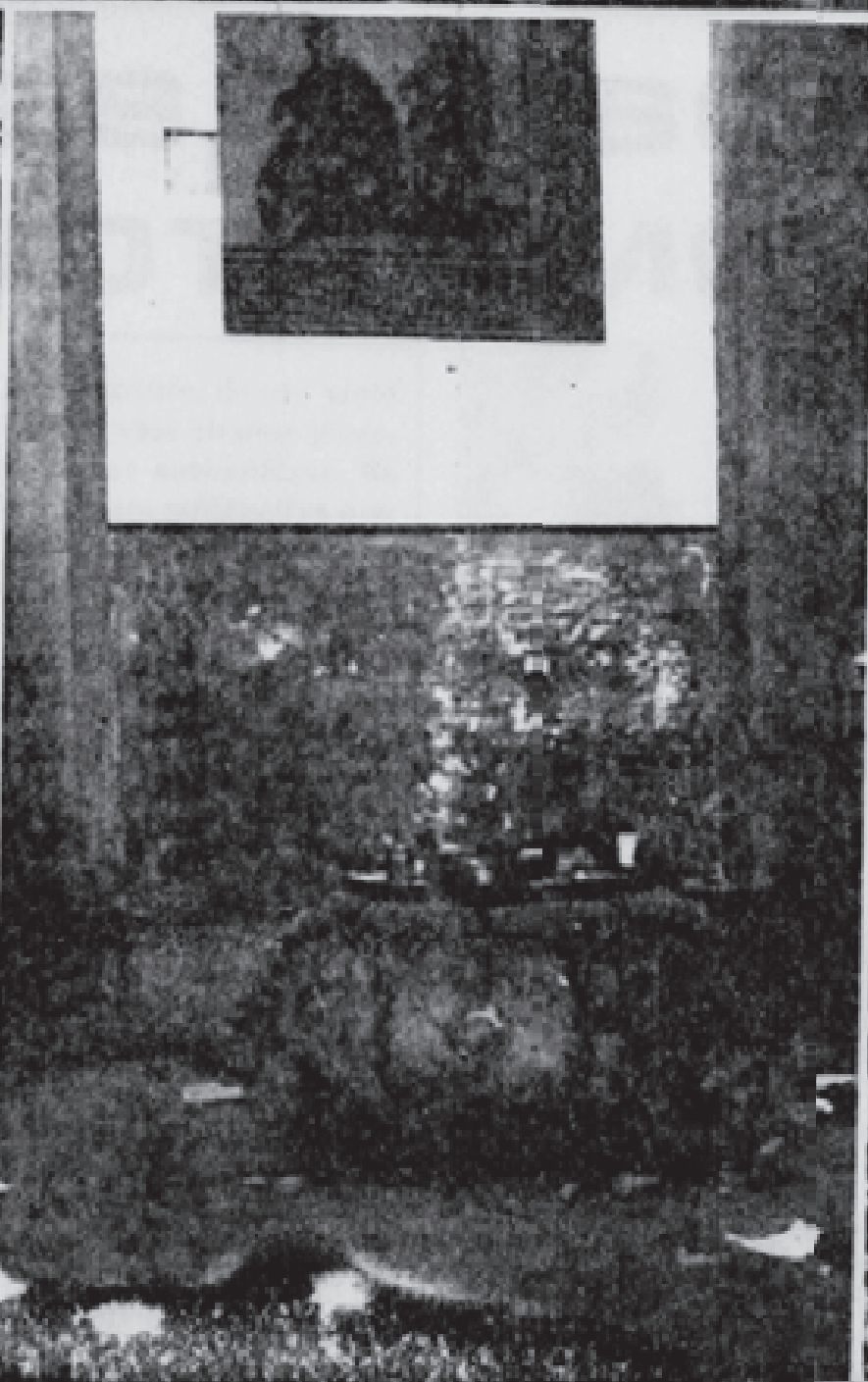
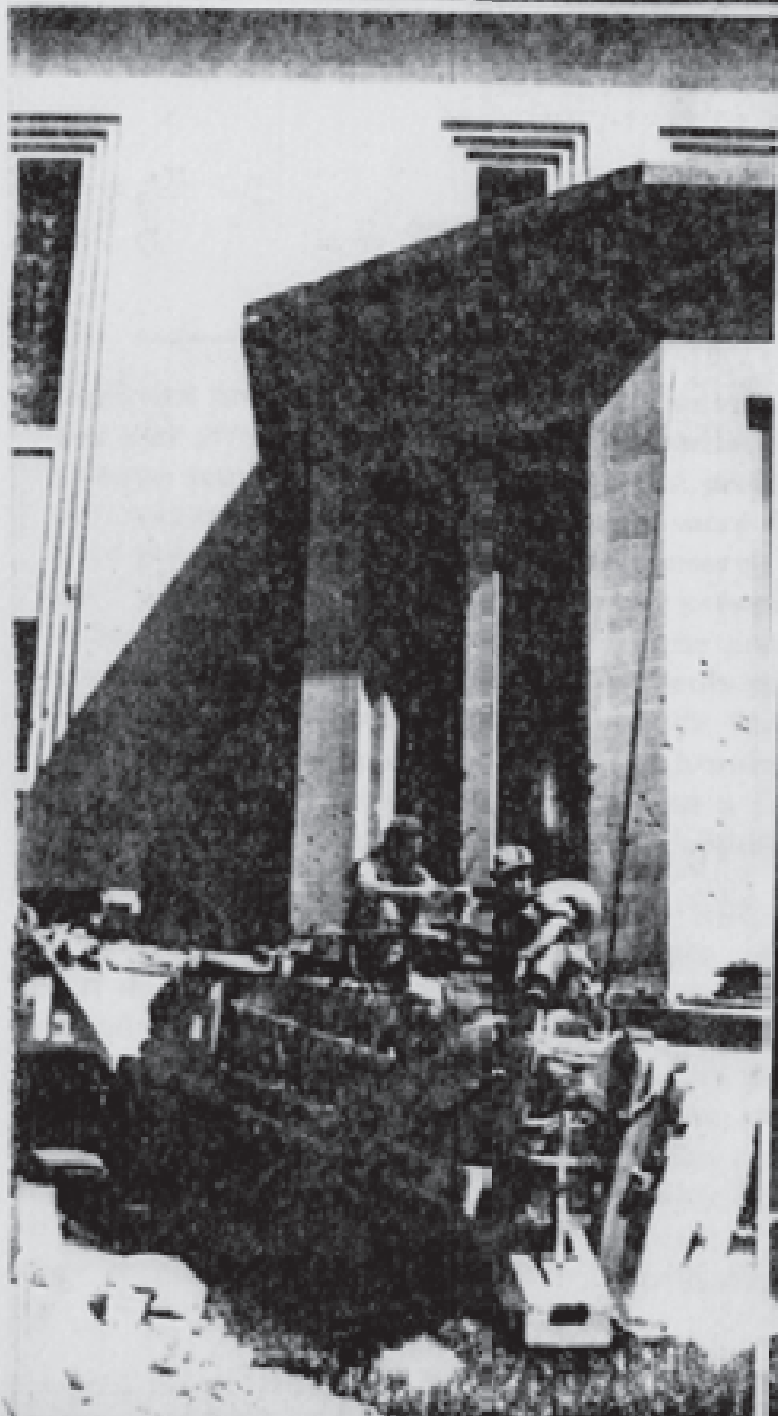
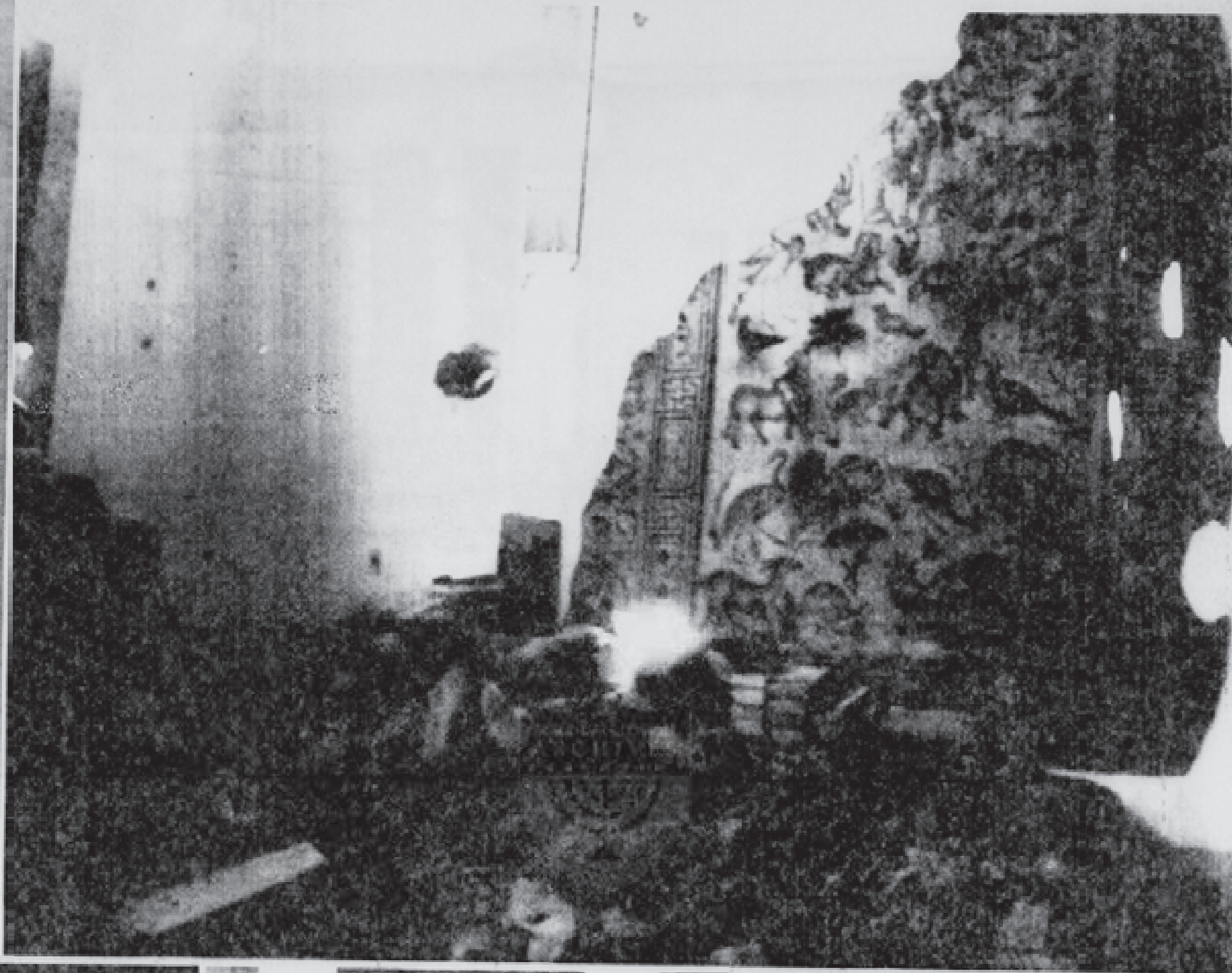
L Y R

LA REVUE DU LIBAN

ET DE L'ORIENT ARABE

N° 1186 - DU 14 AU 21 AOÛT 1982 - 500 PIASTRES LIBANAISES

IL
FAUT
SAUVER
LE
MUSEE





Partout un spectacle de désolation dans le secteur du Musée.

OU ONT PASSE LES TRESORS DE NOTRE MUSEE ?

Ils ont profané ce haut lieu de civilisation et de culture, ils ont violé par leur présence, par leur ignorance, par leur regard vide chaque pièce, chaque œuvre d'art, témoin d'un passé prestigieux et authentique. Ils ont saccagé, souillé, sali, volé cet antre sacré des valeurs millénaires que tout peuple digne de son humanité conserve jalousement, pieusement, qu'il regarde avec amour, admiration, et présente aux autres avec fierté.

Mais eux, barbares ou terroristes, que comprennent-ils à l'art, à la civilisation? Quelle valeur peut avoir à leurs yeux un vase irrisé en verre d'époque gréco-romaine, une poterie du 3ème millénaire, des sarcophages, une mosaïque, des statuettes en bronze, etc...?

Ignares ils l'étaient et le demeureront à jamais, laissant après leur passage mort et destruction. La steppe n'apprécie pas la culture.

Il m'était impossible de faire taire ce cri de révolte qui venait du plus profond de mon être, en visitant, vendredi dernier, le Musée National de Beyrouth qui était passé entre les mains des Syriens et des Palestiniens depuis l'entrée de la F.F.A. au Liban en novembre 1976. Ce jour-là de triste mémoire, un crime, impardon-

nable et toujours impuni, était commis contre la civilisation, par tous ceux qui ont permis à ces hordes de s'installer dans le secteur même du Musée. Ce jour-là on venait de signer l'arrêt de mort du Musée National de Beyrouth témoin vivant et authentique de toute une civilisation qui remonte à la préhis-



La façade principale touchée de plein fouet.



Les blindés israéliens investissent le secteur.

Le silence de l'émir Maurice Chéhab est incompréhensible

Par NELLY HELOU



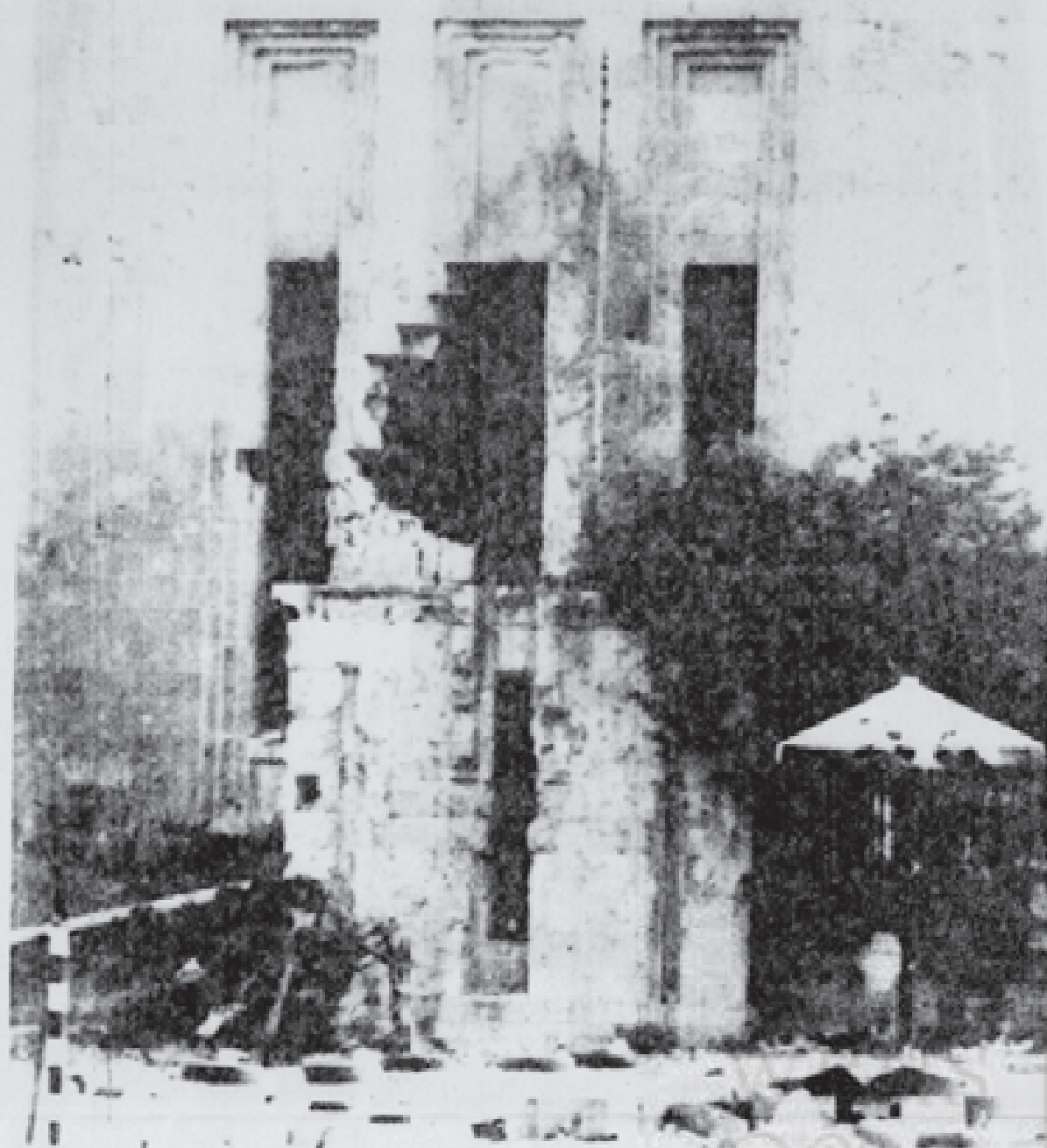
Positions israéliennes à Beyrouth.

toire, une sorte de microcosme où le visiteur revit au présent les millénaires écoulés alors que Byblos depuis 7000 ans est le témoin privilégié d'un développement technologique et culturel extraordinaire. Les différentes étapes de l'aventure humaine se retrouvent là, de la cueillette et de la chasse à celle du élevage et de l'agriculture, de l'alphabet phénicien à la civilisation gréco-romaine, etc.

La profanation d'un Musée aurait dû déclencher de violentes réactions et une action positive de la part des services concernés de l'UNESCO. Ici, elle n'a suscité que silence et indifférence à l'échelle nationale et internationale. Pourquoi?

Les Syriens commencent par s'installer dans les jardins du Musée. Progressivement ils investissent le toit même du bâtiment, y fixent leurs barricades et leurs canons et y crachent de ce lieu même leurs obus sur les quartiers est de la capitale. Puis, avec le temps, se sentant

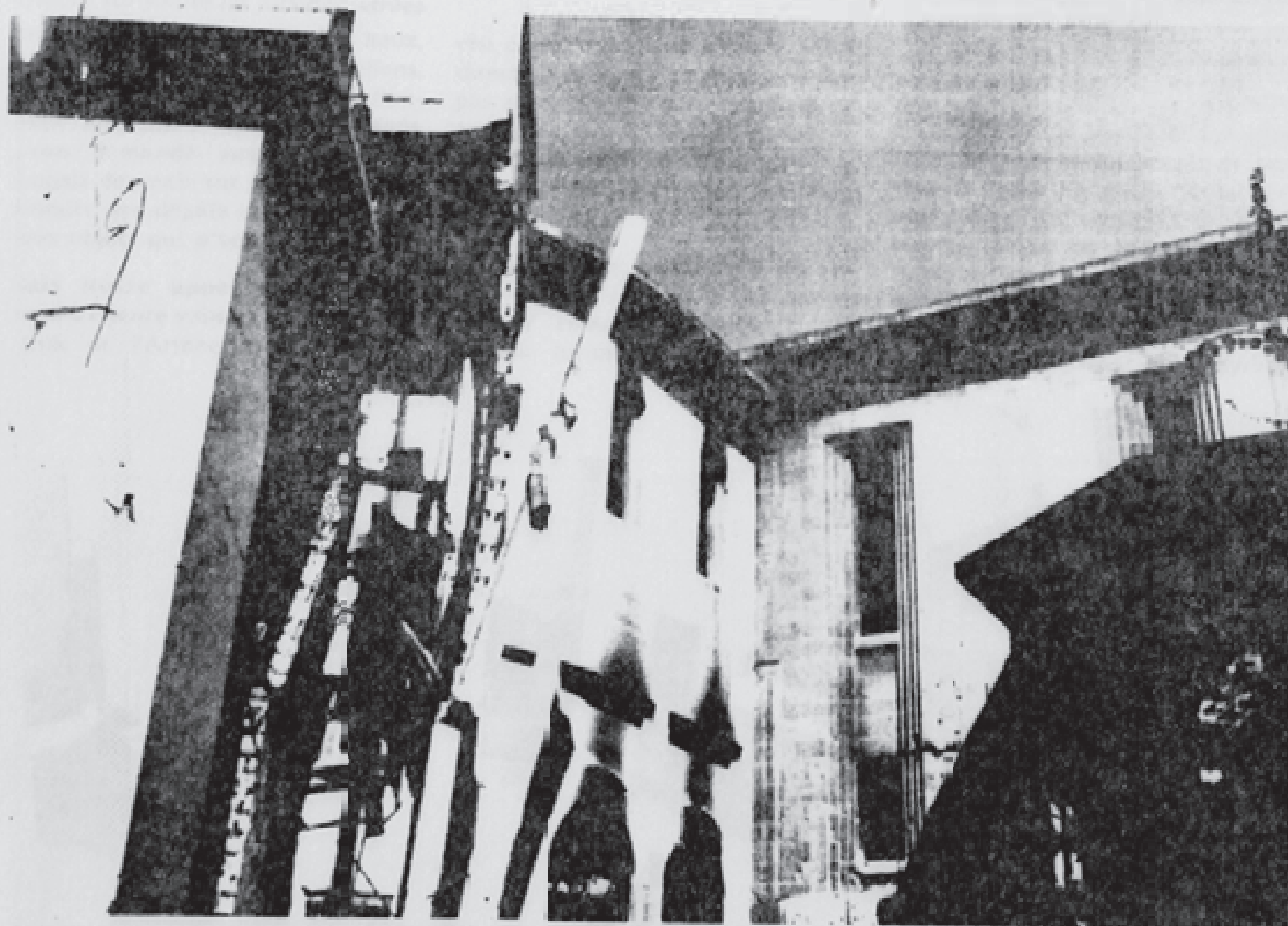
LE MUSEE DE BEYROUTH



Gros plan sur un impact d'obus.



Un char israélien du côté Est du Musée.



Les façades latérales sont, elles aussi, criblées de balles et touchées par les obus.

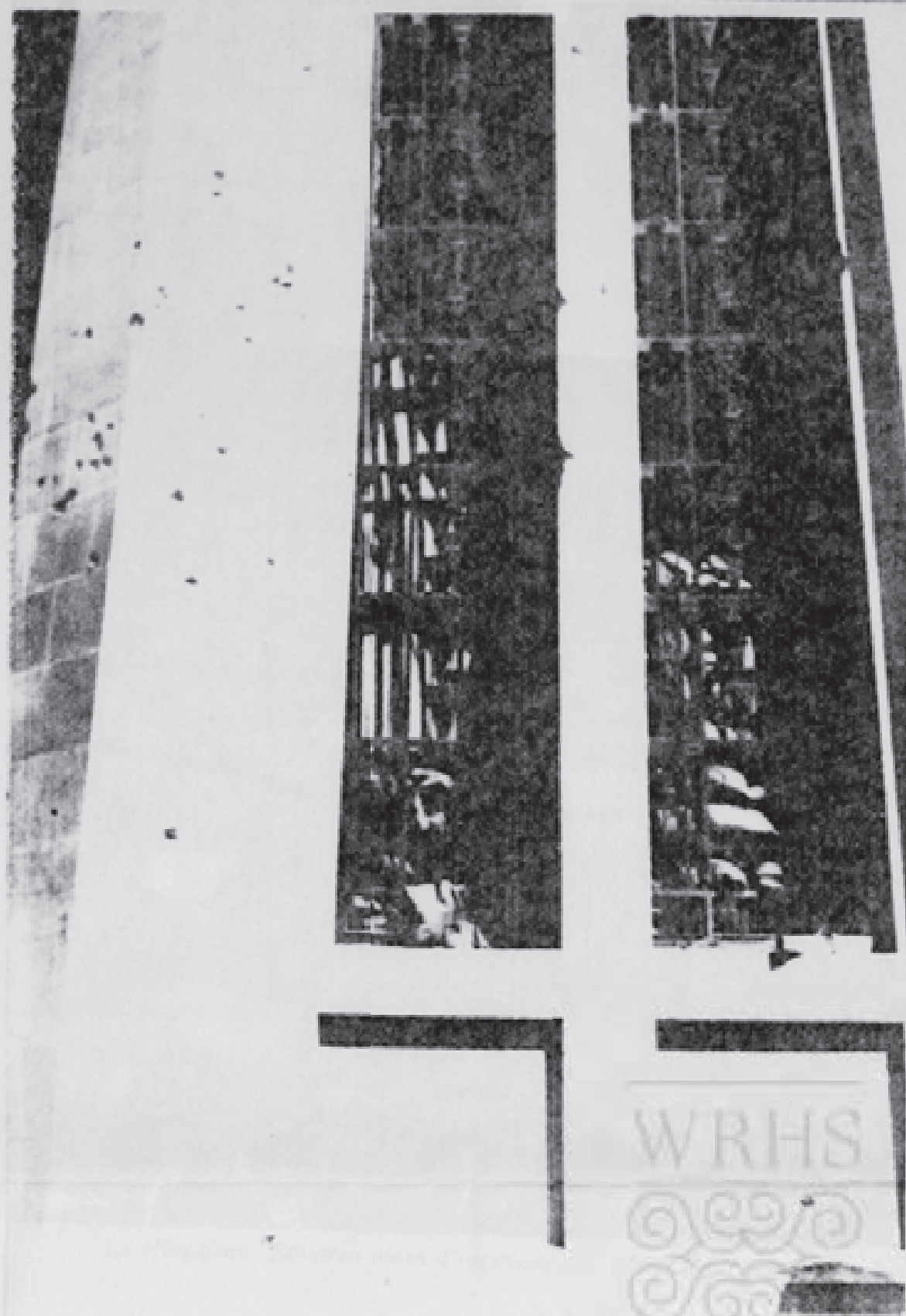
chez eux dans notre pays, ils ont cent les portes et profanent de bottes ce lieu sacré de culture. On circule en principe à pas fe

Pourtant ce secteur du N avait été pieusement protégé cours de la guerre des deux au 1975-76 par les soldats et militaires de l'Armée libanaise qui avaient leurs propres positions. L'officier en charge du secteur à l'époque, le tenant Camille Ala, nourri de sources spirituelles d'un libanais pur, imprégné des idées de May, affirmait sans cesse: «Je défends le Musée au prix de mon sang, de ma vie». C'est là l'ultime trésor de nos patrimoines.

Hélas, un beau jour, en novembre 1976, la volonté politique, asservie au monde arabe, a été plus forte que le patriotisme sincère d'un groupe de militaires libanais, qui ont cédé contre-cœur leurs positions aux Syriens de la F.F.A.

**DETRUIRE TOUTE UNE
CIVILISATION**

Aujourd'hui, à la suite d'une bataille qui s'est déroulée dans le secteur du Musée, les Sy



Les Syro-Palestiniens se protégeaient à l'intérieur par des sacs de sable placés sur toutes les façades vitrées.

Les Palestiniens ont évacué les lieux, renonçant à la fuite devant les Israéliens, qui, à peine installés au Musée, l'ont ouvert aussitôt à la presse. « Nous vous demandons de venir sur place faire l'inventaire des dégâts et récupérer les objets qui n'ont pas été volés.

Mais notre appel est demeuré jusqu'à l'heure vain », me dit le porte-parole de l'Armée israélienne. J'ai

eu du mal à comprendre, par ailleurs, que la direction générale du Musée ne veut pas se rendre sur place pour ne pas se compromettre du fait de la présence israélienne. Certaines susceptibilités sont des fois mal placées...

D'autant que, depuis 1976, les visites étaient interdites à qui que ce soit. Y compris peut-être au directeur lui-même... Pourquoi, dès



Il faut marcher sur les décombres pour pénétrer à l'intérieur de ce qui représente en principe un haut-lieu de civilisation.



Sous cette «galerie de l'Alphabet», ils ont installé leurs lits de camp dans la saleté et le désordre.

lors, ne pas profiter de l'occasion et récupérer les lieux?

La façade du Musée et les côtés latéraux sont endommagés et portent les traces des balles, l'impact des obus. Mais c'est en pénétrant à l'intérieur même du Musée que l'on reçoit un véritable choc, on a envie même de pleurer, de détourner son regard de tant de saletés, d'ordures, d'immondices laissés par les Syriens

dans leur fuite.

Le sous-sol est inondé d'eau.

Impossible d'y pénétrer. La grande salle, ce beau et vaste Hall du Musée avait été littéralement transformée en camp retranché syro-palestinien.

Des graffiti sur les murs, des vêtements sales, des casseroles, des chaussures, un casque, abandonnés



Le beau hall principal du Musée



transformé en zone de campement par les Syriens et consorts.



Le «Septime Sévère» plein d'immondices touché par un obus.



Un pantalon sale sur les genoux de cette statue millénaire.

LE MUSEE DE BEYROUTH

sur le sol. Sous la «Galerie de l'Alphabet» eux, les ignorants, ont aménagé une soi-disant chambre avec quelques pierres en béton pour dormir, cuisiner, etc.

Ils ont installé d'autres chambres et des toilettes. Un pantalon dégueulasse traîne sur un beau socle en

marbre; dans l'une de ces belles mosaïques murales, ils ont fait une grosse ouverture pour y installer une arme à feu. Partout des sacs de sable, des armes légères abandonnées, un gros trou d'obus dans le «Hall de Septime Sévère», des traces de barbarie dans la «Galerie d'Ech-

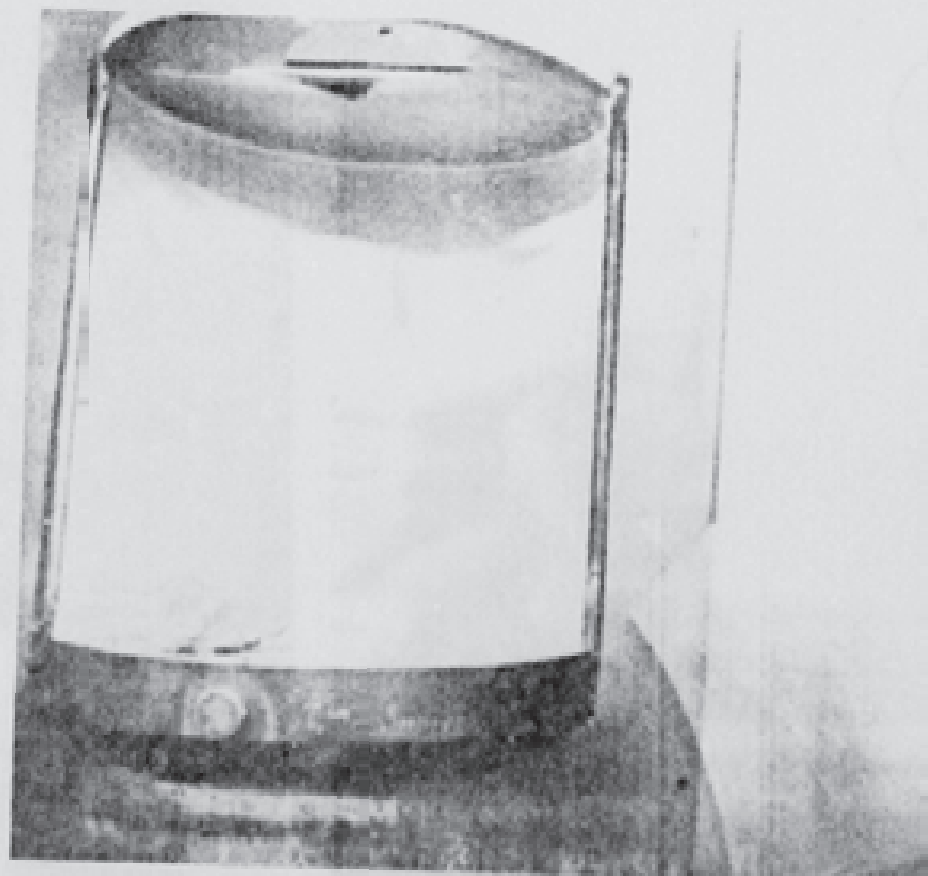
moun», dans le «Hall d'Ahiram» et sans cesse le contraste flagrant entre la civilisation et la steppe...

Heureusement que le fameux sarcophage d'Ahiram, des sarcophages, des mosaïques et d'autres pièces de grande valeur sont bien

protégés par d'imposants blocs de sable et de béton édifiés par l'émir Maurice Chéhab, aussi que les petites pièces de ont été retirées du Musée et en lieu sûr au Liban et n'iront à l'étranger. Là-dessus, malheureusement, on ne peut avoir aucun



A la galerie supérieure toutes les vitrines sont brisées et vides de tout contenu.





Les Syriens ont inscrit sur ce bloc de marbre le mot barbare, Qui l'est vraiment? L'information précise, car l'émir Maurice Khéhab, le directeur général des Antiquités, est introuvable. Impossible de le joindre. Pourtant on se serait attendu à ce qu'il fasse une

conférence de presse, même en dehors du Musée, s'il ne veut pas se compromettre avec les Israéliens, pour expliquer à tous les journalistes et grands reporters de la presse



Le casar gros, notre collaboratrice Nelly Hérou observe cette belle poterie ancienne sauvée lors de la dernière bataille.

internationale qui se trouvaient au Musée, vendredi dernier, l'impact de ces lieux de haute Culture. J'en ai entendu plus d'un dire: «Il n'y a pas un Libanais pour nous expliquer la

valeur et l'importance du Musée». Pourtant nous connaissons tous le rôle des médias d'information à l'échelle internationale. Pourquoi... (Suite en page 62)



Des graffiti sur les murs.



Des pierres millénaires de valeur inestimable, abandonnées sur le sol.

LE MUSEE DE BEYROUTH

SI ON AVAIT TOUCHE AU PRADO

La galerie supérieure, qui avait été soigneusement murée, est défoncée, et offre elle aussi le même aspect de désolation, de tristesse, de ruines.

Des débris de verre jonchent le sol. Toutes les vitrines qui recelaient de merveilleuses pièces d'art, de véritables bijoux sont vides, brisées, défoncées. Par terre, des pierres des II^e et III^e millénaires sont abandonnées en

vrac comme s'il s'agissait de quelques galets sans valeur. Et pourtant à lire les inscriptions on réalise ce que chaque pièce représente. Des poteries ont été brisées. Une seule est demeurée intacte. Au fait, qu'est-ce qui a été volé, qu'est-ce qui a été épargné? Comment le savoir. Les Israéliens affirment avoir trouvé dans les poches des Syriens et des Palestiniens des pièces de valeur.

L'important est de sauver au plus

vite ce qui reste de notre Musée National. Pour cela, il faut exiger son évacuation totale de tout élément armé, et la présence immédiate de l'Etat. Est-ce demander l'impossible?

En quittant les lieux l'âme triste, je garde en mémoire la réflexion de Julia Navarro, une journaliste espagnole: «si on avait touché à une seule pierre du Prado de Madrid, la réaction des Espagnols aurait été terrible...»

NELLY HELOU



Les Israéliens à l'intérieur du Musée National de Beyrouth.



Ces armes abandonnées par les Syro-Palestiniens sur une barricade installée à l'intérieur du Musée face au champ de course.



des sacs de sable à l'intérieur du Musée.

Congregation Beth Israel

ORGANIZED 1854

5600 North Braeswood Boulevard

Houston, Texas 77096

SAMUEL EGAL KARFF, D.H.L.

RABBI

October 28, 1982

Dear Danny:

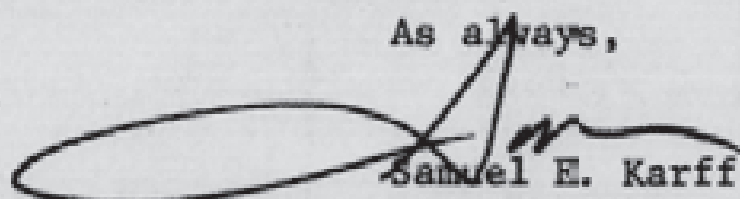
At the last meeting of the Journal we agreed to commission a series of articles (which may or may not appear in a single issue) on the meaning of the Zionist vision in the light of the events of this past Summer. Since the articles will not appear until the next Fall, we are thinking not in terms of a current-event-bound report, but a "think piece."

I would like to invite you to contribute such an article from your own perspective. Was the Summer of '82 a "watershed"? How did you respond personally to the events and to others' response to the events? How do you sort out the issue of power and morality - survival and purpose - in Israel today?

I think you have a special contribution to make to any discussion of this theme in our Journal. I hope you will accept the commission. Let me hear from you.

With every good wish, I am

As always,



Samuel E. Karff

Rabbi Daniel J. Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

P. S. We would like the manuscript by April 15th.

November 8, 1982

Rabbi Samuel E. Karff
Congregation Beth Israel
5600 North Braeswood Blvd.
Houston, Texas, 77096

Dear Sam:

I will be happy to put together a piece for the Journal
and I will try to have it in by Income Tax day.

Incidentally, I have been appointed editor of the CCAR
Centennial Volume. I took the appointment on the pledge
that it would be free of all interference and would be
the work of a small editorial committee which will con-
sist of you, Mike Myers and myself. Half of the volume
is to be a commissioned serious history of the Confer-
ence and the other half a series of essays on issues
raised by that history. I hope you will agree to serve.

With all good wishes I remain

As always,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

~~Handwritten scribbles and signatures at the top left of the page.~~

Jonathan Stein ✓
Murray Blackman ✓
" Seltzman ✓
Bernard Neplman ✓
H. Bruce Korman ✓

✓ N J Zucker ✓ Lawrence Kushner ✓
② Albert Potkin ✓ Danell I Schwartz ✓
Mayer Keller ✓ Lou Steinger ✓
Ronald Bierman ✓ Max Shapiro ✓
Allen Frechling ✓ Michael Zidek ✓
Isaiah Zelden ✓ Aevia Rubin ✓
Hillel Cohn - CA ✓ Barry Friedman ✓
Joseph Lecher ✓ Martin Friedman ✓
Stephen Chester ✓ Barry Greene ✓
" Foster ✓ Blanche Bloom ✓
Arnold Sobel ✓ Martin Zolberg ✓
Mark Panoff ✓ Jerome Davidson ✓
H. Hirsch Cohen ✓ Balfour Brickner ✓
Eugene Lipman ✓ Harold Sobel ✓
Haskel Bernett ✓ Judea Miller ✓
Jeffrey Baflo ✓ Jack Stern jr ✓
Philip Kiang ✓ Simon Maslin ✓
Alden Sugerman ✓ Ricky Steinberg ✓
Herb Bronstein ✓ Lechi Zutterman ✓
Robt J Meyer ✓ Randall Falk ✓
Ronald Loff ✓ Jack Bampore ✓

The Temple


DANIEL JEREMY SILVER - RABBI

UNIVERSITY CIRCLE AT SILVER PARK • CLEVELAND, OHIO 44106 • 791-7755
BRANCH: 26000 SHAKER BLVD. • BEACHWOOD, OHIO 44122 • 831-3233

The Journal of Reform Judaism has asked me to do a piece on my reactions to Lebanon and to "our" reactions to Lebanon. If you spoke on Lebanon over the holidays or immediately thereafter, I would appreciate receiving xeroxes of any of your views which appeared in the local press. I am writing to an unscientific, random sampling of congregational rabbis. On the basis of this material I propose to analyze not only the approaches taken but the ideas which motivated them.

You should know that mine will not be a "neutral" piece. I have a point of view. I was not deeply troubled by the Lebanese invasion although I think a number of serious errors in judgment were made. However, rest assured that I will make no ad hominum arguments. I am interested primarily in the basis from which we make our various judgments and what this says of our understanding of Judaism.

Sincerely,



Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

The Temple

DANIEL JEREMY SILVER - RABBI

UNIVERSITY CIRCLE AT SILVER PARK • CLEVELAND, OHIO 44106 • 791-7755
BRANCH: 26000 SHAKER BLVD. • BEACHWOOD, OHIO 44122 • 831-3233

November 12, 1982

Rabbi Randall M. Falk
Congregation Ohabei Shalom
5015 Harding Rd.
Nashville, Tenn. 37205

Dear Randall:

The Journal of Reform Judaism has asked me to do a piece on my reactions to Lebanon and to "our" reactions to Lebanon. If you spoke on Lebanon over the holidays or immediately thereafter, I would appreciate receiving xeroxes of any of your views which appeared in the local press. I am writing to an unscientific, random sampling of congregational rabbis. On the basis of this material I propose to analyze not only the approaches taken but the ideas which motivated them.

You should know that mine will not be a "neutral" piece. I have a point of view. I was not deeply troubled by the Lebanese invasion although I think a number of serious errors in judgment were made. However, rest assured that I will make no ad hominem arguments. I am interested primarily in the basis from which we make our various judgments and what this says of our understanding of Judaism.

Sincerely,



Daniel Jeremy Silver

*I hope this material will be helpful. I am
sending the sermon itself so that you can
DJS:mp see how distorted the newspaper report is -*

*Regards,
Randall*

The Temple

DANIEL JEREMY SILVER - RABBI

UNIVERSITY CIRCLE AT SILVER PARK • CLEVELAND, OHIO 44106 • 791-7755
BRANCH: 2600C SHAKER BLVD. • BEACHWOOD, OHIO 44122 • 831-3233

November 12, 1982


Rabbi H. Hirsch Cohen
Director, B'nai Brith Hillel Foundation
University of Connecticut
N. Eagleville Rd.
Storrs, Conn. 06268

Dear Hirsch:

The Journal of Reform Judaism has asked me to do a piece on my reactions to Lebanon and to "our" reactions to Lebanon. If you spoke on Lebanon over the holidays or immediately thereafter, I would appreciate receiving xeroxes of any of your views which appeared in the local press. I am writing to an unscientific, random sampling of congregational rabbis. On the basis of this material I propose to analyze not only the approaches taken but the ideas which motivated them.

You should know that mine will not be a "neutral" piece. I have a point of view. I was not deeply troubled by the Lebanese invasion although I think a number of serious errors in judgment were made. However, rest assured that I will make no ad hominum arguments. I am interested primarily in the basis from which we make our various judgments and what this says of our understanding of Judaism.

Sincerely,



Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

*Yes, I did,
but nothing
to xerox. My
views were
never reported
in the local
press. I
appreciate
your thinking
of me, & I
look forward
to your
paper.*

*Warm regards,
Jewish*

The Temple -- Nashville, Tennessee
Yom Kippur Morning Sermon
September 27, 1982
Rabbi Randall M. Falk

SPECIAL SERMON ON ISRAEL

Dear Friends,

May I say that, in all humility, you almost heard an excellent sermon this morning on "Taking Reform Judaism Seriously". It was a subject that I felt was of real importance to this congregation, and which perhaps you will hear at another time. But a very important discussion took place last Tuesday night at the Board of Trustees meeting of our Temple that changed the pattern for this morning's sermon. Let me share it with you, because I wish that you all might have been there to hear this very significant and challenging discussion.

We had been requested, as had the other congregations in this community, to provide the opportunity for someone to speak to the congregation on behalf of our Jewish Federation of Nashville and Bonds for Israel on the necessity of our being aware of the great burden being carried by the State of Israel financially, as well as militarily, and of the great importance of our being prepared to help shoulder that burden. The Board of Trustees accepted this request that had come through our President, and debated it for some time. Everyone felt that certainly we wanted to express, in these difficult and dark hours, our support, our standing side-by-side, with our brethren in Israel. And yet there was reluctance to break precedent, for we have never had a guest speaker in our pulpit on the High Holydays, nor have we ever made an appeal for funds directly or indirectly in these times. And so as the Board debated the pros and cons of how we should respond to this very important request by leaders of our community - members, in fact, of our congregation - gradually it seemed to develop that a compromise was in order, and that the Rabbi be requested to address the problem that we face together with our brethren in Israel in these days. And this is what I propose to do this morning.

There are three basic concerns that I would share with you on this Yom Kippur. The first concern is one that is raised because of the terrible things we read in the daily newspapers and hear on the television, day-by-day, about Israel's responsibility for murder and assassination of so many men, women, and children - civilians - in the land of Lebanon. Certainly the loss of one life of any civilian, much less a military person, is of grave concern and deep sorrow to us. This question as to what has happened to the moral fiber in Israel, because of the tragic war in Lebanon, needs to be answered, I think, by more than propaganda and hysteria. I want to answer that one first by sharing with you an "Order of the Day" that was issued by the Israel Defense Force on June 11, 1982, at the time of the beginning of the war in Lebanon. I offer it, not because it answers all the questions of how Israel has conducted itself in Lebanon, or because I can claim that this Order was never violated, but because it is important to know that it is the view of Israel and its forces, and its sense of humanity, which has been too frequently omitted in discussions by the media of this past-summer's war. This is the Order from the Israel Defense Force:

"It is forbidden to fire unless fired upon. It is forbidden, without any exception, to take booty from any source. Anyone found carrying booty of any kind will receive the maximum punishment. Do not harm, do not disturb, the peaceful civilian population. Treat women with respect; they are not to be molested.

"You are not to disturb any cultural center, any antiquities, museums, art galleries, churches, mosques, or sacred places.

"Every war arouses in people lust, hate, contempt for life, and feelings of vengeance against the enemy. Despite these perfectly natural emotions and sentiments, you must remember that you are a human being, and as a human being you must respect other human beings, and uphold all those fundamental values which are the basis for the preservation of our civilization.

"Though you are fighting a vicious enemy that has resorted to terror against innocent citizens and defenseless women and children, you are not to engage in any vengeful act against your enemy if you take him prisoner.

"Above all, what is most important is, you must respect the sanctity of man, even that of your enemy.

"The eyes of the world will be looking at you as you enter there. There will be reporters, photographers, and television cameras. Whatever you do will reflect upon the people of Israel. Any act of desecration, taking of booty or desecration of holy places, mistreating your enemy, will reflect badly upon the army, and upon the State of Israel.

"Above all, you must remember to value the Jewish tradition that even in times of war you must remember: ki adam l'adam hu - that man-to-man, you are a human being."

The order is followed by a passage from the Book of Joshua in which the Israelites are called to account by God for taking booty in a battle against Ai, a city-state they had fought. It closes with Joshua's lament: "What calamity you have brought upon us!". So our modern soldiers were challenged to keep an ancient covenant of respect for life and property.

Now I ask you: do you know of any other army, in any era of time, that has gone into battle with this kind of admonition to obey the moral precepts of our heritage? We can be very proud of the fact that, despite all of the horror pictures what were shown over and over again, it is a matter of record that, not only did our men go into the struggle with this kind of Order, but that there is testimony by many observers that they followed this Order to the best of their abilities, especially when the enemy was hiding among civilian men and women. So, this matter of the moral caliber of Israel is one in which we can take pride, and with which we can align ourselves with a sense of integrity and honor.

The second concern that I would share with you is a matter of self-interest, because more than once I have heard American Jews here and elsewhere say: How can the State of Israel do this to us, to world Jewry? How can they so conduct themselves that they turn the world against us? The increase of anti-Semitism will be tremendous as they continue to defy world opinion and to prosecute a war that they felt was necessary. 31

Let me hasten to assure you that the actions of Israel, whether we agree or disagree with all or part of them in this war in Lebanon, will not increase anti-Semitism. It may give anti-Semites what we call in Hebrew a "pitchon-peh" - an "excuse" for letting out their vile filth, their declarations of hatred against Jews. But it will not be the cause. Anti-Semites and those who, for whatever reasons, oppose the existence of Israel or of Jews, will simply have found another excuse to hate us and our brothers in the Middle East. When the Soviet Union's Breznev condemns Israel for atrocities, I wonder if the world stops to ask itself: what has happened in Afghanistan and in Poland in recent months? How does Breznev have the audacity to condemn Israel for three hundred dying at the hands of Christians in Lebanese camps, when thousands continue to die at the hands of communist soldiers in Afghanistan and in Poland? While two wrongs never make a right, it seems to me that it is the greatest hypocrisy for Breznev to sit in judgment on Israel. And what about those who dare compare the Christian phalangists' murder of three-hundred Muslims, without resistance from the Israel army, to Babi Yar, where not three hundred, but two-hundred thousand Jews died at the hands of the Nazis while the Russian army stood by. 11)

Equally disheartening was one of the saddest occurrences that took place this season: the Roman Catholic Pope's embrace of the P.L.O. leader, Arafat, the terrorist who could only besmirch the Pope's exalted role as a respected religious leader in this world. How must the survivors of Arafat's massacre of Maronite Christians feel when they see the picture of the Pope embracing their loved one's murderer? How can a Pope justify urging Israel to come to terms with terrorists, that Israel and the P.L.O. should recognize each other, after thirty-four years of the Vatican's steadfast refusal to follow the example of almost every other civilized nation in recognizing the State of Israel? How dare the Pope stand and encourage Arafat to make peace when he has yet to accept the existence of the State of Israel? The cartoon in the Nashville Banner the other evening told it all when it showed the Pope, at the conclusion of an embrace with Arafat, being told by Arafat, "I feel so much cleaner now that we have come together", and the Pope's white robe is splattered with the filth from the bloody hands of the terrorist leader.

I do not want to leave you, though, with the feeling that all of those whom we thought were friends or allies have deserted us in these difficult hours. There are Christian friends, and there are scores of them, who have remained steadfast in their support of Israel and world Jewry, even though they, as we, may disagree with aspects of Israel's participation in this war.

I want to share with you a letter, a letter that was sent to the Rabbis of the three congregations in Nashville, by a man whom I think is the personification of the true Christian gentleman. This is a letter written by Professor Walter Harrelson of the Vanderbilt Divinity School. It is one of a number of letters of support we have received during these Holydays. This one, I think, summarizes so beautifully what many Christian friends are thinking and feeling with us in these times. He writes:

"Dear Colleagues and Friends:

"I am taking the liberty of writing to all three of you on this Holiday season to express to you and to your congregations my special greetings on this New Year's Day.

"You and the members of your congregation must feel the sting of abuse laid upon the Jewish people and the State of Israel these days by persons who, whether in ignorance or in malice, use the horrors done in Beirut to justify that abuse.

"Many of us know better than that and feel humiliation that such atrocities would be used by people to lay blame upon the Jewish people or upon Israel. If mistakes and miscalculations were made -- and that does seem to me to have been the case -- the atrocities were committed by Christians inflamed with violence and mad to seize the opportunities to take vengeance.

"I know that you and the congregations you serve are weighed down by grief over the killings in Beirut as are many others. We live in times of desperate evil, but our God will not permit us to fall utterly into despair or to fail to pursue justice and peace and renewal of life.

"Pray for us Christians, as we pray for you and the Jewish people at this holy season.

"Faithfully yours, Walter Harrelson".

In these difficult and trying days, it is good to be reminded that there are friends, as there have always been, in the Christian world, who will stand side-by-side with us to face the darkness and to move on, we pray, to a better day.

Now my third and final concern is with Israel itself, and especially with its government. Here I see no reason to remain silent. There is every reason for the American Jew to support the courageous Jews of Israel who are opposed to the recent actions of their government. I have feared and opposed Menachem Begin since the day of his election as Prime Minister. He is neither a man of peace, nor one who can understand and see the necessity of regarding Israel as a part of a world brotherhood. I want to support the three courageous editors of Israel's major newspapers, one of whom is a former student and a cherished friend of mine. I wish everyone of you had seen them on television last Tuesday night on A.B.C.'s "Night Line" when, one by one, even the one whose newspaper

had been a supporter of Begin and his government, came forth and condemned the Israeli army's action in Beirut and in the camps. One called for Begin's resignation. I want to support 400,000 Israeli men and women who marched in Tel Aviv this past weekend, protesters against their government's actions, urging that Israel's troops leave Lebanon immediately.

I want to send word that American Jews are proud of the democratic spirit in the State of Israel that allows protest and disagreement in times like these. What other country can you imagine in the Middle East, or the Far East, or in South America, or in almost any corner of this globe, that would allow the kind of democratic dissent that occurs in Israel today? With all my heart and all my strength, I want to support the people of Israel and undergird their sense of commitment to the ideal of democracy. Even though I condemn, and sometimes bitterly, the actions of the present government in the State of Israel, I do so with no less conviction than I oppose many of the policies of the present administration in the United States of America. When I oppose President Reagan's internal policy and his foreign policy in so many areas, not for one moment in that opposition do I even consider withdrawing my support for this great nation. And when I disagree with Begin and his administration, by the same token, not for one moment would I consider withdrawing my support from the great State of Israel.

This, I think, is the most important message that I have for you today: We have no excuse, despite our disagreements, for withholding support from our beleaguered brothers. On the contrary, they need us, as they never did before, in the political arena and with our financial backing to undergird this great democracy. There is no excuse, even in our shame over what occurred in the camps of Lebanon, for weakening our strong ties with our brothers in Israel. Israel's very existence has given world Jewry a greater sense of dignity and pride than we have ever known in modern history.

I want to close with some paragraphs of a statement that was issued by the President of the Association of Reform Zionists of America, Rabbi Roland Gittelsohn. Many of you are members of ARZA, and many more of you should be, because Reform Jews stand firmly and fully in support of Israel. We have roots that we intend to expand and to deepen in Israel as the years go by. We were the first of the major branches of Judaism outside of Israel, to establish our own secondary school, the Leo Baeck School in Haifa. We were the first of the major branches of Judaism in America to establish a branch of our seminary in Jerusalem. And we are among the vanguard who continue day-by-day to try to break down the intra-religious bigotry and the barriers that the ultra-Orthodox insist on maintaining. I want you to hear what Rabbi Gittelsohn wrote; and with this, I would conclude:

"My Jewish heritage compels me to state that military force can never be more than a means to a larger and more important end. When the means are mistaken for ends, neither democracy nor decency nor Judaism can survive. Unbridled militarism, an insatiable appetite for more territory, an obsessive search for absolute physical security - these always have yielded and always will yield catastrophe. This is true in the evil competition among the super powers of the world. It is no less true in the more precarious and fragile circumstances prevailing in the Middle East. Our sages said it well: 'The sword comes into the world because of justice being delayed, because of justice being perverted, and because of those who render wrong decisions'.

"Military strength, divorced from an incessant search for justice, inevitably becomes cancerous. Our own Jewish history provides an instructive and frightening paradigm. The military strength of the Maccabees restored to the Jewish commonwealth of that time a political and religious freedom. It most probably could not have been achieved by any other means. But, in subsequent generations, the Hasmonean descendants of the Maccabees -- confusing means with ends, obsessed with their physical power, blinded to the moral dictates of their heritage -- caused their State to decay and collapse. We must not - I repeat, must not permit anything like that to happen ever again.

"I do not know who first said that Israel must be a Jewish State, not merely a State for Jews, but those words must be indelibly inscribed on our minds and hearts. Israel, of course, cannot survive without military strength, but neither will it survive if it contemns the moral teachings of Judaism. This means - explicitly, specifically, perhaps even painfully - that Israel must be concerned with the welfare and needs of all peoples, not just of Jews. While Israel itself as a State must be the final judge of its own security needs, it must also give decent respect to the views of others, and especially of its stalwart friends in these United States. Israel must be ready to accept some degree of territorial compromise in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza for the sake of peace and with guarantees adequate to insure that peace.

"I have said nothing here that has not been said more forcefully and eloquently by Israelis themselves, indeed, by the very founders of modern Zionism. We Reform Jews are determined to protect and defend Israel in every way we can, to protect and defend it against the enemies from both outside and within the State. We believe, with Theodore Herzl, that the revival of a Jewish State is inextricably bound up with the revival of Judaism. We affirm, with David Ben-Gurion, that Israel will finally be judged, not by its military prowess, but by its moral worth. We endorse the prophetic insistence that Israel must always be 'a light unto the nations', and we pledge our full energy and commitment to that noble and spiritual ideal."

To all of this, we can say together, "Amen".

Franklin

Kol Nidre Service

September 26, 1982

"What I Expect of Israel"

I. Introduction

A. As our celebration of Rosh Ha Shanah drew to a close, word from south of Beirut began to ~~inundate~~ ^{FIRST, THERE WAS A TRICKLE AND NOW} inundate us: the flood of pictures and words is ~~now~~ unrelenting.

1. A terrible massacre of some sixteen ^{UNARMED, INNOCENT} hundred ~~innocent~~ men, women, and children had occurred.

2. The site was two Refugee camps: SABRA AND SHATILA.

WE CONDEMN

3. The ruthless killers, who inflicted this wanton bloodbath, ^{THEY} were Falangists who call themselves Christians;

their murdered victims were Moslems. ^{WE MOURN FOR THEM.}

4. Apparently the decision was made ^{THE} somewhere along Israeli Army chain of command that it would be permissible to allow the Falangists ^{INTO THE CAMPS,} ~~in~~ to rout out some ^{MEMBERS} ~~2,000~~ PLQ allegedly languishing ~~in~~ ^{THERE.} ~~those camps.~~

GAVE
NUMBERS

(?)

WRHS

PLQ
V Languishing
in camp

5. After 36 hours of this terrible slaughter, Israeli Forces ^{FINALLY} moved in to stop this cold blooded murder.

6. These are the facts--the rest of the tale of horror remains subject to speculation.

7. We are left with many unanswered questions; WE WAIT FOR THE FULL TRUTH TO EMERGE. Meanwhile, we are sick at heart and sorely afraid.

WR ^{THERE HAS BEEN}
B. ^A conflict of instincts within me ^{THIS WEEK}.

1. Especially during the High Holy Days, I usually refrain from dealing directly and specifically with ^A particularly sensitive, contemporary matters.

~~a. Rosh Ha Shanah and Yom Kippur demand that we be retrospective and introspective.~~

~~b. I believe that my Pulpit messages should help ^{TO MOTIVATE} you to search your souls, to probe your beliefs, and to ^{URGE} motivate you to bring about constructive~~

~~changes in your life style.~~

2. ~~so much to the surprise to come,~~

~~the disappointment of others, and the~~

~~pleasure of many,~~ ^{So, previously,} I had decided not

to focus attention on the ^{SUBJECT} ~~matter~~ of

Israel and Lebanon except in the most

~~indirect ways as I prepared outlines~~

from which I wanted to talk to you ^{DURING}
~~THESE DAYS OF AUG.~~

C. But, events of the last few days have

convinced me to alter my course. Tonight,

good conscience and a heavy heart compel

me to share my views with you--openly,

candidly, and honestly. I have a feeling

that to do otherwise would be an act of

cowardice and a turning away from ^{MY} moral
~~RESPONSIBILITY.~~
~~leadership~~

D. In essence, I want to talk about what I

expect of Israel and what She should

expect of us.

1. I speak out of concern for those who

live there, most especially because

of my daughter, Shira, and her son, Hadar.

^{THEY LIVE}
a. Since ~~Kennedy~~ is no more than six miles south of Lebanon, I have a vested interest in what preceded Israel's June 6th incursion ~~of her~~ neighbor's turf, and what has transpired since then.

^{FURTHER,}
b. I am convinced that the fate of today's Israelis is tied tightly ^{HOLD IN THE U.S. AND} to the future of Jews the world over.

^{Also,}
2. I speak out of concern for Israel as a part of a Family of Nations.

a. Her peril puts the world at risk, because of the machinations of the United States, the Soviet Union, and the oil-rich Arab states of the Middle East.

b. Her promise could have a great influence on the entire Third World, which needs to find the ~~technological~~ means to escape from the chains of poverty, hunger, and disease--^{THERE IS}

^{NO DOUBT THAT}
Israel holds the keys.

II. ^{There is today a} ~~the~~ Conflict Between Reality and Idealism
A. ^{From its inception} Israel was expected to be different

Zionist

"STATE UNLIKE
ANY OTHER"

1. Its earliest Zionist pioneers came to Palestine to found a State unlike any other. Their mission was to

a. fulfill ~~the~~ the search for a way to return to nature and the soil.

b. ^{to} reclaiming Judaism's homeland and its language.

2. ^{Europe's AFTER} Rising out of ~~the~~ ashes of World War II, Israel was destined not just to be a refuge for the world's homeless Jews, but its very existence was to re-awaken the corporate spirit of World Jewry.

3. There was to be a universal benefit to Israel's birth. "The world will be freer by our liberty, richer by our wealth, greater by our greatness." (Herzl)

B. For most of its 34 years, the ^{NATION'S} struggle ^{AMIDST HATEFUL ARABS} to survive has played havoc with Israel's dreams and visions.

1. Until this year, four major wars and an on-going war of attrition forced Her to be an armed camp.

a. militarism and pragmatism ^{DO} impede social progress.

1. there has been the absolute necessity of remaining a mighty ^{ISRAEL'S} ~~armed camp~~ ^{MILITARY BASTION.}

^{THUS,} 2. ~~so~~ there was the structuring of an economy ^{THUS} to fund a large, finely equipped military force.

b. this ^{has} left little opportunity for the idealism of the pioneering Zionists to come to the fore as a fundamental philosophy of this reborn nation.

2. But, look at the terrible price that Israel has had to pay. Its moral fibre

is rotting away.

- IT HAS*
a. a staggering inflation rate
- IT IS WORKING AWAY*
b. an increasing number of emigrants
- IT IS SUFFERING*
c. a dramatic decrease in immigration
- IT FACES CONSTANT AND GROWING*
d. internal turmoil and political unrest

- e. charges of immoral behavior abound

- IT IS*
f. ignoring the needs of beleaguered
(SUCH AS THE PALAESTINE)
Jews elsewhere, and many within it
(VIA A VISA REFORM AND CONSERVATIVE'S STRUGGLE)
g. political alignments that turn Jew
SO, AGAINST ARAB

- against Jew, and Jew against non-Jew
(THINK OF WHAT MUST BE DONE TO AN
ORIENTAL JEW, A PALESTINE, AND AN
3. Israel's relationships with other

nations couldn't be worse

- IT HAS*
a. minimal rapport with Egypt, which
put its life on the line to prove
that more can be gained at the
conference table than on the field
of battle.

- ISRAEL HAS FOOLISHLY*
b. refused to take the initiative-
after Camp David-to see if there could
be a reconciliation with Jordan,
Lebanon, and Syria--its other

immediate neighbors.

^{NOW IT IS ASSUMING TO}
c. play ~~ing~~ hardball with the United

States-its only dependable friend, ^{BY}

^{BEING}
never ^A willing to carefully consider

any and all proposals ^{WHICH} coming from
^{MUNACHUM BUBIN'S}
Washington because of ^A paranoia.

^{HE IS CONVINCED THAT}

All the world is ~~is~~ anti-Semitic ^{AND}
^{WE DISAGREE!}

C. Now conditions worsen as a result of TERRIBLE
^{THAT HAVE BEEN}
errors committed since the invasion of
^{ON JUNE 6TH}
Lebanon ^A this summer.

1. ^{SEEMED TO BE}
^A minimal thrust ^{was} appropriate.

a. ~~the necessity of~~ a 40 Km. "security
belt" ^{WAS A PROVEN NEED}

b. ^{Ridding} the world of a global

academy for murderers and a massive

^{arsenal for terrorists MADE SENSE}
^{C. OUT, UNDER ARIK SHARON, THINGS GET OUT OF HAND.}
2. The insanity, which has subsequently
transpired, ^{HAS INCLUDED} --

a. the brutal destruction of

communities and the taking of lives--

^{A TOLL THAT IS ANY}
^A hardly ^A different than the actions

of the PLO, which ~~took the lives~~ ^{KILLED SOME}
~~of~~ 100,000 Lebanese ^{DURING} the last
few years.

^{THAT HAS BEEN A}
b. ^Ahardening world opinion in favor
of the homeless Palestinians and
against Israel, and, by reason of
linkage, against World Jewry.

^{ISRAEL'S MISGUIDED}
c. ^Aattempt ~~to~~ to police Beirut and
its environs ^{ALLOWED} ~~and thereby allowing~~
warring factions in Lebanon ~~to get~~
~~out of hand and~~ to bring on a
storm of brutality that is totally
inexcusable.

^{Now, THE PRIME MINISTER'S BEGINS}

d. ^Arefusing to authorize an
^{JUDICIAL}
independent inquiry so as to fix

<sup>THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF HIS ARROGANT STUBBORN-
the blame. Those who are at</sup> ^{NUSS.}

fault must be punished.

D. ^{THE} The only solutions that I consider essential ^{ARE}
^{THESE:}

1. ^{THE} The Begin Government should resign ^{OR BE}
^{TURNED OUT OF OFFICE BY A KNESSET VOTE OF}
^{NO CONFIDENCE.}
Internal turmoil will become more

than bothersome. ^{SHOULD THIS NOT HAPPEN NOW.}

2. ^{THAT THERE SHOULD BE}
^{CRISIS}
^{SHOULD BE} A created an emergency coalition of all

^{PERHAPS}
major parties with President Itzhak

Navon serving as Prime Minister.

ISRAEL HAS NO CHOICE BUT TO

3. allow a full, searching, far-ranging
^{INQUIRY}
~~investigation~~ to determine if ^{ANY OF ITS MEN} ~~Israelis~~

were culpable vis a vis the massacres.

- ISRAEL MUST**
4. declare a total cessation in the

establishment of West Bank settlements

and simultaneously ^{grant} ~~grant~~ considerable authority
^{DEMOCRATICALLY}
to ~~democratically~~ elected non-Jewish

Israeli leaders in those communities

^{IN LARGE NUMBERS}
in which non-Jewish Palestinians live

- THIS IS THE TIME TO**
5. utilize the multi-national force to
police Beirut ^{WITH} ~~and so~~ Israel will ~~pulling~~

~~pull~~ its army well to the south of

this area, and ^{BEING} ~~be~~ ready to leave

Lebanon immediately when ~~it is to be~~ Syria ~~is~~

IS forced, by the international community,

to move out of Lebanon, too.

- ISRAEL SHOULD**
6. Take the initiative to get the newly
established Lebanese government,
plus those of Jordan and Syria, to

the conference table ^{INVITE} with ^{AND ESTABLISH} the ^{TO} United States ^{functioning} as the facilitator so as to broaden the scope of the Camp David Accords.

7. ^{BLANK SHOULD} Attempt to reverse world opinion by making amends with African nations who could use ^{LEARN ITS} ~~its~~ technical skills as they attempt to prepare for life in the 21st century.

E. What are we to do and not do?

1. Always distinguishing between ^{THE} Israeli ^{PEOPLE} and any particular sitting government, I am opposed to ^{OUR} punishing them ^{CITIZEN} ~~some~~ by ^{THE ADMINISTRATION AND THE CONGRESS} withholding ~~federal~~ funds and ^{OR BY ANY OF US CURTAILING OUR FINANCIAL} ~~private~~ support ^{OF WORTHY} ~~undertaking~~ thereof.

a. Monies raised by our Jewish

Federation Council assist a host

^{ISRAEL'S} of health, education, and welfare

agencies and institutions. They

sorely need our support.

- b. The Israel Bonds Organization ^{FROM WHOM WE SHALL HAVE TOMORROW} provides capital for the nation's

economic development. We need

to be responsive ~~to ITS ANNUAL APPROX,~~
~~PERHAPS NOW MORE THAN EVER BEFORE.~~

c. ARZA renders assistance to Reform

Judaism's programs and projects

~~AS REFORM JEW~~
there. We have a responsibility

to give aid.

d. I'm sure that you can cite other

groups which warrant our assistance.

~~My~~ ^{ONLY} word, of caution is to be sure

that none of them stands in the

way of either the Reform or

~~Conservative Jewish Movement~~
^{JUDAISM'S}

~~THAT ARE THOSE CODES WHICH ARE~~
making inroads ~~by their~~ attempting

to negate our authenticity in

the World Jewish Congress, the

Jewish Agency ~~or through the~~
^{AS CONSPIRATORS OF}

Orthodox Rabbinate. ~~WE CAN ALL~~
~~AFFORD TO BE THEIR ALLIES.~~

2. I believe that when ~~the~~ ^{my} Israeli

government takes a step which we consider

to be an erroneous one, we should ~~HIGHLY~~

be critical.

OUR IS ALL TOO OFTEN
a. ^A silence ~~may be~~ interpreted *by some*
as approval.

b. *We* have the means to make our
voices heard through the organized
Jewish community and as indiv-
iduals communicating *to Israel's*
~~by way of~~
the Consul General *Hon.*

OUR TO ISRAEL
c. ^A loyalty ^A does not require us to
be deaf and blind. To the
contrary, because of our ^{FIRM} ties
with Israel, our views ^{need to} ~~must~~ be heard.

d. *Regarding* such criticism voiced in
public, I disagree ^{with those who contend} ~~A~~ that to speak out
is traitorous, that our comments *only*
provide sustenance for Israel's
enemies. However, I certainly
think that our words should be
carefully chosen and that we must
know all the facts before we
go public.

3. ^{THIS} Even in the midst of troubled times,
our regularly going on tour to Israel
is a sign of our interest; ^{OUR} and support-
~~that~~ is priceless.

a. here is a way ^{FOR US} to become ^{BETTER} informed

b. this is the means by which opinions
^{BETWEEN AMERICANS AND ISRAELIS}
can be expressed one-on-one.

c. I know of no better way to shore
^{THOSE, THOSE}
up fellow Jews who so often feel ~~ISOLATED~~.
~~that they have been abandoned.~~

^{BE ENCOURAGING}
d. we ought to ~~encourage~~ those young
people and adults who express some
~~interest~~ in making Aliyah. All too

often, we allow our own fears to
^{LIVING UNDERSTANDING OF}
substitute for support.
^{THEIR AMBIGUITIES.}

4. ^{THAT} In like measure, I believe we must
be ardent in our defense of Israel
when She is being victimized.

a. terrorist attacks on Her soil
or against Her representatives
in foreign lands require our
cries of outrage, and our

soliciting similar responses

ARE MANY.

from our non-Jewish friends OF WHOM THERE ARE

UNFAIR DASTARDLY
b. editorial comments, cartoons and ILL-BODIED

commentaries, plus slanted news stories

WHICH ISLAND
that distort and hit below the

belt, need to be vigorously

challenged.

c. hurtful statements or activities

by Churchmen and others demand our

mounting a campaign in which we consistently
voice our indignation.

d. Administration and Congressional

efforts to weaken Israel or to put

SECURITY ARDORLY
Her in Jeopardy should be challenged

by us most ardently.

5. In other words, we are bound by

our belief, our history, and by

AS LINKED
world events to Israel's fate--

this partnership is an ever-active

one; it suffers when we are passive,

disinterested, uninvolved, or

acquiescent, OR WHEN SHE IS LED INTO
A MINEFIELD OF TRAGIC MISTAKES
BY INSENSITIVE LEADERS WHOSE
JUDGMENT IS FAULTY AND DANGEROUS.

III. Conclusion

- A. Israel has the means to turn today's trauma into tomorrow's triumph. We have a responsibility to play a role as "Lovers of Zion".
- B. It is long past due for Israel's government to start anew, ~~for~~ ^{ROMAN} our government to ^{AND} be supportive ^{AND} for Israel's traditional enemies to take their lead from Egypt ^{ANXIOUSLY} ~~by settling~~ ^{THEIR DIFFERENCES AND GUARANTEEING ISRAEL'S} ~~territorial integrity and security.~~
- C. Always is the time for Israel to be an extraordinary, singular State. ^{AFTER ALL} ~~all others.~~
- D. It was David ben Gurion who wrote:
"The State of Israel will prove itself not by material wealth, not by military might nor by technical achievement, but by its moral character and its high human values."
- E. ^{THAT ENGULFS US} ~~May~~ the current crisis be the springboard to ^{PROPER ISRAEL} ~~propose~~ it back on course for its own well-being, for the benefit of all Jews, and ultimately for the good of all humanity.
^{TRULY, THAT HAS BEEN AND IS ISRAEL'S} ~~MANIFEST DESTINY.~~

U

Five Sermons for the High-Holydays, 5743

by Rabbi Albert Friedlander

given at:

Westminster Synagogue
Rutland Gardens
London SW7

Eve of Rosh Hashana	"The Poisoned Land"
Rosh Hashana	"The Last Sacrifice"
Kol Nidre	
Yom Kippur (morning)	"The Lost Son of the King"
Yizkor	"Pandora's Box"



17 - 27 September 1982

There is a rabbinic story which tells of a time of bitter harvest: ONCE, there was a fair land, isolated from the rest of the world. It was surrounded by high mountains, and the mountain passes were often closed for decades, filled with snow and ice. The land was dependent upon itself. But the harvests were rich, and the people were kind to each other. They were happy, and their culture flourished.

The time came when the counsellors of the king came to him with anguish and distress. "We are destroyed!" they said. "Somehow, a poison has sprung up within our produce. No one will be able to eat the food of our land without becoming mad. But if we do not eat the food, we shall die."

The king withdrew into his chamber and pondered deeply upon the problem. Then, he called the wisest of the counsellors to his room. "We

by Rabbi Albert Friedlander

MY DEAR FRIENDS: The last day of Ellul has ended. These are the opening mementos of the first of Tishri, of the year 5 7 4 3. But these last days of the old year have been filled with a bitter harvest, the product of the violence which has been planted within our society, which has poisoned the world in which we live. In Rome, the Vatican has welcomed the leader of world-wide terrorism. The Pope has been shown standing next to Mr Arafat - the man who has just gained great advantage from the murder of Mr Bashir Gemayel, the President-elect of the Lebanon. At the very least, there is a lack of sensitivity and of understanding in that Papal action which has caused much damage to the quest for peace. And, with Mr Gemayel murdered, the banked fires of the Lebanon have flared up again, and we can only hope and pray that the frail cease-fire will hold and that new violence will not erupt in that tortured land.

The last moments of the old year have been filled with other pain and grief. Planes have fallen from the skies. Brave men dedicated to saving lives have been lost at sea. And a fairy tale has had an unhappy ending. The death of Princess Grace of Monaco is more than an unfortunate driving accident. In our world, we need dreams, legends, fairy tales. Grace Kelly supplied us with such a story: the actress who became a princess, who served her people, was loved by them, and who gave us the assurance that beauty does have meaning and purpose in our world. In our time, the acting profession has supplied us with political leaders: Greece, The Argentine - and elsewhere. But there was something special about Princess Grace of Monaco - and we shall miss the flame that was quenched in the last days of the dying year. Truly, this last week has been a bitter harvest.

There is a rabbinic story which tells of a time of bitter harvest: ONCE, there was a fair land, isolated from the rest of the world. It was surrounded by high mountains, and the mountain passes were often closed for decades, filled with snow and ice. The land was dependent upon itself. But the harvests were rich, and the people were kind to each other. They were happy, and their culture flourished.

The time came when the counsellors of the king came to him with anguish and distress. "We are destroyed!" they said. "Somehow, a poison has sprung up within our produce. No one will be able to eat the food of our land without becoming mad. But if we do not eat the food, we shall die."

The king withdrew into his chamber and pondered deeply upon the matter. Then, he called the wisest of the counsellors into his room. "We

must all eat the food, else we shall die," said the king. "Therefore, we shall go mad. But you must eat less than all the rest, and must use what is left of the old food. And, each day, you must go through the land, to the palace and to the villages. You must tell all of us, day after day, without fail: "Remember that you are mad! Remember that you are mad!"

I.

"Remember that you are mad" - we are mad, and live in a world which poisons us each day. We are poisoned by a madness endemic in our society which can no longer believe in itself, in its institutions, and in God. It is a world which rushes from one madness to the next, a world which has grown so insecure that it prefers to believe the worst of human beings, and is no longer able to give trust and confidence to anyone. The Lebanon is only one example of many. Without judging all aspects of this conflict, without justifying the mad militarism of Sharon and Begin, we can and must say to one another that WE are mad if we join the multitude who blindly condemn Israel and see it as the cause of all the suffering in the Lebanon.

When all the television cameras of the world brought us pictures of destroyed buildings, few pointed out that many of those buildings were destroyed in the course of the last seven years by the PLO and the Syrians. When the casualty lists rose above the number of inhabitants in a city, few bothered to correct the figures once the truth was known. Why? Our concern tonight has to go beyond the Lebanon, has to ask WHY THIS MAD AND POISONED WORLD WANTED TO BELIEVE EVERY POSSIBLE EVIL ABOUT ISRAEL AND ABOUT THE JEWISH PEOPLE. Let me put it simply: the poison of antisemitism - that long-lived madness - continues to be part of the atmosphere around us. It does not dominate the outside world. We must not see an antisemite in every critic of Israel. But the current situation has made it possible for antisemitism to become respectable again - to say 'Israeli' and mean 'Jew', to condemn out of hatred and not out of knowledge. We must not be infected by that illness. It is so easy to conform, to mouth the same criticism and thus remove ourselves from it, to mimic madness and then to acquire it. But there is basic principle to Jewish life; "Al tifrosh min ha-tzibur - do not separate yourself from your community!" It applies here. In these days of penitence, we can acknowledge wrongs that were done by our community - mistakes of judgment and false use of force - but we cannot separate ourselves from this. But we will not let hate-mongers exalt terrorists at the expense of those who reacted against the terror. Nor will we let good people - the Pope - distort reality at the expense of truth. And we will not go mad. We will not hate ourselves. We will not hate our neighbours. Our concern for the suffering will continue

to reach out to the Lebanese and to Palestinians in the year ahead of us. And it will be built upon our love for Israel, upon our knowledge that the only security for that embattled land is built upon true peace with its neighbours.

II.

"The harvest is poisoned and the people sicken and grow mad...."

The great madness of our time is lack of faith and many of us are afflicted by it. How did it happen? Our century is one of faith and belief in materialism. In the acquisitive society, humans surrounded themselves with the spoils of economic warfare, made them their fences, their protection, their delight and their hope for the future. And this vast structure came crashing down upon us. It didn't happen suddenly - the end of an economic miracle, an unpredicted recession, a sudden loss of wealth. No. Over the course of decades, meaning has seeped out of the structure of materialism. Our children discovered that there were no real values in a system where corporations mattered more than individuals, where every thing and every person had a price. And we ourselves view all aspects of our society and of our culture and discover the sickness slowly coming to the fore. In other cultures, the stage was the place for religion, and the theatre explored the meaning and purpose of its community. Now, with the extension of television into a constellation of satellites filling the sky and purveying material goods and pornographic nightmares, the dramas of our day spend less time in the pursuit of meaning and more in the tearing down of fellow human beings. Perhaps we need this caustic surgery. Certainly, there are moments when the media are mindful of the moral obligations. In the last two nights, the programme on the gathering of the survivors and on 'Auschwitz and the Allies' addressed the conscience of the world. But how many watched without turning away? These days, the world wants to be entertained; it does not want instruction. And all the visions of destruction only confirmed most in their attitude that they did not want to listen - just as their parents had refused to listen to Auschwitz.

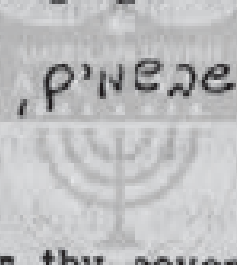
We are mad to accept this pattern of unreason, to substitute a disintegrating faith in material things for the tradition which calls us together at this season. Secularism, in all its weak innocence, has had its day. A generation earlier, William Butler Yeats spoke of the decay of our culture

"Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned."

If only our artists would at least ask the questions of our time! But much of art and literature has lost its way, has created its own rules, its small and limited systems, and hides in them while the blood dimmed tide washes the shores of our world.

There are those who would substitute science for religion, confronting religious fundamentalists who would turn religion into science. Both actions are part of the sickness of our time. They betray an ignorance of science and of religion. From the early days of the Einstein to the scholars of our time, science has begun to explore the organic nature of a universe which contains humanity and God as part of that nature. The 'unified field theory' approaches the Sh'ma as a statement about the nature of the Universe; religion and science both describe reality as a unified whole. In that oneness, we find elements of change, mind, creative freedom, and cosmic purpose. The contingency of God builds upon human freedom. And in our declaration that God is a personal God we come to confront the nature of human suffering, the knowledge that we will never finish our journey, that so much of our potential will remain unfulfilled. But in our declaration of the personal God we also move away from the sickness of our time which denies God, denies human freedom, denies meaning and purpose within our lives.

A few moments ago, we prayed as a congregation:

"אֱלֹהֵינוּ שְׂמֵחִים, בְּיָמֶיךָ לָבוֹד וְאֵלֵינוּ אֶחָד" 

"Our God who art in heaven remember thy covenant and forget us not!"

But if we forget God, shall we be remembered? In these prayers of the machzor, our prayerbook for the festival of memorial, we asserted a faith which has brought us and our ancestors through valleys of darkness and to the mountain tops of faith. Let our hearts listen to the words of our mouth. Let our minds be aware of the consequence of actions, of justice which must be realized within the context of human freedom. The philosopher Alfred North Whitehead asserts the role of God as the supreme creativity which inspires creative action and thus brings humanity closer to the Divine. In that relationship, the justice and judgment which are the basic themes of Rosh Hashana are paramount. Whitehead writes:

"The consequent nature of God is his judgment on the world. He saves the world as it passes into the immediacy of his own life. It is the judgment of a tenderness which loses nothing that can be saved. It is also the judgment of a wisdom which uses what in the temporal world is mere wreckage."

The wreckage of the world in which we live, the flawed madness of lives which cannot find meaning by the standards of the market-place - these come to endure and begin to flower when they are linked with the religious vision. On this night, and in the day ahead, let us begin to believe.

III.

We are back at our starting place, listening to the tale of a poisoned harvest, seeing it in the reality of death in the Lebanon and in papal fallability. According to our story, the wise man survived and did not become mad because he had eaten of the old harvest, stored from earlier days. Our ancient store is found in our prayerbooks, in the traditions of the past, the institutions of the present. It is found in our experiences, in our life and its affirmations of Judaism. Tonight, we can resolve to separate ourselves from the madness which affects this world, from the poison that has set human beings against one another. "You are mad" is what we must say to a world which has not yet unlearned antisemitism. "You are mad to place the anguish and pain caused by the three armies which invaded the Lebanon upon one people!" "You are mad to worship power and material gain in a world which needs the assurance of Avinu Malkenu, of God as the source of justice!" "You are mad to hate when you must learn to love!" "O world, you are mad!"

One of the survivors of Auschwitz told us how she enabled others to survive. "I told them stories" she said. "And the stories had happy endings." Not all stories end that way; but the story of our life has only begun. This is the evening of the first day of the New Year. It is the time when we chose life over death, sanity over madness, love instead of hate. That wise man in the story was not always right. He must have been mad at times; and so are we. But if we help each other in the year ahead, if we care for each other, if we show concern -

the New Year can be a year of blessing,
and we may be inscribed for a year of peace:

L'SHANA TOVA TIKATEVU!!

A M E N

by Rabbi Albert Friedlander

We have listened to the sound of the Shofar - and now we know that the New Year is truly part of our life. More than prayers, meditations, and explanations of Rosh Hashana, it is the t'keeah, sh'varim, t'ruah, of the ram's horn which cuts through our confusions and reminds us that we are the people Israel assembled in worship before the throne of judgment. The shofar calls us to order. It reminds us of past sacrifices - of the very ram sacrificed in place of Isaac on that ancient mountain top. For it is in the mystery of the binding of Isaac that we find the innermost meaning of this day. Each year, we peel away another level of meaning - and so much more is left. How can we live in a world where children may be sacrificed? Where parents die alone? Where our brothers die of thirst in the wilderness?

There is a rabbinic re-telling of the Akedah - the Binding of Isaac - in which the dimensions of our problem come into view:

"Dark and hidden was Abraham's way to Mt. Moriah. He went to sacrifice his son, to hear the word of God and to fulfill it. The devil, in his dark coat of invisibility, stood at every cross-road and whispered to Isaac: 'Your father wants to murder you! Attack! Defend yourself!' But Isaac and Abraham were wrapped in their garment of EMUNA, were united by confidence and faith. Hand in hand, they walked on together, unto the mountain, towards a God who did not want human sacrifice, towards God who sent them back into the land of the living.

Dark and hidden was also the way of the devil. When he did not succeed in destroying the trust between father and son, he made his way to Sarah. She was alone in the house, waiting for husband and son. The devil came to Hebron on the third day, when Abraham and the unbound Isaac were already on their way home to Sarah. 'Sarah!' moaned the devil, 'do you know what happened? Do you know why the two left you? You must have guessed - Abraham wanted to kill your son! And he did it. The knife entered into the heart, the body went up in flames. Now he is coming back. He will be here almost at once, the urn with your son's ashes in his hand!'

Dark and hidden was the way of Sarah. She entered the way of suffering and died in anguish. The Bible confirms this with the text:

"Sarah died in Hebron, and Abraham came to mourn for her.."

That is the way Rabbi Tanchuma tells the story. He knew that there is no passage through the night, no encounter (with??) the devil, where death does not demand its sacrifices. The Akedah, the Testing of Abraham, demands them.

"Who died?" "The ram" says the Bible.

"Isaac" whispered the devil.
"The parents" taught Rabbi Tanchuma.
"Ishmael" says Mohammed.
"God" taught Saul of Tarsus.

But which answer shall we give this morning?

It should be clear to us that all of the answers are part of the Jewish tradition, to be explored by us. But in a curious way, the answer by the Koran - that it was Ishmael who was killed - must take precedence on this day. We are directed towards it by the Anguish of the Lebanon, by the Israeli troops again occupying Beirut. But we may also remind ourselves that in all traditional synagogues this morning the reading is not the Binding of Isaac - that is tomorrow's text. Today, the chapter read from the Torah is Genesis 21. Abraham sends Hagar and Ishmael into the desert. It is the same story: Ishmael would have died of thirst - but an angel of the Lord brings salvation at the last moment. The blessing which comes to Abraham and Isaac on Mt. Moriah also comes to Hagar and Ishmael in the wilderness: Ishmael will be the ancestor of a great and numerous people. Through Ishmael, Abraham becomes the founding father of the Arab nations. And the descendents of Ishmael and Isaac, Arabs and Jews, are conscious of being brothers as they wrestle with one another through the ages, down to our times.

We may well talk about the sacrifice of Ishmael this morning. Last night, we stressed our love for Israel, our concern for its security, which must in the end be established upon peace between Israel and its neighbours. Our compassions for the Lebanese and the Palestinians rises out of this love, out of this knowledge that Ishmael and Isaac are brothers. Both brothers were abandoned by their neighbours. It was the callous disregard for the suffering of the Palestinians by their Arab neighbours which led to the refugee problem. More: the refugees were created as a political tool by their Arab brethren in a cynical exercise designed to destroy the new state of Israel. And Israel these days also stands alone and isolated. A few days ago, Elie Wiesel said in New York: "we are so utterly alone these days - we feel totally abandoned!" And nevertheless, an article of his, published in the Jewish Chronicle, drew attention to the fact that the Israeli Ministry of Health had offered free medical care to all the Lebanese wounded - but, of course, the offer went unnoticed by the world press. Wiesel also said:

"In truth, throughout the world Jews feel the need to do something for the Lebanese civilian population. They have a feeling of responsibility for what has happened." and he continued "we ought to mobilize our resources and our efforts. Let our physicians take care of the sick; let our instructors go out there to teach in the schools; let our philanthropists help to rebuild the houses, the hearths that have been destroyed. As Jews, as human beings, we ought to see this as our first priority. Let us do this with Israel, and for Israel."

We are so often confused these days in regard to Israel. Phalanxes of the traditional rabbinate have marched through newspaper columns proclaiming their 100% support of Mr Begin's policies. I find this strange and somewhat revolting - not least because I do not see the rabbinate blessed with particular political knowledge. Most of the American leadership, including the Conference of Presidents, have come out in favour of certain aspects of President Reagan's plan. It does seem clear to me that the free democracy operating in Israel permits the espousal of different political solutions - and that Jews all over the world can exercise the same rights and disagree with Mr Begin's military solutions. Where we can all agree is upon the need for humanitarian action. The Binding of Ishmael - the suffering of our fellow human beings - must be part of our Rosh Hashana meditation.

According to the Mishna,

"The world is judged at four seasons: at Passover, in regard to grain; on the Feast of Weeks, in regard to the fruit of the tree; on Rosh Hashana, all the inhabitants of the world file before God. As it is said: He that fashioneth the hearts of them all, that considereth all their doings (Ps. 33:15). On the Feast of Succot, the world is judged in regard to rain..'

Our hearts and our doings are examined today; but the matter does not end there. The world goes on, blessings of food, of fruit are part of every festival, and we are judged on the manner of our sharing it with others. Here, in this congregation, we must make a major effort to bind up the wounds of Ishmael, to give beyond our abundance. The Ten Days of Penitence are followed by Succot, by the rejoicing in the harvest. It is a time of sharing, and it is the season when we complete our penitence. Forgive a side remark, but, in the confessing of our sins, I often reflect upon Succot when so few of our members contribute to the fruits and decorations of our succah - and now I would make it the symbol of our generosity to the Lebanon and to Israel! Yet I also know that these Days of Penitence are a time of turning, of change and of growth. The mystery of the Akedah must send us out into the world

to help those in need - and it will also bring us back into our community to repair the breaches, to rebuild the sanctuary from which we draw our strength.

Who died on that mountain top? The parents, said Rabbi Tanchuma. And there are many ways of entering into that saying. Last Thursday night, the showing of "Auschwitz and the Allies" on television reminded the world of an Akedah where all were sacrificed: father, mother and child. The French scholar Andre Neher has examined Elie Wiesel's book Night as an Akedah description:

From beginning to the end, this first story of Wiesel is a writing again of the Akedah in the dark light of the night of Auschwitz. Father and son go the way of the sacrifice, imprisoned in the silence of God, burned by the flames of reality - and - if the Akedah of the Bible were reality, everything would happen to Abraham and to Isaac as it is told in the book Night.

But then it would be played as a counter-piece; not as the father who leads the son to the sacrifice, but as a son who leads the father, pulls, carries and brings him to the place of sacrifice - the old, dead-tired father. That Abraham would stumble, stop, complain against the son: "I can't! Let us rest! I want to die here..." and then, at the cross roads, they would not have seen a light upon the mountain at the end of the way, they would have chosen a way at random and said to one another: "I hope we will not regret it!" - just as the father and son in Auschwitz, who decided to leave Auschwitz on the next transport. The Russians freed it two days later, but father and son let themselves be brought to Buchenwald, where the father died."

(L'Exil de la Parole: du silence biblique...)

We cannot and will not remain in the contemplation of that anguish until the end of our days. But we cannot block out the past. It is said that those who do not remember the past are doomed to repeat it. And an American thinker added that those who only remember the past are also doomed to repeat it. We are open to the present, to new anguish and to new hope. What we have learned from the past, what we repeat to ourselves on Rosh Hashana is that hopes can be destroyed, that moral teachings cannot only be ignored but transformed into blatant immorality. Rabbi Hugo Gryn, speaking in Thursday night's Auschwitz programme, pointed out that the Nazis had claimed the role of God for themselves and had reversed the Ten Commandments into a devil's litany: "They had brought the Jews back into an even darker Egypt; they had made images of themselves for worship; had taken God's name in vain; had stolen, murdered, envied....."

Is it any wonder then that we can hear the echo of those Christian teachings who see the Akedah as the death of God, even if followed by a resurrection? we are not free to take that answer when we look upon the question: "who died on the mountain

top?" Beyond the darkness, we affirm light. In a universe of anguish, we believe in a God who cares, who perhaps mourn the dreadful gift of freedom he has given humanity, the freedom to love and to hate, to give life and to take it. Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, writing in Friday's Jewish Chronicle, expresses some of our doubts and fears, our anxieties and our hopes, as he reflects upon the binding of Isaac:

"If we had with us today one of the old masters of Chassidic prayer, he might have had the words for a post-Holocaust Rosh Hashana. 'Master of the Universe' - he would have said - 'the shofar we blow is more than a symbol. It is the horn of the ram of Isaac rescued from the ashes. Do what You will to Your people; they will not leave you. Still they ask to be inscribed in Your Book of Life. After everything - can You refuse them?'"

The process of judgment begins with the defendant appearing in Court. We have come here. We have meditated together, we have prayed together. During the Ten Days of Penitence, we can continue this process, can learn together, can work towards a better future. The rabbinic question continues to reverberate through our texts: "Who died?" "Who was sacrificed?" The answer is given by all of us - and all is contained within our own lives. Each day, we are sacrificed and sacrifice others. Each day, we mourn the suffering of Isaac and see behind him, a mirror image of suffering, his brother Ishmael. The tears of Hagar and of Sarah fall upon the barren ground, and a million children fill the darkness behind the barbed wire. We leave Egypt and enter it again, and the commandments of our faith are despised and rejected in the world around us.

Last night, we spoke of the poison which fills our world, the madness which takes hold of us as we conform to the norms of our society. This morning, walking with Abraham, we have climbed the high mountain tops of faith, where return is always possible, where repentance is a category of life. The ram's horn has sounded in our midst. It has called us to return and to repentance, to understanding and to action in which we can redeem ourselves. At the end of the Shofar service, we will hear the T'KEEAH G'DOLAH, the great sound of hope which fills our tradition with the knowledge that there is light beyond the darkness. Cautiously, let us accept its message.

There is so much we will not be able to achieve next year.

But we can give some help.

And we can be concerned...and pray...and hope -

may all who suffer - may humanity be inscribed for blessing in the

Book of Life: L' SHANA TOVAH TEKATEVU. AMEN

Kol Nidre 5743

by Rabbi Albert Friedlander

My dear friends: it is so very difficult to speak to you tonight. All over the world, the sermons prepared by rabbis for Kol Nidre have had to be discarded: not because they were unrelated to the themes of this most sacred moment of Jewish life; not because they were not central to our basic teachings - but because our life has changed during the past week. What we would have said last week or two days ago is no longer relevant to what we have to say tonight. What we would have confessed during our ritual of atonement no longer suffices for the condition of the world at this moment.

This is not a total indictment of ourselves, of the Jewish people, of the teachings of Judaism. It is not that the prayers or lectures of past years are no longer relevant. On the contrary: the basic truths of our tradition, the fundamental insights concerning sin and repentance are more important than ever; and we must find our way back to them. But the very essence of Judaism is found in the changes and chances of life, in the existential thrust of events to which we and our teachings respond, in which we develop and grow.

NO ONE COULD HAVE PREDICTED THAT A JEWISH COMMUNITY WOULD EVER BE CHARGED WITH EVEN INDIRECT PARTICIPATION IN A MASSACRE. But the charge has been made. The horror of Beirut has somehow been placed upon our doorstep. In the cities of England, marchers have proclaimed us murderers. All of us, in one way or another, have had to confront friends, neighbours and even foes who have demanded some explanation from us concerning the murder of the Palestinians in the refugee camps of Beirut. What answer can we give: as individuals, as a community, as Jews filled with anguish and pain at the sufferings of fellow human beings?

Let us begin with the situation in which we find ourselves. It is Kol Nidre Eve, the time of confession, of self-appraisal, the moment when we stand before the Throne of Judgment. Our main concern tonight is NOT to justify ourselves and our people in the sight of others. Of course it is important to talk with our neighbours. In some ways, it is a necessary act of self-defence against libellous accusations, against an old hatred of Jews, a new hatred of Israel. So few are asking: "Why did Christian Arabs commit these murders?" So many say: "Why did the Israelis permit this?" And where is

the inquiry for the real criminals, for the climate of violence, the cycle of revenge, the killing of Gemayel, the response of the Phalangists?

It was only in yesterday (Saturday's) TIMES, that Clifford Longley finally asked that basic question, pointing out why all Christians must bear the blame for Beirut. He said:

"Whether or not Jews stood guiltily by outside the Palestinian refugee camps, the fingers that pulled the trigger were Christian. If the West is not to fall into the antisemitic trap that lies just ahead, its outrage at the Beirut massacres needs rapidly to acquire a sense of shame. This was a Christian atrocity.

...
Guilt by religious association is apparently one of those vices of human reaction for which there is no effective answer. Were it based on logic and more fact, it would respond to better logic and more fact. It is no more reasonable to hold Jews in general somehow to blame for the events surrounding the Beirut outrage than to hold the Archbishop of Canterbury responsible for the actions of the so-called Christian gunmen who perpetrated it.

Shame by religious association is another matter. It would not be unreasonable of the Archbishop of Canterbury to declare his horror that the name of Christian should be born by those who shoot down innocent people in cold blood...."The word 'Christian' has been dishonoured."

What Clifford Longley says to his community, he also says to us. We will not judge guilt without knowing the facts. But we already know enough to feel shame. The question remains - asked by us as well, asked by our tradition: could and did Jews stand by and permit such actions? Violent actions are part of the world in which we live, they are particularly part of the Middle East. And the world did not cry out when the Syrians murdered 25,000 when they came to the Lebanon. It has not asked about the 100,000 killed in the Civil War after the PLO and the Syrians entered. But it is precisely because Israel was not part of this process of killing in the past that we must now ask ourselves: how could Israel have become involved? The theme of Yom Kippur is human weakness. ARE WE THAT WEAK, was Israel so weak that it could become enmeshed in such a situation?

Calm and sober analysis is needed at this point. The facts must be permitted to speak for themselves; and we have to listen to those who were involved. A few days ago, more than 30 progressive rabbis went to the Israeli Embassy in order to discuss all aspects of this tragedy. It was an informal, off-the-record meeting; and we were asked to make no direct quotes. But what was said was echoed by the spokesmen of Israel who have appeared in public print since that meeting; and something of a unified picture is beginning to emerge. Our meeting began with a statement from

the rabbinate in which we indicated our own approach and our basic questions. A few paragraphs from that statement are relevant here:

"Not all of the rabbis assembled are of one mind regarding the war in the Lebanon...but on many things we are united. They include our love for Eretz Yisrael and our commitment to M'dinat Yisrael, which are unalterable. Therefore, too, whatever democratically elected Government is in power in Israel at any time, we shall always want to interpret its policies l'chaf z'chut, in the most favourable light possible - subject to our honest perception of the truth, and subject to our loyalty, to which we must always give the highest priority, to the moral principles of the Jewish faith which it is our vocation to teach.

.....

It goes without saying that we were deeply grieved by the losses which the Israeli forces sustained in the operation and that we have been thinking with the utmost sympathy of the more than 300 bereaved families. It also goes without saying that, like the people of Israel, we have been profoundly distressed by the many thousands of casualties suffered by the Lebanese and the Palestinian civilians. About all that we are unanimous.

Likewise, we are at one in the indignation we have felt at the many evidences of bias against Israel on the part of the media, both in their coverage of the war and in their coverage of the Beirut massacres...

But let us proceed to the massacres, to the questions we want to ask:

1. Why was it necessary for the IDF to enter West Beirut after the departure of the PLO?
2. In doing so, did they not assume responsibility for the safety for the Palestinians in the refugee camps?
3. Was it not a grave dereliction of that responsibility to allow Christian militia to enter that city?
4. Can you give us any further information about the identity of the militia and about the sequence of events, eg. when did the local commander and Mr Begin's Cabinet first learn about the massacres and take action to stop them?

(statement from John Rayner for Council of Reform and Liberal Rabbis)

We may or may not agree with the attitudes expressed by the rabbis; we may or may not feel that these were the basic questions to be asked. But on Kol Nidre night, when we examine our vows, the vows made by the Israeli government must also be open to examination. Last Thursday night, a large group from our congregation met here at Kent House to ask themselves the same questions regarding the tragedy. We started with the earlier history of the events which is basic to our understanding. At that time, and the day before, in the Embassy, some answers emerged which may be helpful to us.

"Why did Israel enter Beirut?" Our friends tell us that Beirut was entered precisely to avert bloodshed. Israel knew that Phalangists and the Muslim Left has old scores to settle, knew that the PLO had left mountains of weapons in the houses of Beirut; and it wanted to turn over full authority to the Lebanese forces as soon as possible. The Lebanese were slow; their auxiliaries, the Christian militia, were quicker. As late as Thursday morning, Israeli officers begged the Lebanese to take over. They did not do so. It seems they assisted in what appeared to them to be an operation of war - but was slaughter! This must be examined.

But that only leads to the second question: "Did Israel assume responsibility for the safety of the camps?" There is no way of saying NO to that question. Israeli soldiers surrounded the camp. Israel was responsible: it entered West Beirut to assume responsibility! Even if there had not been a military presence, the laws of Judaism and of humanity tell us that we are our brother's keeper. Where were we? Where was Israel? Israel's spokesmen say that it only controlled three sides of the camp, that the Lebanese were on the fourth side, that the killers entered there. But soldiers have eyes to see and ears to hear. If TV crews could film carnage, what of the watchmen of the city? Watchmen, what of the night?

The killers entered. "Who were they?" Mr Sharon spoke for an hour to the Knesset, indicating that the killers were the Phalangists, taking revenge for their murdered leader. Others have given evidence that it was Major Haddad's group, which is far more closely identified with Israel. But no matter how they entered they should not have entered. And as to whom they were, that must be established by a court of inquiry with the power to subpoena, which has up to now been rejected by the Israeli government, even though President Navon has demanded it; even though major figures in the Begin government have resigned in protest against the Cabinet's refusal to permit such a full inquiry. The spirit of Israel is not one which rejects inquiry. The Embassy spokesman reminded us of a small incident a few months ago: An English tourist claimed to have been beaten by two Israeli girl soldiers. Israel did not believe it: "our girls don't do such things!" But they investigated. It was true. The girl soldier who had beaten the woman was sent to prison; and the girl soldier who had just looked on was also punished. And there must be an inquiry to determine "Who were the murderers in the Lebanon?"; and an inquiry to determine: "Who looked on? Who could have stopped this? Who did not stop this?"

We have now heard that in the end Israel intervened and stopped greater massacres from happening. I believe that. But what happened between Thursday and Saturday, when reports were already at hand, when the Cabinet went to their synagogues

without having taken action. How could they pray? Were they just foolish? Uninformed? Were they blind and deaf? Or did they say: "Am I my brother's keeper?" We are not in the position of being judge and jury, not when we ourselves stand in judgement on Kol Nidre night. We do not yet know all the facts. But that is why there must be an inquiry. Israel's Chief of Staff gave out five different stories covering the massacre during the past week. They show confusion, anger and concern. They do not give us the facts which a committee of inquiry can and must establish for us. We must know how much information the Cabinet had. We must know - and not guess - why Mr Begin refuses to be influenced by 100,000 marchers. Until we know, we cannot judge. But in the Divine Court, judgment is being made and sealed into the Book of Life. And we must understand that this judgment also concerns us: we are part of the Jewish community, and we are part of the world community, which permitted this massacre to take place, and which should have spoken out earlier, when Lebanon was being dismembered.

There are so many ways which we must walk in our determination to become responsible and concerned human beings. There are so many ways of discovering our own guilt on this evening of KOL NIDRE. It is so easy to join Mr Begin in his basic response which I believe to be at the heart of his complex manoeuvres today. I believe that the Prime Minister of Israel and his Cabinet have not reacted to the massacre in the refugee camps, but to the world's reaction to these events. He defends himself against the enemies of Israel, against the new antisemitism which has been given enormous weapons to use against us. Very well. He MUST respond to those reactions. But more than anything else, he must respond to the actual tragedy. Some grief has been expressed, but always in the context: "Don't teach us about suffering! Have you forgotten the Holocaust?" At this point, it is blasphemy to use the tragedy of the Six Million as an answer to the massacre of the Six Hundred.

We, too - and that is our sin tonight - have been too much concerned with the reactions to the massacre rather than with the actual event. What can we say? How can we defend ourselves? How shall we answer our neighbours? I think that there will be facts, that there will be answers, that the world in time will condemn the actual murderers and veer away from the onlookers. Meanwhile, it is important for us and Israel to show total concern for the tragedy, to give help where it is needed, to acknowledge responsibility where it does exist - and it does exist!

The Israeli military authorities in Beirut introduced armed members of the Christian militia into the Palestinian camps, men of Damour filled with the spirit of revenge. They had to know what this meant. Mr Shimon Peres pointed this out in

the Knesset, saying: "You don't have to be exceptionally wise; it's enough to be a village policeman to know what the consequences would be."

(?) As Conor Cruise O'Brien summarizes this in today's OBSERVER:

"to let loose Christian militias into the Palestinian camps, with a mission to 'flush out terrorists', was to license a massacre. And the massacre was allowed to proceed, apparently for a day and a half, before the Israeli forces put a stop to it."

It is not that Israel is worse than the countries surrounding it. Its record on human rights is far superior, and it is the only democracy in that part of the world. The sin we have to confess tonight is that at times it is no better. And IT MUST BE BETTER. We know that Israel cares. The streets of Jerusalem and of Tel Aviv have been filled with those who have expressed their bitter grief at the massacre which has taken place. Had it been a Jewish community somewhere in the Arab world, we would not have seen such grief expressed by others. And our synagogues throughout the world tonight are filled with worshippers who place the women and children, the young and old massacred in Beirut, into the very centre of their prayers. And when we count our sins of commission and omission in the day ahead, when we afflict ourselves in fasting and in prayer, the events of the past week will fill our hearts. It is said that during ((the pilgrim festival we go up to Jerusalem and during)) the Ten Days of Penitence we draw upward from earth to heaven; but that on Yom Kippur God comes down from heaven to be closer to Israel, to listen to our confessions. God listens. But we must also listen to our own confessions. As individuals, and as a community, we must acknowledge where we have sinned with intention, and where we have sinned unintentionally. We need not defend ourselves before our neighbours. We must appear before God.

"Are we so weak?" we asked at the beginning. "Is it possible for Jews to be guilty by-standers who do not act while others are slaughtered?" It is possible. And we are weak - all of us assembled today. Yom Kippur, the Sabbath of Sabbaths, comes to us because we know of our weakness. We know that we have to acknowledge our sins, that we must repent, that we can repent: that we can cease to do evil and learn to do good. Sh'muel Agnon, the Nobel Prize winner of Jerusalem, recorded the following ancient text for the beginning of Yom Kippur:

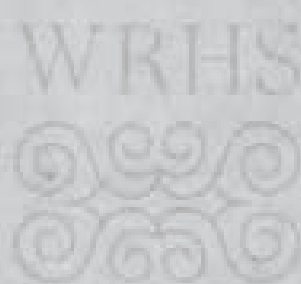
"It is a wide-spread custom throughout most of the Diaspora for the rabbi of the city to address strong words to the congregation before or after Kol Nidre. He ought not to make his sermon long, but speak long enough to awaken the people to repentance. He ought to raise his voice in weeping that, hearing him, they might awaken their own hearts to Repentance."

Let us weep together, and let us repent.

O, may all Israel weep; and may we all repent.

And then, perhaps, humanity will weep and turn from its evil ways.

A M E N



by Rabbi Albert Friedlander

ק' יצא ר' אהרן כי קדוש אני ה' אלוהים

"Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy...."

We read our Torah portion this Yom Kippur morning in order to be instructed in the ways of repentance; and we find it a difficult task. Last night, contemplating the anguish of Beirut, we recognized how far we and the world are from repentance. In the long day of our fast, we may come closer to it. But how far are we also from holiness - and how distant from God. Where can we gain the strength on this day to confess our sins, to move away from them, to make the prayers we utter true perceptions of ourselves?

אבותינו מלכותנו עשינו

"Our Father, our King, we have sinned before Thee"

There are so many sins we must confess. The rabbis teach that were we truly to recount them all, there would be no end to the days of penitence. That is why the traditional texts have acrostic confessions, limiting the expression of them to the number of letters in the alphabet. Even then, every sin listed is found within our lives in countless ways: the sin of ignorance, of hatred, of apathy, of standing by idly while fellow human beings die - all of these sins drawn together for us these days under that dreadful constellation of events which we have named BEIRUT. It is not that this is the only sin. Had Beirut not occurred, there would still be much for us to examine within our own lives, within our community and the world. But the massacre happened. It breaks through all our evasions, it challenges the comfortable pretence that we follow a sound ethical system, that our tradition brings holiness into the world. Last night, we called for an immediate full inquiry into the event. But we must also inquire into our own lives. The words of Israel's president Yitzhak Navon apply to us:

"Beyond all of this, we must not, and we are not allowed, to pass by what has happened and carry on with our routine. Our duty towards ourselves - towards our image in our own eyes, and in that part of the civilized world of which we consider ourselves a part - is to examine, soon, in an accurate manner, by qualified and independent persons, all that has occurred in this unhappy affair, and if need be, to draw all necessary conclusions from such an examination."

It is comforting that these words come from the President of Israel. It is uncomfortable to apply the words to ourselves, to break away from our routine, to submit ourselves to this inquiry, to realize that we are also responsible. How much concern have we shown for the Lebanon in the past, that unhappy land torn apart by the PLO and the Syrians, by Christians and Muslims? And what have we done since the massacre to bind up the wounds, to give comfort and help? As we said last night, we must not only react to the reaction, but to the situation. And we must reassert the ethical values, for our own community and for the world around us, which have been lost within the pressures and politics of a world which has turned to war for its solutions in all areas of the globe. Gently, let me ask: have we forgotten the Falklands? The fact that it was a victory did not inhibit the Dean of St Paul's from asking searching questions within a religious service celebrating its conclusion. And it is instructive to hear that it has now been translated into Spanish and has been distributed in the Argentine. A religious leader did not evade his responsibility: he asked moral questions concerning the nature of any war and its aftermath, this should set a pattern for the rabbinate and for any of us concerned with the ethical issues involved in taking human life.

"You shall be holy.....

... וְאַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל אֱלֹהִים

"

II.

How can we be holy? We look at the outer and inner turmoil of our lives, on the day when our flaws and shortcomings are the basic content of our prayers, and we are filled with despair. Where are the moral teachings which were to guide our days? Let us not be totally deflected from self-examination by the massacre of Beirut. Our condemnation of the murderers, of those who may have assisted this murder in any way - should not give us the illusion that we are not moral human beings. We are not judge and jury who stand above the events. We are also participants. And have we applied our fine sense of moral outrage to ourselves, to the events and shortcomings of the past year which have flawed our own life, which have brought apathy

and anguish into the world and very little holiness? What moral teachings have we pursued? When have we studied them? When have we applied them? Looking at ourselves: have we, as individuals, been a source for good or for evil during the past year? And let us never forget: apathy, the absence of good, is itself a great evil.

Often I feel that the poets have greater perception of human evil than the preachers. Here is the way Ted Hughes' "Crow" reports: A Disaster

"There came news of a word,
Crow saw it killing men. He ate well.
He saw it bulldozing
Whole cities to rubble. Again he ate well.
He saw its excreta poisoning seas.
He became watchful.
He saw its breath burning whole lands
To dusty char
He flew clear and peered.
...."

And what Ted Hughes' dark bird sees is total disaster and total evil within humanity. I do not want to accept the grimly reductive satire of a poet who finds no trace of holiness within us and very little evidence of God. A glimmer remains. God speaks to 'Crow'. But what Crow sees beyond everything else is the dark beast of evil, lurching across our landscape. But - where is evil? asks the poet.

"Where is the Black Beast?
Crow, like an owl, swivelled his head.
Where is the Black Beast?
Crow hid in its bed, to ambush it.
Where is the Black Beast?
Crow sat in its chair, telling loud lies against the Black Beast.
Where is it?
Crow shouted after midnight, pounding the wall with a last.
Where is the Black Beast?
Crow split his enemy's skull to the pineal gland.
Where is the Black Beast?
Crow crucified a frog under a microscope he peered into the brain of a
dogfish
Where is the Black Beast?
Crow killed his brother and turned him inside out to stare at his colour.
Where is the Black Beast?
Crow roasted the earth to a clinker, he charged into space -
Where is the Black Beast?
The silence of space decamped, space flitted in every direction -
Where is the Black Beast?
Crow flailed immersely through the vacuum, he screeched after the
disappearing stars -
Where is it? Where is the Black Beast?"

The answer is given in every line. It is in all of us, when we live in our homes, when we lie down, when we rise up, when we walk upon our ways. Are we teaching holiness, or are we burning the earth into cinders, deploying atomic weapons, splitting the enemy's skull? The Hound of Heaven, the beast slouching towards Armageddon, is identified within ourselves. It is we who are evil, we who have trespassed, we who have done perversely. And the poet's vision is joined by every line of our prayers, pleading with us to turn from evil to good, to be holy.

"K'doshim t'h'yu" - how can we find our way back to that reality of our faith? That it is real, we should not doubt. It is as real as the evil - but it is not disconnected from it. We cannot find it by turning away from the darkness in the Lebanon, by a denial that there could never be Jews who would permit such evil to happen - or by assuming that we ourselves would NEVER be associated with evil in any form. All we need do is to take one day of our life in the past year and examine it; we will find the dark beast couched in a corner of that space.

"Be holy!" But we want to be. We want to be holy as God is holy. The wall which lies between us and that realization of holiness is the perception of the evil which we have done in our lives: evil against our family, our friends, our neighbours; against ourselves. "We have sinned; we have transgressed; we have done perversely - chattanu l'faney-cha!"

And on this day we can be purified. We can return to God.

If we do not understand it, or feel it in our prayers, we are fasting without purpose, we afflict ourselves in vain.

III.

"Kee Kadosh anee adonai elohey-chem"

If we find our way back to the Holiness of god, we can be holy. But we have strayed so far. We are part of a world which is far from the teachings of the Prophets, from the commandments of God. Darkness rules, broods over the camps in Beirut - still in great danger! - fills the corners of our lives, the length of our days. Where is the way back, the way of teshuvah, of return?

Let us listen to a rabbinic tale.

"Once, there was a king" - rabbis live in the knowledge of the King and his kingdom. "That king had a son whom he loved with all of his heart. He instructed and cherished him, and all the treasures of the palace were open to the son. The son became spoiled. He disdained the instruction, he treated others with arrogance, he did not accept his responsibilities. Finally, the king's advisors came to him with the report that the son was beginning to destroy the palace and the city with his actions. Reluctantly, the king banished his son to the outermost regions of his land. Angry and hurt, the son abandoned all aspect of his former position. His garments became rough and torn, and he worked in the fields. He became a shepherd, living in a rough hut which he had fashioned for himself. He talked to no-one. In time, he almost came to forget that he had ever been a prince.

One day, the king decided to journey through his land, to listen to the people and discover their needs. "Whoever approaches the king will have his wish granted" was announced by heralds. And the shepherd who had once been the prince lifted up his head and listened. The roof in his hut was broken and leaking, and winter was coming.

In due course, the king came to that desolate place at the edge of his land. The shepherd appeared before him; and the king recognized his son. "O my son," said the king in his heart. "Ask for anything, and I will give it to you. Ask for your former position, for your place next to me - and it will be granted." But the prince barely looked up from the ground. He did not recognize his father. "I need a new roof," he said. "Winter is coming." And the king wept. "Life has diminished you. Suffering has crushed you," said the king. "You could have asked for anything - and all you can think of is a new roof!"

The rabbinic story ends here, concerned with showing how affliction can diminish and destroy human beings. Yet it always seemed to me that there is a continuation - somewhat like this:

"The king's son received his new roof. And for a while he was content. But in the long winter nights, he began to think about his encounter with the king. Why had the king wept? Slowly, the shepherd began to remember that he had been a prince. And the day came when he found a young boy to guard the flock, and began his long journey back to the palace. He has not yet arrived; but every day brings him closer to the king. For he knows now that when he confronts the king, the father's arms will reach out in love. "I have come back to claim my place," he will say. This time, the king will weep with joy. And the son will enter into his heritage."

.....

"K'doshim t'h'yu, kae kadosh adonai elohey-chem"

We cannot be holy as long as we deny the king, as long as we live on the outermost edge of his kingdom, on the drear shingles of our unbelief. We cannot confess, we cannot return, as long as we do not see the reality of the Divine in the world, the reality of

a moral law which is as clear and as steadfast as the starry skies above. We know so much about the Black Beast of evil which roams the world — we know so little about the Divine holiness which can burst into light wherever we turn our eyes: in a burning bush, in a righteous act. Children of the king, we have turned away from our heritage: we settle for so little, when we could demand so much.

On Yom Kippur, we demand so much for ourselves: new hope, new vision, new ways. We want to turn away from evil, we want, we demand of ourselves that we be holy. And we make similar demands upon Israel: it must strive for holiness. It must accept special responsibilities for itself, must judge itself more harshly. And we who make these demands must share in the task, may not abandon the people, must give support to those who work for justice and peace in a land that was holy and must again be holy. We must give our love to Israel in a time such as this.

'We settle for so little, we could demand so much' — from ourselves, and from Israel. But also from God! This is the time of Levi Yitzchak, of the holy fool who appears before God and demands that the Judge of the World subjects Himself to justice. It is the time of the prince who appears before the king to claim his royal estate. And it is the time when the people appear before the throne of judgment.

"Avinu malkenu, chattanu l'faney-cha — Our Father, our King,
we have sinned before Thee. Judge us in mercy, and bless us."

O Lord: we demand blessing — for all who suffer, for all who are in danger,
for Thy people Israel, for Thy humanity struggling
against evil, seeking holiness in the world.

O Lord, let us be holy as Thou art holy.

AMEN v'amen