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## Speech at Herb Young Testimonial Dinner

Edmund S. Muskie

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REMARKS BY SENATOR EDMUND S. MUSKIE

TEMPLE EMANUEL

BEVERLY HILLS, CALIFORNIA

JANUARY 23, 1971

TONIGHT WE ARE PAYING TRIBUTE TO A GOOD CITIZEN AND A  
COMMUNITY LEADER.

HERB YOUNG IS AND HAS BEEN A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSMAN. . .  
CONTRIBUTING TO THE ECONOMIC GROWTH OF THIS AREA.

THAT IS A SUBJECT FOR CONGRATULATIONS. . .BUT IT IS NOT  
FOR HIS BUSINESS SUCCESS THAT WE HONOR HIM.

WE HONOR HERB BECAUSE HE HAS GIVEN OF HIS RESOURCES. . .  
HIS TIME. . .AND HIS TALENT -- TO BENEFIT TEMPLE EMANUEL, HIS  
COMMUNITY AND THE STATE OF ISRAEL.

HE IS THE PRODUCT OF A GREAT TRADITION. . .AND HE IS  
HELPING TO MAKE THAT TRADITION LIVE.

I HAVE JUST RETURNED FROM A 17,000 MILE TRIP TO ISRAEL,  
EGYPT, <sup>THE</sup> SOVIET UNION AND GERMANY.

IT WAS AN INTENSIVE, EXHAUSTING AND REWARDING JOURNEY.

I DID NOT GO AS A NEGOTIATOR OR AS A REPRESENTATIVE. . .

BUT AS A UNITED STATES SENATOR WHO WANTED TO LISTEN AND TO

LEARN. . . TO GET TO KNOW THE LEADERS OF THE COUNTRIES I

VISITED, WHERE I HAD NOT KNOWN THEM BEFORE. . . AND TO GAIN

A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF THOSE COUNTRIES, ON THE SCENE.

NOWHERE DID I GAIN A GREATER SENSE OF THE COUNTRY THAN IN

ISRAEL.

BEFORE I TOOK THE JOURNEY, I WAS COMMITTED TO THE

INDEPENDENCE OF ISRAEL AND THE NECESSITY OF OUR SUPPORT TO HELP

PROTECT HER EXISTENCE AGAINST HOSTILE ACTION.

. . I LEFT ISRAEL WITH A BROADER AND DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF

WHY ISRAEL IS IMPORTANT TO US AND TO THE WORLD.

I RETURNED WITH NO EASY SOLUTIONS TO THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS.

ALL THE PARTIES SPEAK OF THE NEED FOR PEACE.

BUT ALL THE PARTIES SPEAK IN TERMS OF FEAR. . . AND  
SUSPICION. . . AND DISTRUST -- AND THESE THREATEN THE  
HOPES FOR A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT.

WE HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO SUSTAIN ISRAEL IN HER SEARCH  
FOR A GENUINE PEACE WHICH WILL PROTECT HER FREEDOM AND  
INDEPENDENCE.

WE MUST ALSO DO ALL WE CAN TO ENCOURAGE CONDITIONS FOR A  
SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION TO THE JARRING TALKS.

THAT IS AN OBLIGATION FOR OUR GOVERNMENT AND FOR US AS  
INDIVIDUAL CITIZENS.

ISRAEL IS NOT IMPORTANT BECAUSE OF HER SIZE. . . OR THE  
NUMBERS OF HER PEOPLE.

SHE IS NOT IMPORTANT JUST BECAUSE OF HER LOCATION IN A  
STRATEGIC PLACE ON THE GLOBE.



ISRAEL IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE SHE IS PART OF THE VERY FABRIC  
OF OUR LIVES. . . OUR ETHICAL AND RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS. . . OUR  
HOPES AND OUR ASPIRATIONS.

ISRAEL IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE HER PEOPLE HAVE A RIGHT TO  
LIFE AND FREEDOM IN THE LAND OF THEIR COVENANT.

IN ISRAEL, I SAW THE MIRACLE OF AN ANCIENT PEOPLE --  
REJOINED TO THE SACRED LAND THAT GAVE THEM BIRTH.

I SAW THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK. . . REDISCOVERING THE ANCIENT  
LANDMARKS OF WHICH THEY WROTE.

I SAW A PEOPLE -- TORN AND SCARRED BY THE MOST SAVAGE AND  
SUSTAINED PERSECUTION IN WORLD HISTORY -- WHO HAVE ACHIEVED A  
NATIONAL REBIRTH IN THE VERY SHADOW OF THEIR GREATEST TRAGEDY.

I SAW THE PEOPLE OF THE BIBLE -- OF RABBI HILLEL. . . OF  
MAIMONIDES. . . OF JUDAH HALEVI. . . OF FREUD AND EINSTEIN AND  
BUBER. . . AND OF ARTHUR RUBENSTEIN AND MAYA PLISETSKAYA --

THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE NOURISHED THE TRADITION OF SCHOLARSHIP AND  
CREATIVITY WHILE DEFENDING THEIR NATIONHOOD.

ISRAEL IS AN ANCIENT LAND, WHOSE HISTORY IS CLOSE TO THE  
SURFACE, WHEREVER YOU TURN.

BUT THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT OF ISRAEL IS NOT THE  
REMNANTS OF THE PAST. . . BUT THE VITALITY OF HER PEOPLE --  
FROM TEL AVIV TO THE NEGEV. . . FROM THE NEGEV TO KINNERET AND  
GOLAN. . . AND FROM KINNERET AND GOLAN TO HAIFA AND THE  
MEDITERRANEAN.

HERE IS A PEOPLE WHO HAVE KEPT LEARNING AT THE CENTER OF  
THEIR LIVES. . . UNDER THE MOST THREATENING CONDITIONS.

HERE IS A COUNTRY WHICH IS DETERMINED TO MAINTAIN FREEDOM  
EVEN UNDER THE THREAT OF WAR.

END PAGE

HERE ARE MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE DEDICATED THEIR LIVES TO EACH  
OTHER. . .IN THE KIBBUTZIM AND IN THE CITIES.

THE RESULTS OF THAT VITALITY AND COMMITMENT ARE ASTONISHING --

--ISRAEL'S RATE OF ECONOMIC GROWTH IS AMONG THE WORLD'S  
HIGHEST;

-- ISRAEL'S TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO MORE THAN 60 COUNTRIES IN  
AFRICA AND ASIA AND LATIN AMERICA...IS ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST  
INEXPENSIVE AND MOST EFFECTIVE AID PROGRAMS;

-- ISRAEL IS A TRAIL-BLAZER IN ABSORBING IMMIGRANTS AND IN  
SETTLING THE LAND;

-- ISRAEL IS MAKING DETERMINED EFFORTS TO RADICALLY IMPROVE  
HEALTH AND EDUCATION STANDARDS OF NEWCOMERS...SOME OF WHOM ARE  
FROM PRIMITIVE SOCIETIES;

-- ISRAEL HAS ACHIEVED A MIRACLE OF RECLAMATION OF A BARREN,  
UNPRODUCTIVE AND FORGOTTEN LAND.

OUT OF WHAT WAS ONCE DESERT AND SWAMP, ISRAEL NOW SUPPORTS  
AGRICULTURALLY HER LARGEST POPULATION SINCE ANCIENT TIMES.

SHE POSSESSES A BOOMING INDUSTRIAL CAPACITY...AND SHE PROVIDES A PLEASANT, MODERN LIFE FOR HER PEOPLE -- OR AT LEAST SHE COULD, IF ONLY THERE WERE PEACE.

IN THE MIDST OF ALL THE TURMOIL THAT SURROUNDS THIS MIRACULOUS STATE, I FOUND A PEOPLE ENDURING SACRIFICE AS ONLY THOSE WHO HAVE SUFFERED FOR UNCOUNTED CENTURIES CAN.

THERE IS IN ISRAEL TODAY A DETERMINATION TO STAND FAST AND TO ACCEPT WHATEVER SACRIFICE MAY BE NEEDED TO PROTECT THE NEWFOUND SOVEREIGNTY AND DIGNITY OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE.

BUT I BELIEVE THAT THERE IS ALSO A DETERMINATION TO UNDERTAKE THE RISKS WHICH ATTEND ANY EFFORT TO MAKE PEACE.

THE ABLE LEADERS OF ISRAEL WITH WHOM I MET ARE, I BELIEVE, PREPARED TO SHOW THE SAME COURAGE AND INTELLIGENCE IN THE SEARCH FOR PEACE THAT THEY DISPLAYED IN SECURING THE NATION'S DEFENSE IN WAR.

I WAS STRUCK, OVER AND OVER AGAIN IN MY CONVERSATION WITH PRIME MINISTER MEIR BY THE DEPTH OF HER FEELING FOR HER COUNTRY AND HER PEOPLE, BY THE RARE SKILLS SHE BRINGS TO A DIFFICULT TASK OF LEADERSHIP, AND



BY HER CAPACITY TO RISE ABOVE THE TEMPTATION TO SPEAK WITH HATE -  
ABOUT THOSE WHO HAVE ATTACKED HER PEOPLE.

IT WAS AN UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE FOR ME TO TALK WITH  
MRS. MEIR AND THE MEMBERS OF HER GOVERNMENT...TO WALK THE STREETS  
OF JERUSALEM WITH MAYOR TEDDY KOLLEK...AND TO SHARE IN TALK AND FOOD  
WITH THE BRAVE YOUNG PEOPLE OF THE BORDER KIBBUTZIM.

BUT IN SOME WAYS THE MOST MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE FOR ME WAS TO  
SPEND AN HOUR WITH ONE OF THE GREAT MEN OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY --  
DAVID BEN CURION.

BEN CURION LIVES IN A SIMPLE COTTAGE ON THE KIBBUTZ OF  
SEDE BOKER IN THE NEGEV.

HE IS SURROUNDED BY THE DESERT -- A DESERT WHICH IS GUARDED BY  
TROOPS AND BARBED WIRE.

BUT HE LIVES AS A FREE SPIRIT IN THE MIDST OF HIS MEMORIES  
AND THE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO SHARE HIS IMMEDIATE CONCERNS FOR THE LIFE  
AND FUTURE OF ISRAEL.

BEN CURION TALKED WITH ME OF MANY THINGS, FROM THE PERSPECTIVE  
OF A WARM AND VIBRANT MAN WHO HAS LIVED -- AND IS STILL LIVING -- A

FULL AND PRODUCTIVE LIFE.

BUT THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS HE SAID TO ME --- AND THE ONES  
WHICH WILL REMAIN WITH ME -- ARE HIS COMMENTS ABOUT JUDAISM.

HE SAID JUDAISM CAN BE SUMMARIZED IN THREE SENTENCES:

THERE IS ONE GOD.

LOVE THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF.

LOVE THE TRUTH AND PEACE.

THESE WERE THE THOUGHTS HE WANTED TO LEAVE WITH ME.

THEY COME FROM A MAN WHO HAS KNOWN STRUGGLE AND CONFLICT ---  
WHO HAS HAD THE COURAGE AND THE SPIRIT TO RISE ABOVE ONE OF THE  
MOST HORRIFYING EXPERIENCES EVER TO BEFALL ANY PEOPLE --- AND WHO HAS  
PURSUED THE CAUSE OF DIGNITY AND FREEDOM AND SELF-RESPECT  
THROUGHOUT HIS LIFE.

TO MEET WITH BEN GURION WAS TO UNDERSTAND THE CAUSES OF  
ISRAEL'S PAST. . . AND THE STRENGTH OF HER FUTURE.

NO VISITOR TO ISRAEL CAN FAIL TO BE IMPRESSED BY THE EXTENT  
TO WHICH ISRAEL'S PIONEERS AND DEFENDERS HAVE DONE IT ALONE.

HERE IS NO TOTTERING REMNANT, LOOKING FOR OUTSIDE PROPS  
IN THE FACE OF INTERNAL DESPAIR.

HERE IS NO HELPLESS CHARGE ON THE WORLD'S CHARITY.

FOR THIS IS A NATION OF BRAVE MEN AND WOMEN WHO ARE WHAT  
THEY ARE BECAUSE THEY HAVE TAKEN THEIR FATE INTO THEIR OWN HANDS  
AND SHAPED THEIR OWN FUTURE.

BUT THEY WOULD BE THE FIRST TO SAY THAT THEY DO NOT STAND ALONE.

FOR THEY WOULD NOT BE WHERE THEY ARE TODAY WERE IT NOT FOR  
THE TIRELESS, SACRIFICIAL SUPPORT OF JEWISH PEOPLE ALL OVER THE WORLD. . .

ESPECIALLY IN THE AFFLUENT LANDS OF THE WEST AND -- MORE  
PARTICULARLY -- IN THE UNITED STATES.

JEWISH HISTORY HAS SHOWN, THEY SAY, THAT SURVIVAL HAS BEEN  
ACHIEVED ONLY BECAUSE THOSE JEWS IN THE GREATEST NEED HAVE BEEN  
HELPED BY THOSE BEST ABLE TO DO SO.

AND THEREIN LIES ONE OF THE GREAT STORIES OF WORLD HISTORY --  
THE SPONTANEOUS AND UNIMAGINABLY GENEROUS OUTPOURING OF HELP FOR  
ISRAEL FROM AMERICA'S JEWISH COMMUNITY.

IT IS THAT GENEROSITY. . . THAT COMMITMENT TO A CAUSE. . . AND  
THE CAUSE ITSELF -- OF THE LOVE OF GOD. . . THE LOVE OF NEIGHBOR AS  
THYSELF. . . AND THE LOVE OF TRUTH AND PEACE -- WHICH BRINGS US HERE  
TONIGHT... AND WHICH SHOULD SEND US OUT TO GIVE OUR OWN SOCIETY A NEW  
SENSE OF PURPOSE -- A CONVICTION THAT ALL OUR PEOPLE SHOULD SHARE  
IN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE AMERICAN DREAM... WHICH HAS ITS ROOTS IN  
ANCIENT ISRAEL.