

**The original documents are located in Box D28, folder “62nd Annual Bnai Zion American-Israel Friendship Award Dinner, New York, NY, February 15, 1970” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

### **Copyright Notice**

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. The Council donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

BENAY

Dr. LeVine

62ND ANNUAL BNAI ZION AMERICA-ISRAEL  
FRIENDSHIP AWARD DINNER, NEW YORK HILTON  
HOTEL, NEW YORK, NEW YORK, 6 P.M.  
SUNDAY, FEB. 15, 1970

Robert Chagny

Lindsay  
Rockefeller  
Santo  
Model  
CELLAR

Walt Thayer  
Cellar  
Si Halpern  
Leonard  
Jack  
Murphy

THIS IS AN AUDIENCE THAT IS  
WELL-INFORMED ON THE <sup>part +</sup> RECENT HISTORY OF THE  
MIDDLE EASTERN SITUATION. YOU HAVE A  
SOPHISTICATED KNOWLEDGE OF ISRAEL'S PROBLEMS.  
YOU HAVE ALSO HEARD A GREAT DEAL OF RHETORIC.  
SINCE YOU ARE DEVOTED TO ISRAELI-AMERICAN  
FRIENDSHIP, YOU HAVE CAREFULLY FOLLOWED AND  
ANALYZED EVERY DEVELOPMENT, / EVERY REALITY, /  
AND ARE NOT MISLED BY VERBIAGE AND HIGH-  
SOUNDING FORMULATIONS. YOU RETAIN FAITH IN  
OUR NATION, THE UNITED STATES, TO DO JUSTICE  
IN ITS RELATIONS WITH THE EMBATTLED  
DEMOCRACY OF ISRAEL. <sup>for very good reasons</sup> BUT YOU WANT TO KNOW  
THE SCORE.

THE SITUATION IS TOO TENSE AND  
EXPLOSIVE TO CONFUSE THE ISSUE. WE MUST



MEAN WHAT WE SAY AND SAY WHAT WE MEAN.

THERE HAVE BEEN ALL TOO MANY WILD RUMORS  
AND EXAGGERATIONS. THERE HAVE BEEN CHARGES  
THAT ISRAEL IS BEING SOLD OUT TO RUSSIAN  
AND ARAB PRESSURES. THERE ARE FEARS THAT  
ISRAEL IS BEING UNDERMINED, / CUT-OFF, /  
REJECTED, / AND NEGLECTED. THERE ARE FEARS  
THAT ISRAEL IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY  
ISOLATED.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I WANT TO  
TELL YOU THAT I HAVE BEEN REASSURED ON THE  
HIGHEST LEVELS IN WASHINGTON THAT THE UNITED  
STATES GOVERNMENT STANDS BY ITS FRIENDS.  
ISRAEL IS ONE OF ITS <sup>best</sup> FRIENDS.

THE FRIENDSHIP OF OUR TWO  
COUNTRIES IS AN ARTICLE OF FAITH. PRESIDENT  
NIXON HAS VERY RECENTLY REAFFIRMED *in strong terms*  
ISRAELI-AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP. MRS. GOLDA  
MEIR, PRIME MINISTER OF ISRAEL, STATED THAT  
SHE "NOTED WITH GRATIFICATION" THE CLEAR

EXPRESSION BY PRESIDENT NIXON ON THE ISSUE OF ISRAEL'S SECURITY AND INTEGRITY.

ALSO, ISRAELI AMBASSADOR RABIN STATED IN WASHINGTON THAT HE WAS ENCOURAGED BY THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT. AS A FRIEND OF ISRAEL, I MIGHT ADD THAT I, TOO, FOUND GREAT REASSURANCE IN THE MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT. I REFER, OF COURSE, TO THE MESSAGE HE SENT THROUGH MY GOOD FRIEND, MAX FISHER, TO THE EMERGENCY CONFERENCE OF JEWISH LEADERS IN WASHINGTON LAST MONTH.

THE SOVIET UNION HAS DENOUNCED THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE. MOSCOW'S ARAB FRIENDS HAD SOME VERY UNKIND THINGS TO SAY ABOUT RICHARD M. NIXON. COMMUNIST CHINA HAS BLAMED THE PRESIDENT FOR SUPPORTING ISRAEL AND PLEDGED CHINESE SUPPORT OF THE ARAB CAUSE.

THE PRESIDENT TOLD THE CONGRESS  
IN HIS STATE OF THE UNION REMARKS THAT WE





ARE MOVING FROM AN ERA OF INTERNATIONAL  
CONFRONTATION TO AN ERA OF NEGOTIATION.  
THIS IS TRUE IN THE MIDDLE EAST, AS IT IS  
ELSEWHERE. WE ARE DEEPLY ENGAGED IN TRYING  
TO HELP THE PEOPLE OF THE MIDDLE EAST FIND  
PEACE. BUT WE WILL NOT DO THIS AT THE  
EXPENSE OF ISRAEL. INDEED, WE WILL NOT DO  
THIS AT THE EXPENSE OF ANY NATION'S  
LEGITIMATE INTERESTS.

NO PEACE AGREEMENT WILL BE  
WORTH THE PAPER IT'S WRITTEN ON IF EITHER  
SIDE ENDS UP CHEATED AND BENT ON VIOLENT  
REDRESS AS SOON AS IT HAS ADEQUATE POWER.

THIS ADMINISTRATION IS NOT GOING  
TO NEGOTIATE THE PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST.  
THERE IS NO QUESTION OF OUR NEGOTIATING  
AWAY THE BASIC RIGHTS AND INTERESTS OF THE  
NATIONS NOW AT WAR. THEY MUST NEGOTIATE  
THE PEACE THEMSELVES.

THE UNITED STATES IS CONVINCED



THAT PEACE CAN BE BASED ONLY ON AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PARTIES DIRECTLY INVOLVED. AS THE PRESIDENT HAS SAID, "THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR NEGOTIATIONS. PEACE AND SECURITY CAN ONLY EMERGE FROM THE MUTUAL AGREEMENT OF THE TWO SIDES IMMEDIATELY CONCERNED."

MUCH WORK HAS BEEN DONE THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS UNDER THIS AND THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION. YOU ARE A VERY SOPHISTICATED GROUP AND REALIZE THAT THE ART OF DIPLOMACY IS COMPLEX AND THAT WORDS AND VERSIONS THAT APPEAR IN THE PRESS ARE OFTEN CONFUSING AND MISLEADING. I HAVE LOOKED CAREFULLY BEHIND THE DIPLOMATIC SITUATION/AND ASSURED MYSELF THAT THIS ADMINISTRATION, ALONE OR IN CONCERT WITH ANY OTHER POWER, CANNOT AND WILL NOT DICTATE THE TERMS OF PEACE OR SEEK TO IMPOSE A SETTLEMENT.



I ADVOCATE A GENUINE PEACE, A  
REAL PEACE, A DURABLE PEACE. ONLY A PEACE  
BASED UPON AGREEMENT THAT IS NOT ONE-SIDED  
IS A PEACE THAT ALL SIDES WILL HAVE A  
VESTED INTEREST IN MAINTAINING.

PRESIDENT NIXON STATED ON  
SEPTEMBER 8, 1968, THAT "IT IS NOT REALISTIC  
TO EXPECT ISRAEL TO SURRENDER VITAL  
BARGAINING COUNTERS IN THE ABSENCE OF  
GENUINE PEACE AND EFFECTIVE GUARANTEES."  
THIS ADMINISTRATION CONTINUES TO RECOGNIZE  
THAT FACT.

THE SOVIET UNION OR EGYPT OR  
ANYONE ELSE WOULD BE BADLY MISGUIDED TO  
CONCLUDE THAT THE UNITED STATES IS GOING  
TO HIGH-PRESSURE ISRAEL INTO UNILATERAL  
WITHDRAWAL.

THE STATE DEPARTMENT PEOPLE  
HAVE REASSURED ME THAT THEIR REAL AIM IN  
THE FOUR-POWER TALKS IS TO PREVENT A SPREAD



OF THE CONFLICT AND, IF POSSIBLE, TO FIND  
SOME FORMULA UNDER WHICH THE ARABS AND  
ISRAELIS COULD MEET AND RESOLVE THEIR  
DIFFERENCES. THERE MUST BE SOME "GIVE AND  
TAKE" IN ANY INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMACY. BUT  
THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE UNITED STATES  
WILL "GIVE" AT THE EXPENSE OF ISRAEL WHILE  
THE SOVIET UNION "TAKES" FOR THE ARABS.

I CAN UNDERSTAND HOW ISRAEL  
FEELS. ISRAEL IS SURROUNDED, **B**ESIEGED,  
SUBJECTED TO VILIFICATION AND HATRED, TO  
GUERRILLA ATTACKS AND SABOTAGE. THE  
ISRAELIS <sup>very properly</sup> MAY POINT OUT THAT WHILE THE  
UNITED STATES IS THE ADVOCATE OF PEACE,  
THE SOVIET UNION IS THE ADVOCATE ONLY OF  
THE ARABS. THE ISRAELIS MAY ALSO RAISE A  
VERY LEGITIMATE QUESTION AS TO WHETHER A  
ROLLBACK FROM OCCUPIED TERRITORY AND EVEN  
ONE-SIDED CONCESSIONS TO THE ARAB STATES  
WILL REALLY SATISFY THE EXTREMISTS OF THE





SO-CALLED "NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT" OF THE ARABS. IT HAS NOT IN THE PAST, AND INSCRIBED ON THE <sup>NATIONAL</sup> <sup>BUILDING</sup> ARCHIVES AT S... "WHAT IS PAST IS PROLOGUE."

IT IS PERFECTLY UNDERSTANDABLE THAT ISRAEL WOULD SCRUTINIZE EVERYTHING OUR GOVERNMENT SAYS AND DOES. ISRAEL'S VERY SURVIVAL IS AT STAKE. THE ISRAELIS REMEMBER VERY WELL THE LIQUIDATION OF THE JEWS IN THE WARSAW GHETTO DURING WORLD WAR II. THEY REMEMBER THE NAZI GENOCIDE. AND THEY ARE WELL AWARE OF THE ANTI-JEWISH PERSECUTION NOW PRACTICED IN SYRIA, IRAQ, AND SOME OTHER ARAB STATES.

IT IS VITAL THAT ISRAEL CORRECTLY ASSESS AMERICAN INTENTIONS. IF ISRAEL REACHED A CONCLUSION THAT IT WERE ISOLATED OR SOLD-OUT, IT COULD BE A GRAVE THREAT TO WORLD PEACE. IMPROVED COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND AMERICA ARE ESSENTIAL.



I AM THEREFORE MOVED TO PROPOSE  
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A TELEPHONE "HOT-LINE"  
BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND JERUSALEM. SUCH A  
MEANS OF INSTANTANEOUS CONTACT WOULD ENABLE  
EITHER PRESIDENT NIXON OR PRIME MINISTER  
MEIR TO CLARIFY ANY MISUNDERSTANDING. IT  
WOULD ALSO BE VERY USEFUL IF NEW FACTORS  
DEVELOPED THAT THREATENED A DANGEROUS  
ESCALATION OR SPREADING OF THE CONFLICT.  
ISRAEL WOULD HAVE THE REASSURANCE OF  
INSTANTANEOUS COMMUNICATION WITH THE  
PRESIDENT. THE PRESIDENT COULD ACT INSTANTLY,  
IN SOME UNFORESEEN CRISIS, BY CONTACTING  
MRS. MEIR.


RECENT EVENTS HAVE CAUSED ME  
GREAT CONCERN. THE FIGHTING HAS STEADILY  
INCREASED. ISRAELIS AND ARABS ARE DYING  
EVERY DAY ON BOTH SIDES OF THE SUEZ CANAL.  
THE YOUNG AND THE BRAVE ARE GIVING THEIR  
LIVES. HUMANITY AND COMPASSION REBEL AGAINST



THE RISING LEVEL OF VIOLENCE. THE NEW  
SHIPMENTS OF ARMS TO LIBYA BY FRANCE AND  
TO EGYPT BY THE RUSSIANS ARE ESCALATING THE  
ARMS RACE IN A MANNER THAT CONCERNS ME  
INTENSELY.

A NEW FACTOR HAS BEEN INTRODUCED  
IN THE MASSIVE FRENCH TRANSACTION WITH LIBYA.  
I CANNOT IMAGINE WHY LIBYA, WITH AN ARMY FAR  
SMALLER THAN THE NEW YORK CITY POLICE  
DEPARTMENT, NEEDS OVER 100 OF THE LATEST  
FRENCH MIRAGE JET FIGHTER-BOMBERS --- OR  
HUNDREDS OF BRITISH CHIEFTAIN TANKS,  
CONSIDERED THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL TANK.

PRESIDENT NIXON IS ABSOLUTELY  
RIGHT IN URGING THAT ARMS SUPPLIERS FIND A  
WAY TO LIMIT THE ARMS RACE. I HAVE URGED  
THAT OUR GOVERNMENT SEIZE ON THE FORTUITOUS  
AND VERY TIMELY OCCASION OF PRESIDENT  
POMPIDOU'S VISIT NEXT WEEK TO DISCUSS THIS  
NEW FRENCH POLICY. THE HUGE NEW INFUSION OF





ARMS INTO A HOTBED OF CONTENTION DOES NOT  
HELP REDUCE VIOLENCE OR FATALITIES.

THERE ARE SOME VERY SERIOUS  
MATTERS THAT OBVIOUSLY WILL DEVELOP IN THE  
AGENDA OF TALKS IN WASHINGTON WITH PRESIDENT  
POMPIDOU, MATTERS THAT INVOLVE THE INTERESTS  
OF THE WHOLE WORLD. IT HAS BEEN A BASIC  
TENET OF OUR GOVERNMENT THAT WHILE WE MAY  
BE DIVIDED AT HOME ON FOREIGN POLICY MATTERS  
WE ARE NEVERTHELESS SUBSTANTIALLY UNITED  
WHEN OUR GOVERNMENT DEALS WITH OTHER NATIONS.

THE COMING NEGOTIATIONS IN  
WASHINGTON BETWEEN OUR GOVERNMENT AND  
PRESIDENT POMPIDOU ARE OF SUCH IMPORTANCE  
THAT WE CANNOT PERMIT AN IMPRESSION THAT THE  
CONGRESS IS NO LONGER PREPARED TO ACCORD  
THE REPUBLIC OF FRANCE THE TRADITIONAL  
COURTESIES. WE SEEK NEGOTIATION, NOT  
CONFRONTATION. THE VIOLENCE AND KILLING IN  
THE MIDDLE EAST ARE VERY, VERY SERIOUS. ✓ THE

*and more so every day.*





*Tragically*

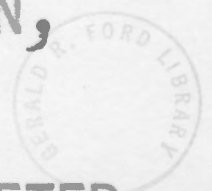
SITUATION IS GROWING WORSE.

IT SEEMS TO ME THAT WE MUST  
STRENGTHEN THE HAND OF THE PRESIDENT WHEN  
HE SPEAKS FOR ALL OF US TO PRESIDENT POMPIDOU.  
THIS IS THE WAY TO IMPRESS UPON THE FRENCH  
PRESIDENT THE GREAT CONVICTION AND UNITY  
OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ON THE MATTERS WE HAVE  
DISCUSSED.

WE SHALL DO EVERYTHING WE CAN IN  
THE INTEREST OF PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE  
MIDDLE EAST. BUT WE WILL DO MORE THAN TALK.  
THE UNITED STATES WILL NOT AND CANNOT STAND  
BY AND WATCH THE MILITARY BALANCE TURN  
AGAINST ITS FRIENDS.

WE WOULD, OF COURSE, PREFER THAT  
PRESIDENT NIXON'S STATESMANLIKE EFFORT TO  
LIMIT THE ARMS RACE WOULD GENERATE A POSITIVE  
RESPONSE FROM FRANCE, FROM GREAT BRITAIN,  
AND, OF COURSE, FROM THE SOVIET UNION.

A BALANCE IS ESSENTIAL TO DETER



AGGRESSION AND TO KEEP THE CONFLICT UNDER CONTROL. THE UNITED STATES IS PREPARED TO SUPPLY THE MILITARY EQUIPMENT NECESSARY FOR FRIENDLY GOVERNMENTS, SUCH AS ISRAEL, TO DEFEND THEMSELVES. WE WOULD, OF COURSE, PREFER RESTRAINT IN THE SHIPMENT OF ARMS INTO THIS TROUBLED AREA. BUT WE ARE AWARE OF WHAT OTHER MAJOR POWERS ARE DOING. WE ARE MAINTAINING A VERY CAREFUL VIGILANCE. WE WILL NOT HESITATE TO TAKE THE STEPS REQUIRED. — *2 repeat with emphasis* —

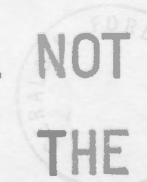
THE 1968 REPUBLICAN PLATFORM PLEDGED THAT ISRAELI MILITARY SUPPLIES "MUST BE KEPT AT A COMMENSURATE STRENGTH BOTH FOR HER PROTECTION AND TO HELP KEEP THE PEACE OF THE AREA." WE PROMISED COUNTER-VAILING HELP, INCLUDING SUPERSONIC AIRCRAFT, IF NEEDED. WE WILL KEEP THIS PLEDGE. I MIGHT ADD THAT DELIVERIES OF PHANTOM AND SKYHAWK JETS ARE ~~GONING~~ FORWARD



ON SCHEDULE UNDER EXISTING CONTRACTS.

IT IS UNDERSTANDABLE THAT ISRAEL, CUT OFF FROM TRADITIONAL SOURCES OF ARMS IN FRANCE, IS SEEKING A SENSE OF CONTINUITY IN AIRCRAFT PROCUREMENT HERE. I DEEPLY REGRET THAT LIVES ARE LOST DAILY IN THE MIDDLE EAST. BUT AS LONG AS THERE IS NO PEACE AND NO AGREEMENT ON ARMS LIMITATION, WE WILL KEEP A VERY CLOSE EYE ON THE POWER BALANCE.

I CAN ALSO REVEAL THAT WE ARE LOOKING INTO THE BROADER QUESTION OF THE MEDITERRANEAN, THE MISSION OF THE U.S. 6TH FLEET, AND RELATED FACTORS. WE DO NOT WANT A CONFRONTATION WITH THE SOVIET UNION OR ANYONE ELSE. BUT WE HAVE COMMITMENTS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AND THE RIGHT TO MAINTAIN MILITARY FORCES THERE. OUR SHIPS AND OUR FLAG WILL REMAIN IN THAT AREA. WE WILL NOT FLEE BECAUSE OF PRESSURES AND THREATS. THE



6TH FLEET WILL CONTINUE SERVING THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM.

WE HAVE NO WARLIKE MOTIVES IN THE MIDDLE EAST. THE AMERICAN PEOPLE DESIRE ONLY THE FRIENDSHIP OF ALL THE VARIOUS NATIONS OF THAT REGION. IT IS OUR FERVENT PRAYER THAT NATIONS ACCORD OTHERS THE RIGHT TO EXIST. PERHAPS REALIZATION WILL COME THAT TRUE LIBERATION CAN BE FOUND IN DEVELOPMENT OF ONE'S OWN COUNTRY, RAISING OF ONE'S OWN LIVING STANDARD, AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF ONE'S OWN SOCIAL JUSTICE. AGGRESSION WILL NOT SUCCEED NO MATTER THE GRANDIOSE PHRASES INVOKED TO JUSTIFY THE UNRELENTING WARFARE BY REGULAR AND GUERRILLA FORCES. ALL PARTIES ARE OBVIOUSLY BETTER SERVED BY PEACE NEGOTIATIONS AND THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE FACTS OF LIFE. THE REAL INTERESTS OF BOTH ARAB AND ISRAELIS REQUIRE PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE.

IN THAT LAND WHERE THE PROPHETS





DREAMED THAT NATION SHOULD NOT LIFT UP  
SWORD AGAINST NATION, LET THERE BE PEACE.  
FOR ISRAEL, A NATION OF PEOPLE WHOSE  
SUFFERING MERITS A LIFE MORE CREATIVE THAN  
PERPETUAL SERVICE IN AN ARMED CAMP, LET  
THERE BE PEACE. FOR THE ARABS, WHOSE  
POVERTY AND FRUSTRATION REQUIRES SCHOOLS  
AND HOSPITALS AND A DECENT LIFE RATHER THAN  
THE ENDLESS PURCHASE OF JETS AND GUNS, LET  
THERE BE PEACE.

ISRAEL COULD BE A LIGHT UNTO  
THE NATIONS OF THAT REGION IF THE ARABS  
WOULD ACCEPT FELLOW HUMAN BEINGS OF THE  
JEWISH FAITH AS ENTITLED TO NATIONHOOD AS  
ANY OTHER PEOPLE. THE GENIUS AND  
PRODUCTIVITY OF THE ISRAELIS COULD HELP  
OTHERS MAKE THEIR DESERTS BLOSSOM. INSTEAD  
OF THE CRADLE OF CIVILIZATION BECOMING ITS  
GRAVE, LET THE CRADLE OF CIVILIZATION GIVE  
RISE TO TWO PEOPLES, ARAB AND JEWISH, EACH



IN THEIR OWN COUNTRIES, WITH COMMERCE AND TRAVEL FLOWING ACROSS PEACEFUL BORDERS, AND WITH A NEW SENSE OF MUTUAL RESPECT IN KEEPING WITH OUR DREAM OF THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN UNDER THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD.

I WANT TO ADD A SPECIAL AND VERY PERSONAL WORD TO THIS AUDIENCE. MANY OF YOU HAVE DEVOTED YOUR LIVES TO THE ZIONIST CAUSE. YOU HAVE SEEN IN ZIONISM A REDEMPTION OF FREEDOM AND HUMAN DIGNITY, THE REBIRTH OF A NATION, AND THE REBIRTH OF A PEOPLE. BUT WE ARE NOW WITNESSING PAINFUL DAYS, TRAGIC DAYS, IN WHICH THE POWERS AND POLITICAL TRENDS AND PRESSURES OF THE WORLD APPEAR TO BE CONVERGING ON THE MIDDLE EAST.

ISRAEL WAS REBORN IN BLOOD AND FIRE. ISRAEL IS TODAY STRUGGLING IN AN ORDEAL OF BLOOD AND FIRE. BUT THIS TIME IT IS DIFFERENT. THE STATE OF ISRAEL HAS



PROVED ITS METTLE. ISRAEL IS A NATION AMONG  
THE NATIONS.

YOU CAN TAKE PRIDE, AS DEDICATED  
SUPPORTERS OF ISRAEL, AS ZIONISTS, IN THE  
NATION YOU HAVE HELPED BUILD. BUT THE  
WATCHMAN OF ISRAEL DOES NOT SLEEP AND DOES  
NOT SLUMBER. TRYING DAYS LIE AHEAD. YET,  
IN YOUR HEART OF HEARTS, YOU CAN DRAW FAITH  
AND SUSTENANCE AND REASSURANCE FROM ONE  
FACT. IT IS THAT THIS IS THE UNITED STATES  
OF AMERICA. THIS IS OUR COUNTRY AND WE,  
JEWS AND NON-JEWS, PEOPLES OF ALL PARTS OF  
THIS COUNTRY, THE SILENT AMERICANS AND THE  
ARTICULATE AMERICANS, WILL NOT LET ISRAEL  
DOWN.

THANK YOU.

-- END --



AN ADDRESS BY REP. GERALD R. FORD, R-MICH.  
MINORITY LEADER, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
AT THE 62nd ANNUAL BNAI ZION AMERICA-ISRAEL FRIENDSHIP AWARD DINNER  
AT THE NEW YORK HILTON HOTEL  
NEW YORK, NEW YORK  
6:00 p.m. SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1970

FOR RELEASE ON DELIVERY

This is an audience that is well-informed on the recent history of the Middle Eastern situation. You have a sophisticated knowledge of Israel's problems. You have also heard a great deal of rhetoric. Since you are devoted to Israeli-American friendship, you have carefully followed and analyzed every development, every reality, and are not misled by verbiage and high-sounding formulations. You retain faith in your nation, the United States, to do justice in its relations with the embattled democracy of Israel. But you want to know the score.

The situation is too tense and explosive to confuse the issue. We must mean what we say and say what we mean. There have been all too many wild rumors and exaggerations. There have been charges that Israel is being sold out to Russian and Arab pressures. There are fears that Israel is being undermined, cut-off, rejected, and neglected. There are fears that Israel is becoming increasingly isolated.

Ladies and gentlemen, I want to tell you that I have been reassured on the highest levels in Washington that the United States Government stands by its friends. Israel is one of its friends.

The friendship of our two countries is an article of faith. President Nixon has very recently reaffirmed Israeli-American friendship. Mrs. Golda Meir, Prime Minister of Israel, stated that she "noted with gratification" the clear expression by President Nixon on the issue of Israel's security and integrity.

Also, Israeli Ambassador Rabin stated in Washington that he was encouraged by the President's statement. As a friend of Israel, I might add that I, too, found great reassurance in the message of the President. I refer, of course, to the message he sent through my good friend, Max Fisher, to the emergency conference of Jewish leaders in Washington last month.

The Soviet Union has denounced the President's message. Moscow's Arab friends had some very unkind things to say about Richard M. Nixon. Communist China has blamed the President for supporting Israel and pledged Chinese support to the Arab cause.

(more)



The President told the Congress in his State of the Union remarks that we are moving from an era of international confrontation to an era of negotiation. This is true in the Middle East, as it is elsewhere. We are deeply engaged in trying to help the people of the Middle East find peace. But we will not do this at the expense of Israel. Indeed, we will not do this at the expense of any nation's legitimate interests.

No peace agreement will be worth the paper it's written on if either side ends up cheated and bent on violent redress as soon as it has adequate power.

This Administration is not going to negotiate the peace in the Middle East. There is no question of our negotiating away the basic rights and interests of the nations now at war. They must negotiate the peace themselves.

The United States is convinced that peace can be based only on agreement between the parties directly involved. As the President has said, "There is no substitute for negotiations. Peace and security can only emerge from the mutual agreement of the two sides immediately concerned.

Much work has been done through diplomatic channels under this and the previous Administration. You are a very sophisticated group and realize that the art of diplomacy is complex and that words and versions that appear in the press are often confusing and misleading. I have looked carefully behind the diplomatic situation and assured myself that this Administration, alone or in concert with any other power, cannot and will not dictate the terms of peace or seek to impose a settlement.

I advocate a genuine peace, a real peace, a durable peace. Only a peace based upon agreement that is not one-sided is a peace that all sides will have a vested interest in maintaining.

President Nixon stated on September 8, 1968, that "it is not realistic to expect Israel to surrender vital bargaining counters in the absence of genuine peace and effective guarantees." This Administration continues to recognize that fact.

The Soviet Union or Egypt or anyone else would be badly misguided to conclude that the United States is going to high-pressure Israel into unilateral withdrawal.

The State Department people have reassured me that their real aim in the Four Power talks is to prevent a spread of the conflict and, if possible, to find some formula under which the Arabs and Israelis could meet and resolve their differences. There must be some "give and take" in any international diplomacy.

(more)

But this does not mean that the United States will "give" at the expense of Israel while the Soviet Union "takes" for the Arabs.

I can understand how Israel feels. Israel is surrounded, besieged, subjected to vilification and hatred, to guerrilla attacks and sabotage. The Israelis may point out that while the United States is the advocate of peace, the Soviet Union is the advocate only of the Arabs. The Israelis may also raise a very legitimate question as to whether a rollback from occupied territory and even one-sided concessions to the Arab states will really satisfy the extremists of the so-called "national liberation front" of the Arabs. It has not in the past, and inscribed on the Archives is "What is Past is Prologue."

It is perfectly understandable that Israel would scrutinize everything our government says and does. Israel's very survival is at stake. The Israelis remember very well the liquidation of the Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto during World War II. They remember the Nazi genocide. And they are well aware of the anti-Jewish persecution now practiced in Syria, Iraq, and some other Arab States.

It is vital that Israel correctly assess American intentions. If Israel reached a conclusion that it were isolated or sold-out, it could be a grave threat to world peace. Improved communications between Israel and America are essential.

I am therefore moved to propose the establishment of a telephone "hot-line" between Washington and Jerusalem. Such a means of instantaneous contact would enable either President Nixon or Prime Minister Meir to clarify any misunderstanding. It would also be very useful if new factors developed that threatened a dangerous escalation or spreading of the conflict. Israel would have the reassurance of instantaneous communication with the President. The President could act instantly, in some unforeseen crisis, by contacting Mrs. Meir.

Recent events have caused me great concern. The fighting has steadily increased. Israelis and Arabs are dying every day on both sides of the Suez Canal. The young and the brave are giving their lives. Humanity and compassion rebel against the rising level of violence. The new shipments of arms to Libya by France and to Egypt by the Russians are escalating the arms race in a manner that concerns me intensely.

A new factor has been introduced in the massive French transaction with Libya. I cannot imagine why Libya, with an army far smaller than the New York City Police Department, needs over 100 of the latest French Mirage jet fighter-bombers -- or hundreds of British Chieftain tanks, considered the world's most powerful tank.

(more)

President Nixon is absolutely right in urging that arms suppliers find a way to limit the arms race. I have urged that our Government seize on the fortuitous and very timely occasion of President Pompidou's visit next week to discuss this new French policy. The huge new infusion of arms into a hotbed of contention does not help reduce violence or fatalities.

There are some very serious matters that obviously will develop in the agenda of talks in Washington with President Pompidou, matters that involve the interests of the whole world. It has been a basic tenet of our Government that while we may be divided at home on foreign policy matters we are nevertheless substantially united when our Government deals with other nations.

The coming negotiations in Washington between our Government and President Pompidou are of such importance that we cannot permit an impression that the Congress is no longer prepared to accord the Republic of France the traditional courtesies. We seek negotiation, not confrontation. The violence and killing in the Middle East are very, very serious. The situation is growing worse.

It seems to me that we must strengthen the hand of the President when he speaks for all of us to President Pompidou. This is the way to impress upon the French President the great conviction and unity of the American people on the matters we have discussed.

We shall do everything we can in the interest of peace and stability in the Middle East. But we will do more than talk. The United States will not and cannot stand by and watch the military balance turn against its friends.

We would, of course, prefer that President Nixon's statesmanlike effort to limit the arms race would generate a positive response from France, from Great Britain, and, of course, from the Soviet Union.

A balance is essential to deter aggression and to keep the conflict under control. The United States is prepared to supply the military equipment necessary for friendly governments, such as Israel, to defend themselves. We would, of course, prefer restraint in the shipment of arms into this troubled area. But we are aware of what other major powers are doing. We are maintaining a very careful vigilance. We will not hesitate to take the steps required.

The 1968 Republican Platform pledged that Israeli military supplies "must be kept at a commensurate strength both for her protection and to help keep the peace of the area." We promised counter-vailing help, including supersonic aircraft, if needed. We will keep this pledge. I might add that deliveries of

(more)

Phantom and Skyhawk jets are going forward on schedule under existing contracts.

It is understandable that Israel, cut off from traditional sources of arms in France, is seeking a sense of continuity in aircraft procurement here. I deeply regret that lives are lost daily in the Middle East. But as long as there is no peace and no agreement on arms limitation, we will keep a very close eye on the power balance.

I can also reveal that we are looking into the broader question of the Mediterranean, the mission of the U.S. 6th Fleet, and related factors. We do not want a confrontation with the Soviet Union or anyone else. But we have commitments in the Mediterranean and the right to maintain military forces there. Our ships and our flag will remain in that area. We will not flee because of pressures and threats. The 6th Fleet will continue serving the cause of freedom.

We have no warlike motives in the Middle East. The American people desire only the friendship of all the various nations of that region. It is our fervent prayer that nations accord others the right to exist. Perhaps realization will come that true liberation can be found in development of one's own country, raising of one's own living standard, and the development of one's own social justice. Aggression will not succeed no matter the grandiose phrases invoked to justify the unrelenting warfare by regular and guerrilla forces. All parties are obviously better served by peace negotiations and the acceptance of the facts of life. The real interests of both Arab and Israelis require peaceful coexistence.

In that land where the Prophets dreamed that nation should not lift up sword against nation, let there be peace. For Israel, a nation of people whose suffering merits a life more creative than perpetual service in an armed camp, let there be peace. For the Arabs, whose poverty and frustration requires schools and hospitals and a decent life rather than the endless purchase of jets and guns, let there be peace.

Israel could be a light unto the nations of that region if the Arabs would accept fellow human beings of the Jewish faith as entitled to nationhood as any other people. The genius and productivity of the Israelis could help others make their deserts blossom. Instead of the cradle of civilization becoming its grave, let the cradle of civilization give rise to two peoples, Arab and Jewish, each in their own countries, with commerce and travel flowing across peaceful borders, and with a new sense of mutual respect in keeping with our dream of the brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God.

(more)



I want to add a special and very personal word to this audience. Many of you have devoted your lives to the Zionist cause. You have seen in Zionism a redemption of freedom and human dignity, the rebirth of a nation, and the rebirth of a people. But we are now witnessing painful days, tragic days, in which the powers and political trends and pressures of the world appear to be converging on the Middle East.

Israel was reborn in blood and fire. Israel is today struggling in an ordeal of blood and fire. But this time it is different. The State of Israel has proved its mettle. Israel is a nation among the nations.

You can take pride, as dedicated supporters of Israel, as Zionists, in the nation you have helped build. But the watchman of Israel does not sleep and does not slumber. Trying days lie ahead. Yet, in your heart of hearts, you can draw faith and sustenance and reassurance from one fact. It is that this is the United States of America. This is our country and we, Jews and non-Jews, peoples of all parts of this country, the silent Americans and the articulate Americans, will not let Israel down.

I thank you.

# # #

*Distribution: Full*  
*Hallway 10:30 a.m. 2/13/70 M Office Copy*  
*Special del. to N.Y. 9:30 p.m. 2/12/70*

AN ADDRESS BY REP. GERALD R. FORD, R-MICH.  
MINORITY LEADER, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
AT THE 62nd ANNUAL BNAI ZION AMERICA-ISRAEL FRIENDSHIP AWARD DINNER  
AT THE NEW YORK HILTON HOTEL  
NEW YORK, NEW YORK  
6:00 p.m. SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1970

FOR RELEASE ON DELIVERY

This is an audience that is well-informed on the recent history of the Middle Eastern situation. You have a sophisticated knowledge of Israel's problems. You have also heard a great deal of rhetoric. Since you are devoted to Israeli-American friendship, you have carefully followed and analyzed every development, every reality, and are not misled by verbiage and high-sounding formulations. You retain faith in your nation, the United States, to do justice in its relations with the embattled democracy of Israel. But you want to know the score.

The situation is too tense and explosive to confuse the issue. We must mean what we say and say what we mean. There have been all too many wild rumors and exaggerations. There have been charges that Israel is being sold out to Russian and Arab pressures. There are fears that Israel is being undermined, cut-off, rejected, and neglected. There are fears that Israel is becoming increasingly isolated.

Ladies and gentlemen, I want to tell you that I have been reassured on the highest levels in Washington that the United States Government stands by its friends. Israel is one of its friends.

The friendship of our two countries is an article of faith. President Nixon has very recently reaffirmed Israeli-American friendship. Mrs. Golda Meir, Prime Minister of Israel, stated that she "noted with gratification" the clear expression by President Nixon on the issue of Israel's security and integrity.

Also, Israeli Ambassador Rabin stated in Washington that he was encouraged by the President's statement. As a friend of Israel, I might add that I, too, found great reassurance in the message of the President. I refer, of course, to the message he sent through my good friend, Max Fisher, to the emergency conference of Jewish leaders in Washington last month.

The Soviet Union has denounced the President's message. Moscow's Arab friends had some very unkind things to say about Richard M. Nixon. Communist China has blamed the President for supporting Israel and pledged Chinese support to the Arab cause.

(more)



The President told the Congress in his State of the Union remarks that we are moving from an era of international confrontation to an era of negotiation. This is true in the Middle East, as it is elsewhere. We are deeply engaged in trying to help the people of the Middle East find peace. But we will not do this at the expense of Israel. Indeed, we will not do this at the expense of any nation's legitimate interests.

No peace agreement will be worth the paper it's written on if either side ends up cheated and bent on violent redress as soon as it has adequate power.

This Administration is not going to negotiate the peace in the Middle East. There is no question of our negotiating away the basic rights and interests of the nations now at war. They must negotiate the peace themselves.

The United States is convinced that peace can be based only on agreement between the parties directly involved. As the President has said, "There is no substitute for negotiations. Peace and security can only emerge from the mutual agreement of the two sides immediately concerned.

Much work has been done through diplomatic channels under this and the previous Administration. You are a very sophisticated group and realize that the art of diplomacy is complex and that words and versions that appear in the press are often confusing and misleading. I have looked carefully behind the diplomatic situation and assured myself that this Administration, alone or in concert with any other power, cannot and will not dictate the terms of peace or seek to impose a settlement.

I advocate a genuine peace, a real peace, a durable peace. Only a peace based upon agreement that is not one-sided is a peace that all sides will have a vested interest in maintaining.

President Nixon stated on September 8, 1968, that "it is not realistic to expect Israel to surrender vital bargaining counters in the absence of genuine peace and effective guarantees." This Administration continues to recognize that fact.

The Soviet Union or Egypt or anyone else would be badly misguided to conclude that the United States is going to high-pressure Israel into unilateral withdrawal.

The State Department people have reassured me that their real aim in the Four Power talks is to prevent a spread of the conflict and, if possible, to find some formula under which the Arabs and Israelis could meet and resolve their differences. There must be some "give and take" in any international diplomacy.

(more)

But this does not mean that the United States will "give" at the expense of Israel while the Soviet Union "takes" for the Arabs.

I can understand how Israel feels. Israel is surrounded, besieged, subjected to vilification and hatred, to guerrilla attacks and sabotage. The Israelis may point out that while the United States is the advocate of peace, the Soviet Union is the advocate only of the Arabs. The Israelis may also raise a very legitimate question as to whether a rollback from occupied territory and even one-sided concessions to the Arab states will really satisfy the extremists of the so-called "national liberation front" of the Arabs. It has not in the past, and inscribed on the Archives is "What is Past is Prologue."

It is perfectly understandable that Israel would scrutinize everything our government says and does. Israel's very survival is at stake. The Israelis remember very well the liquidation of the Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto during World War II. They remember the Nazi genocide. And they are well aware of the anti-Jewish persecution now practiced in Syria, Iraq, and some other Arab States.

It is vital that Israel correctly assess American intentions. If Israel reached a conclusion that it were isolated or sold-out, it could be a grave threat to world peace. Improved communications between Israel and America are essential.

I am therefore moved to propose the establishment of a telephone "hot-line" between Washington and Jerusalem. Such a means of instantaneous contact would enable either President Nixon or Prime Minister Meir to clarify any misunderstanding. It would also be very useful if new factors developed that threatened a dangerous escalation or spreading of the conflict. Israel would have the reassurance of instantaneous communication with the President. The President could act instantly, in some unforeseen crisis, by contacting Mrs. Meir.

Recent events have caused me great concern. The fighting has steadily increased. Israelis and Arabs are dying every day on both sides of the Suez Canal. The young and the brave are giving their lives. Humanity and compassion rebel against the rising level of violence. The new shipments of arms to Libya by France and to Egypt by the Russians are escalating the arms race in a manner that concerns me intensely.

A new factor has been introduced in the massive French transaction with Libya. I cannot imagine why Libya, with an army far smaller than the New York City Police Department, needs over 100 of the latest French Mirage jet fighter-bombers -- or hundreds of British Chieftain tanks, considered the world's most powerful tank.

(more)



President Nixon is absolutely right in urging that arms suppliers find a way to limit the arms race. I have urged that our Government seize on the fortuitous and very timely occasion of President Pompidou's visit next week to discuss this new French policy. The huge new infusion of arms into a hotbed of contention does not help reduce violence or fatalities.

There are some very serious matters that obviously will develop in the agenda of talks in Washington with President Pompidou, matters that involve the interests of the whole world. It has been a basic tenet of our Government that while we may be divided at home on foreign policy matters we are nevertheless substantially united when our Government deals with other nations.

The coming negotiations in Washington between our Government and President Pompidou are of such importance that we cannot permit an impression that the Congress is no longer prepared to accord the Republic of France the traditional courtesies. We seek negotiation, not confrontation. The violence and killing in the Middle East are very, very serious. The situation is growing worse.

It seems to me that we must strengthen the hand of the President when he speaks for all of us to President Pompidou. This is the way to impress upon the French President the great conviction and unity of the American people on the matters we have discussed.

We shall do everything we can in the interest of peace and stability in the Middle East. But we will do more than talk. The United States will not and cannot stand by and watch the military balance turn against its friends.

We would, of course, prefer that President Nixon's statesmanlike effort to limit the arms race would generate a positive response from France, from Great Britain, and, of course, from the Soviet Union.

A balance is essential to deter aggression and to keep the conflict under control. The United States is prepared to supply the military equipment necessary for friendly governments, such as Israel, to defend themselves. We would, of course, prefer restraint in the shipment of arms into this troubled area. But we are aware of what other major powers are doing. We are maintaining a very careful vigilance. We will not hesitate to take the steps required.

The 1968 Republican Platform pledged that Israeli military supplies "must be kept at a commensurate strength both for her protection and to help keep the peace of the area." We promised counter-vailing help, including supersonic aircraft, if needed. We will keep this pledge. I might add that deliveries of

(more)

Phantom and Skyhawk jets are going forward on schedule under existing contracts.

It is understandable that Israel, cut off from traditional sources of arms in France, is seeking a sense of continuity in aircraft procurement here. I deeply regret that lives are lost daily in the Middle East. But as long as there is no peace and no agreement on arms limitation, we will keep a very close eye on the power balance.

I can also reveal that we are looking into the broader question of the Mediterranean, the mission of the U.S. 6th Fleet, and related factors. We do not want a confrontation with the Soviet Union or anyone else. But we have commitments in the Mediterranean and the right to maintain military forces there. Our ships and our flag will remain in that area. We will not flee because of pressures and threats. The 6th Fleet will continue serving the cause of freedom.

We have no warlike motives in the Middle East. The American people desire only the friendship of all the various nations of that region. It is our fervent prayer that nations accord others the right to exist. Perhaps realization will come that true liberation can be found in development of one's own country, raising of one's own living standard, and the development of one's own social justice. Aggression will not succeed no matter the grandiose phrases invoked to justify the unrelenting warfare by regular and guerrilla forces. All parties are obviously better served by peace negotiations and the acceptance of the facts of life. The real interests of both Arab and Israelis require peaceful coexistence.

In that land where the Prophets dreamed that nation should not lift up sword against nation, let there be peace. For Israel, a nation of people whose suffering merits a life more creative than perpetual service in an armed camp, let there be peace. For the Arabs, whose poverty and frustration requires schools and hospitals and a decent life rather than the endless purchase of jets and guns, let there be peace.

Israel could be a light unto the nations of that region if the Arabs would accept fellow human beings of the Jewish faith as entitled to nationhood as any other people. The genius and productivity of the Israelis could help others make their deserts blossom. Instead of the cradle of civilization becoming its grave, let the cradle of civilization give rise to two peoples, Arab and Jewish, each in their own countries, with commerce and travel flowing across peaceful borders, and with a new sense of mutual respect in keeping with our dream of the brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God.

(more)

I want to add a special and very personal word to this audience. Many of you have devoted your lives to the Zionist cause. You have seen in Zionism a redemption of freedom and human dignity, the rebirth of a nation, and the rebirth of a people. But we are now witnessing painful days, tragic days, in which the powers and political trends and pressures of the world appear to be converging on the Middle East.

Israel was reborn in blood and fire. Israel is today struggling in an ordeal of blood and fire. But this time it is different. The State of Israel has proved its mettle. Israel is a nation among the nations.

You can take pride, as dedicated supporters of Israel, as Zionists, in the nation you have helped build. But the watchman of Israel does not sleep and does not slumber. Trying days lie ahead. Yet, in your heart of hearts, you can draw faith and sustenance and reassurance from one fact. It is that this is the United States of America. This is our country and we, Jews and non-Jews, peoples of all parts of this country, the silent Americans and the articulate Americans, will not let Israel down.

I thank you.

# # #