

REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

ANNUAL BANQUET OF THE  
RELIGIOUS ZIONISTS OF AMERICA

NEW YORK CITY

JUNE 16, 1971

The most enduring aspects of our accomplishments in western civilization -- the noblest aspects of our aspirations -- bear a striking kinship to the vision of the Prophets of ancient Israel.

There is an old Hebrew legend that God created many worlds before He was finally satisfied with the one in which He placed Man.

As God had many opportunities to create different kinds of worlds, so do men have different philosophies and ideologies -- different visions -- of what our own world should be.

But the American tradition and the Hebraic tradition have always agreed, not only on the possibility of building a society which men might call great, but, also on the social and ethical foundations upon which that society must rest. To a remarkable degree, that similarity -- that common vision -- can be traced to the teachings of the Prophets.

The Prophets articulated the belief that, for an individual to "know" God, his own life must exemplify those qualities which God himself exemplifies -- as God is merciful, so must man be compassionate -- as God is just, so must man deal justly with his neighbors -- as God is slow to anger, so must man be tolerant of others.

For a man, so too for a nation: This Nation's domestic and foreign policy rests, as surely as does your ancient religion, upon the moral and practical imperatives of mercy, justice and tolerance.

The Prophets taught us that the rights a citizen enjoys do not come from the hand of the State, but from the hand of God -- and that a State must not seek to substitute its will for that of God, as God's will is revealed to the hearts and minds of its citizens. This is the heart -- the essence of the democratic ideal.

The Prophets taught us that no society can survive which does not recognize the supremacy of moral law.

And it was the people to whom God gave the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. These same people throughout the ages have faithfully reminded a forgetful world that a government of laws, not of men, provides the surest road to peace and tranquility for all peoples.

The Prophets believed that, as a Child of God, each man has inherent worth, and infinite potentialities for moral growth -- that the "righteous of all nations are worthy of immortality." The Bible asks, "Have we not one Father? Hath not one God created all of us?"

The "self-evident" truth that all men are created equal was not really self-evident at the time the Founders of this Nation recorded that belief -- nor, indeed, has it ever been self-evident at any time in the history of mankind.

But that belief in the equality of all men in the sight of God has been a truth fundamental to our religion over the ages. That democratic impulse in Jewish history is, really, "where Judaism differed" -- and where America differed.

So it is that our Nation and your religion must share outrage at unequal treatment of equal human beings.

The Prophets taught us that, in a sense, each man is responsible for every other man. The Prophets first gave us that urge toward social justice which has long characterized your faith -- and has long been one of the most ennobling aspects of the American experience.

The Prophets came forth as advocates for the poor and oppressed, and became the first leaders in social reform, admonishing your

ancestors, "Justice, justice shalt thou pursue."

And thus this Nation, like your own faith, is determined that man, being made "but little lower than the angels" must not be degraded or defiled, but rather must be treated as what he is -- the handiwork of a Divine Creator.

The Prophets taught us to respond to the ancient command of Deuteronomy: "The poor shall never cease out of the land; therefore, I command thee saying 'Thou shalt surely open thy hand onto the poor and needy brother in thy land.'" The Hebraic tradition teaches that "Blessed is he that considereth the poor; the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble."

It hardly seems accidental that there is no Hebrew word for charity. As I understand it, the same term which is sometimes used for charity is used interchangeably for justice and kindness -- and, indeed, for righteousness itself.

And it is significant that "good deeds", those deeds which stem from the heart, were not to be directed solely at one's co-religionists. Your forbears were told that "We are required to feed the poor of the Gentile as well as our Jewish brethren."

The Jewish social outlook resulted in the development of distinctive institutions and arrangements to help the poor become self-supporting rather than to subsist on charity. This is the same conviction which characterized the War on Poverty.

Jews -- who knew at firsthand the devastating effects of growing up in ghettos, in homes broken by war or by pogrom -- gave special emphasis to the age-old sanctification of home and family.

And surely there can be no finer precedent, no finer model for aid to the needy in foreign lands than the private programs which the American Jewish community has conducted so fervently and so successfully over the years.

This generation has come to recognize that without education there can be no social progress.

This recognition also finds an echo in the fierce love of learning inculcated in your ancestors by the Rabbis of old, who were fond of saying that the entire world is poised on the breath of school children.

To encourage learning, they gave youngsters honey cakes shaped in the letters of the alphabet to associate learning with sweetness.

Our children and our children's children will have reason to be grateful that enough of us believe that "Wisdom is the principal thing" -- in the America of the '70s as in the Palestine of ancient days.

Man's oldest dream and man's newest hope is that of peace -- a world in which "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore."

Isaiah said, "Come now and let us reason together," and the sages reminded us "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

This age-old hope, this vision of the Prophets, finds its most ardent response and its most determined support in the America of the 20th Century. The greeting "Shalom" means not only "peace", but also implies a certain completeness and sense of well-being. We know and believe that a lasting peace must be secured before man may expect to pursue his fondest hopes and aspirations.

So we share much, your ancient faith and our young Nation. We share a belief in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man -- a dedication to the supremacy of law -- a moral commitment to social justice and equality of opportunity -- a belief that mankind's best hope lies in education, and a knowledge that God's most precious gift is the gift of peace.

We live today in an America richer, stronger, more secure, more hopeful than any nation in all the history of men. Surely, this is a land of milk and honey to rival the Promised Land of the Old Testament.

The American Jewish community, like America itself, has learned to live with a set of delicate balances as important to our society's structure as the balances of nature are to the creatures of God.

We have learned that in diversity there can be unity. Jews, like people of all religions and all races, have made their special contribution to the America of yesterday and today.

We have learned that unquestioned, unqualified loyalty to this country is wholly consistent with strong spiritual and emotional ties to Israel.

We have learned that organized religion can have secular concerns without rejecting its spiritual underpinnings.

But 20th century America is today faced with a historic challenge -- a challenge which we must meet if America is to survive and prevail in these perilous times.

Can we in America maintain a course of moderation and unity without becoming "captives of a comfortable consensus?"

And there are challenges as well to the American Jewish community -- challenges which are fateful for your survival as a people and as a religion.

Can the American Jew continue to "assimilate" without sacrifice of his faith and tradition or risking an atrophy of those qualities of heart and mind which were the genesis of the distinctive Jewish contribution to the American experience?

Can America stand prosperity as it has stood adversity? Can the American Jew -- no longer spurred onward by the chaos of the ghetto, or the whip of intolerance -- maintain the remarkable pace of his drive toward a more just, prosperous and meaningful life? Will he continue to speak out for liberal, humanitarian, progressive causes, as he has so often in the past -- or will he value his new-found acceptance above his age-old duty?

No man can give us the final answers to these questions. We have no cloud by day, no pillar of fire by night, to lead us to our Promised Land. We have only the precepts of our own hearts -- the precepts of the Prophets, of the Judaeo-Christian tradition and heritage.

A thousand years in God's sight are but as yesterday, as a watch in the night. We are companions together on this earth for but a fleeting moment. But I believe that if we hold fast to those precepts, we can make our moment one of glory. We can make a mark upon our society and upon our age which is worthy of that common heritage -- and worthy in the sight of the Lord.

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*Masha -  
never used*

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THE MOST ENDURING ASPECTS OF OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN  
WESTERN CIVILIZATION -- THE NOBLEST ASPECTS OF OUR  
ASPIRATIONS -- BEAR A STRIKING KINSHIP TO THE VISION OF  
THE PROPHETS OF ANCIENT ISRAEL.

THERE IS AN OLD HEBREW LEGEND THAT GOD CREATED MANY  
WORLDS BEFORE HE WAS FINALLY SATISFIED WITH THE ONE IN  
WHICH HE PLACED MAN.

AS GOD HAD MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO CREATE DIFFERENT  
KINDS OF WORLDS, SO DO MEN HAVE DIFFERENT PHILOSOPHIES  
AND IDEOLOGIES -- DIFFERENT VISIONS -- OF WHAT OUR OWN  
WORLD SHOULD BE.

BUT THE AMERICAN TRADITION AND THE HEBRAIC TRADITION  
HAVE ALWAYS AGREED, NOT ONLY ON THE POSSIBILITY OF  
BUILDING A SOCIETY WHICH MEN MIGHT CALL GREAT, BUT, ALSO  
ON THE SOCIAL AND ETHICAL FOUNDATIONS UPON WHICH THAT  
SOCIETY MUST REST. | To a remarkable degree, that  
SIMILARITY -- THAT COMMON VISION -- CAN BE TRACED TO THE  
TEACHINGS OF THE PROPHETS.

THE PROPHETS ARTICULATED THE BELIEF THAT, FOR AN  
INDIVIDUAL TO "KNOW" GOD, HIS OWN LIFE MUST EXEMPLIFY  
THOSE QUALITIES WHICH GOD HIMSELF EXEMPLIFIES -- AS GOD  
IS MERCIFUL, SO MUST MAN BE COMPASSIONATE -- AS GOD IS  
JUST, SO MUST MAN DEAL JUSTLY WITH HIS NEIGHBORS -- AS  
GOD IS SLOW TO ANGER, SO MUST MAN BE TOLERANT OF OTHERS.

FOR A MAN, SO TOO FOR A NATION: THIS NATION'S  
DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICY RESTS, AS SURELY AS DOES  
YOUR ANCIENT RELIGION, UPON THE MORAL AND PRACTICAL  
IMPERATIVES OF MERCY, JUSTICE AND TOLERANCE.

THE PROPHETS TAUGHT US THAT THE RIGHTS A CITIZEN  
ENJOYS DO NOT COME FROM THE HAND OF THE STATE, BUT FROM THE  
HAND OF GOD -- AND THAT A STATE MUST NOT SEEK TO SUBSTITUTE  
ITS WILL FOR THAT OF GOD, AS GOD'S WILL IS REVEALED TO  
THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF ITS CITIZENS. THIS IS THE HEART --  
THE ESSENCE OF THE DEMOCRATIC IDEAL.

THE PROPHETS TAUGHT US THAT NO SOCIETY CAN SURVIVE  
WHICH DOES NOT RECOGNIZE THE SUPREMACY OF MORAL LAW.

AND IT WAS THE PEOPLE TO WHOM GOD GAVE THE TEN  
COMMANDMENTS ON MOUNT SINAI, THESE SAME PEOPLE THROUGHOUT  
THE AGES HAVE FAITHFULLY REMINDED A FORGETFUL WORLD THAT  
A GOVERNMENT OF LAWS, NOT OF MEN, PROVIDES THE SUREST  
ROAD TO PEACE AND TRANQUILITY FOR ALL PEOPLES.

THE PROPHETS BELIEVED THAT, AS A CHILD OF GOD, EACH  
MAN HAS INHERENT WORTH, AND INFINITE POTENTIALITIES FOR  
MORAL GROWTH -- THAT THE "RIGHTEOUS OF ALL NATIONS ARE  
WORTHY OF IMMORTALITY." THE BIBLE ASKS, "HAVE WE NOT  
ONE FATHER? HATH NOT ONE GOD CREATED ALL OF US?"

THE "SELF-EVIDENT" TRUTH THAT ALL MEN ARE CREATED  
EQUAL WAS NOT REALLY SELF-EVIDENT AT THE TIME THE FOUNDERS  
OF THIS NATION RECORDED THAT BELIEF -- NOR, INDEED, HAS  
IT EVER BEEN SELF-EVIDENT AT ANY TIME IN THE HISTORY OF  
MANKIND.

BUT THAT BELIEF IN THE EQUALITY OF ALL MEN IN THE  
SIGHT OF GOD HAS BEEN A TRUTH FUNDAMENTAL TO OUR RELIGION  
OVER THE AGES. THAT DEMOCRATIC IMPULSE IN JEWISH HISTORY  
IS, REALLY, "WHERE JUDAISM DIFFERED" -- AND WHERE AMERICA  
DIFFERED.

SO IT IS THAT OUR NATION AND YOUR RELIGION MUST SHARE  
OUTRAGE AT UNEQUAL TREATMENT OF EQUAL HUMAN BEINGS.

THE PROPHETS TAUGHT US THAT, IN A SENSE, EACH MAN  
IS RESPONSIBLE FOR EVERY OTHER MAN. THE PROPHETS FIRST  
GAVE US THAT URGE TOWARD SOCIAL JUSTICE WHICH HAS LONG  
CHARACTERIZED YOUR FAITH -- AND HAS LONG BEEN ONE OF THE  
MOST ENNOBLING ASPECTS OF THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE.

THE PROPHETS CAME FORTH AS ADVOCATES FOR THE POOR AND OPPRESSED, AND BECAME THE FIRST LEADERS IN SOCIAL REFORM, ADMONISHING YOUR ANCESTORS, "JUSTICE, JUSTICE SHALT THOU PURSUE."

AND THUS THIS NATION, LIKE YOUR OWN FAITH, IS DETERMINED THAT MAN, BEING MADE "BUT LITTLE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS" MUST NOT BE DEGRADED OR DEFILED, BUT RATHER MUST BE TREATED AS WHAT HE IS -- THE HANDIWORK OF A DIVINE CREATOR.

THE PROPHETS TAUGHT US TO RESPOND TO THE ANCIENT COMMAND OF DEUTERONOMY: "THE POOR SHALL NEVER CEASE OUT OF THE LAND; THEREFORE, I COMMAND THEE SAYING 'THOU SHALT SURELY OPEN THY HAND ONTO THE POOR AND NEEDY BROTHER IN THY LAND.'"

THE HEBRAIC TRADITION TEACHES THAT "BLESSED IS HE THAT  
CONSIDERETH THE POOR; THE LORD WILL DELIVER HIM IN TIME  
OF TROUBLE."

IT HARDLY SEEMS ACCIDENTAL THAT THERE IS NO HEBREW  
WORD FOR CHARITY. AS I UNDERSTAND IT, THE SAME TERM  
WHICH IS SOMETIMES USED FOR CHARITY IS USED INTERCHANGEABLY  
FOR JUSTICE AND KINDNESS -- AND, INDEED, FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS  
ITSELF.

AND IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT "GOOD DEEDS", THOSE DEEDS  
WHICH STEM FROM THE HEART, WERE NOT TO BE DIRECTED SOLELY  
AT ONE'S CO-RELIGIONISTS. YOUR FORBEARS WERE TOLD THAT  
"WE ARE REQUIRED TO FEED THE POOR OF THE GENTILE AS WELL  
AS OUR JEWISH BRETHERN."

THE JEWISH SOCIAL OUTLOOK RESULTED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF DISTINCTIVE INSTITUTIONS AND ARRANGEMENTS TO HELP THE POOR BECOME SELF-SUPPORTING RATHER THAN TO SUBSIST ON CHARITY. THIS IS THE SAME CONVICTION WHICH CHARACTERIZED THE WAR ON POVERTY.

JEWS -- WHO KNEW AT FIRSTHAND THE DEVASTATING EFFECTS OF GROWING UP IN GHETTOS, IN HOMES BROKEN BY WAR OR BY POGROM -- GAVE SPECIAL EMPHASIS TO THE AGE-OLD SANCTIFICATION OF HOME AND FAMILY.

AND SURELY THERE CAN BE NO FINER PRECEDENT, NO FINER MODEL FOR AID TO THE NEEDY IN FOREIGN LANDS THAN THE PRIVATE PROGRAMS WHICH THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMUNITY HAS CONDUCTED SO FERVENTLY AND SO SUCCESSFULLY OVER THE YEARS.

THIS GENERATION HAS COME TO RECOGNIZE THAT WITHOUT  
EDUCATION THERE CAN BE NO SOCIAL PROGRESS.

THIS RECOGNITION ALSO FINDS AN ECHO IN THE FIERCE LOVE  
OF LEARNING INCULCATED IN YOUR ANCESTORS BY THE RABBIS OF  
OLD, WHO WERE FOND OF SAYING THAT THE ENTIRE WORLD IS POISED  
ON THE BREATH OF SCHOOL CHILDREN.

TO ENCOURAGE LEARNING, THEY GAVE YOUNGSTERS HONEY CAKES  
SHAPED IN THE LETTERS OF THE ALPHABET TO ASSOCIATE LEARNING  
WITH SWEETNESS.

OUR CHILDREN AND OUR CHILDREN'S CHILDREN WILL HAVE  
REASON TO BE GRATEFUL THAT ENOUGH OF US BELIEVE THAT "WISDOM  
IS THE PRINCIPAL THING" -- IN THE AMERICA OF THE '70s AS IN  
THE PALESTINE OF ANCIENT DAYS.

MAN'S OLDEST DREAM AND MAN'S NEWEST HOPE IS THAT OF  
PEACE -- A WORLD IN WHICH "NATION SHALL NOT LIFT UP SWORD  
AGAINST NATION, NEITHER SHALL THEY LEARN WAR ANYMORE."

THIS AGE-OLD HOPE, THIS VISION OF THE PROPHETS, FINDS  
ITS MOST ARDENT RESPONSE AND ITS MOST DETERMINED SUPPORT IN  
THE AMERICA OF THE 20TH CENTURY. THE GREETING "SHALOM" MEANS  
NOT ONLY "PEACE", BUT ALSO IMPLIES A CERTAIN COMPLETENESS  
AND SENSE OF WELL-BEING. WE KNOW AND BELIEVE THAT A LASTING  
PEACE MUST BE SECURED BEFORE MAN MAY EXPECT TO PURSUE HIS  
FONDEST HOPES AND ASPIRATIONS.

*have mind to share*  
~~SO WE SHARE MUCH,~~ YOUR ANCIENT FAITH AND OUR YOUNG NATION.

WE SHARE A BELIEF IN THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD AND THE  
BROTHERHOOD OF MAN -- A DEDICATION TO THE SUPREMACY OF  
LAW -- A MORAL COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUALITY OF  
OPPORTUNITY -- A BELIEF THAT MANKIND'S BEST HOPE LIES  
IN EDUCATION, AND A KNOWLEDGE THAT GOD'S MOST PRECIOUS  
GIFT IS THE GIFT OF PEACE.

WE LIVE TODAY IN AN AMERICA RICHER, STRONGER, MORE  
SECURE, MORE HOPEFUL THAN ANY NATION IN ALL THE HISTORY  
OF MEN. SURELY, THIS IS A LAND OF MILK AND HONEY TO  
RIVAL THE PROMISED LAND OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMUNITY, LIKE AMERICA ITSELF,  
HAS LEARNED TO LIVE WITH A SET OF DELICATE BALANCES AS  
IMPORTANT TO OUR SOCIETY'S STRUCTURE AS THE BALANCES OF NATURE  
ARE TO THE CREATURES OF GOD.

WE HAVE LEARNED THAT IN DIVERSITY THERE CAN BE UNITY,  
JEWS, LIKE PEOPLE OF ALL RELIGIONS AND ALL RACES, HAVE MADE  
THEIR SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE AMERICA OF YESTERDAY AND  
TODAY.

WE HAVE LEARNED THAT UNQUESTIONED, UNQUALIFIED LOYALTY  
TO THIS COUNTRY IS WHOLLY CONSISTENT WITH STRONG SPIRITUAL  
AND EMOTIONAL TIES TO ISRAEL.

WE HAVE LEARNED THAT ORGANIZED RELIGION CAN HAVE SECULAR  
CONCERNS WITHOUT REJECTING ITS SPIRITUAL UNDERPINNINGS.

BUT 20TH CENTURY AMERICA IS TODAY FACED WITH A HISTORIC CHALLENGE -- A CHALLENGE WHICH WE MUST MEET IF AMERICA IS TO SURVIVE AND PREVAIL IN THESE PERILOUS TIMES.

CAN WE IN AMERICA MAINTAIN A COURSE OF MODERATION AND UNITY WITHOUT BECOMING "CAPTIVES OF A COMFORTABLE CONSENSUS?"

AND THERE ARE CHALLENGES AS WELL TO THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMUNITY -- CHALLENGES WHICH ARE FATEFUL FOR YOUR SURVIVAL AS A PEOPLE AND AS A RELIGION.

CAN THE AMERICAN JEW CONTINUE TO "ASSIMILATE" WITHOUT SACRIFICE OF HIS FAITH AND TRADITION OR RISKING AN ATROPHY OF THOSE QUALITIES OF HEART AND MIND WHICH WERE THE GENESIS OF THE DISTINCTIVE JEWISH CONTRIBUTION TO THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE?

CAN AMERICA STAND PROSPERITY AS IT HAS STOOD ADVERSITY?

CAN THE AMERICAN JEW -- NO LONGER SPURRED ONWARD BY THE CHAOS OF THE GHETTO, OR THE WHIP OF INTOLERANCE -- MAINTAIN THE REMARKABLE PACE OF HIS DRIVE TOWARD A MORE JUST, PROSPEROUS AND MEANINGFUL LIFE? WILL HE CONTINUE TO SPEAK OUT FOR LIBERAL, HUMANITARIAN, PROGRESSIVE CAUSES, AS HE HAS SO OFTEN IN THE PAST -- OR WILL HE VALUE HIS NEW-FOUND ACCEPTANCE ABOVE HIS AGE-OLD DUTY?

NO MAN CAN GIVE US THE FINAL ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS. WE HAVE NO CLOUD BY DAY, NO PILLAR OF FIRE BY NIGHT, TO LEAD US TO OUR PROMISED LAND. WE HAVE ONLY THE PRECEPTS OF OUR OWN HEARTS -- THE PRECEPTS OF THE PROPHETS, OF THE JUDAEO-CHRISTIAN TRADITION AND HERITAGE.

A THOUSAND YEARS IN GOD'S SIGHT ARE BUT AS YESTERDAY,  
AS A WATCH IN THE NIGHT. WE ARE COMPANIONS TOGETHER ON  
THIS EARTH FOR BUT A FLEETING MOMENT. BUT I BELIEVE THAT  
IF WE HOLD FAST TO THOSE PRECEPTS, WE CAN MAKE OUR MOMENT  
ONE OF GLORY. WE CAN MAKE A MARK UPON OUR SOCIETY AND  
UPON OUR AGE WHICH IS WORTHY OF THAT COMMON HERITAGE --  
AND WORTHY IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD.

# # # # #

Union Theo Seminary  
1965 Fla.

June 3, 1971

MEMORANDUM

FOR: Senator

FROM: Jack

Dr. Maurice S. Sage called and asked that the following be passed on to you for your guidance for the annual banquet of the Religious Zionists of America speech in New York June 16:

"This is a traditionalist Zionist group. Where most Jews believe that two and ~~four~~ two make four, this group believes that two and two make four--with the help of God. Members believe that the State of Israel should be based on Biblical principles and that religious traditions should be a strong part of state education."

I assume you will not want a prepared text for this.



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