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Office of the Vice President

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REMARKS OF THE VICE PRESIDENT  
AT THE  
AMERICAN FRIENDS OF HEBREW UNIVERSITY LUNCHEON  
MAYFLOWER HOTEL  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

June 22, 1976

I am moved and deeply honored to receive the Torch of Learning Award from the American Friends of Hebrew University.

The relationship between learning and the life of the Jewish people is inescapable. Jewish immigrants who came to America to find freedom and opportunity, to escape persecution, worked from dawn to dusk, often at menial jobs, in order to give their children opportunity for education.

This dedication and devotion to learning which has characterized Jewish immigrants to America has been the basis of fantastic contributions, by their children, and their children's children, to the economic, social and cultural life of America.

It is this same search to escape persecution, seek religious freedom and find opportunity that has been the driving force which created and developed Israel. And Israel has been built, as well, by a love of learning, by the reverence for the educated mind which is bred into the Jewish character.

Nowhere is that respect for education more evident than in the emergence of Hebrew University, from its modest birth on Mount Scopus half a century ago, to one of the world's most renowned seats of learning today.

Hebrew University has been a major factor in the emergence of Israel as a modern nation, economically and socially progressive, and intellectually and culturally creative.

From Hebrew University have come technologies which helped transform arid wastes into productive fields.

From Hebrew University have come cures for tropical diseases which benefit not only the people of Israel but the afflicted throughout the world.

From Hebrew University has come the cultural nourishment which revived the Hebrew language and preserved the heritage of the Israeli people.

The astonishing and inspiring thing about all this is that Hebrew University's remarkable advances have been achieved, despite the outbreak of four major wars, which have sent students and teachers from the fields of learning to the field of battle. Yet, Hebrew University goes on, and, in the face of constant tension, it keeps alive the humanistic values which sustain the Israeli people.

We all long for the day when lasting peace is attained, the day when this remarkable place of learning can realize the benefits of peace for all the people of the Middle East.

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We all look forward to the day when, instead of fighting battles among themselves, the millions of people who live in these ancient lands can join in fighting battles against ignorance, poverty and disease.

There is so much that is positive and life-giving which Hebrew University can advance for all the peoples of this area. This is the kind of peaceful world we all hope for and pray for in the Middle East. This was the vision of so many of the founders and supporters of this great University over half a century ago. This has been the hope of those who fled the horrors of totalitarianism, and who brought their brilliance, intellect and dedication to Hebrew University in the years preceding and following the Second World War.

I have faith that peace will be achieved in the Middle East -- and that America will keep faith with Israel as we work toward that goal.

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