

*Handwritten notes:*  
The date  
7/24/68  
Mr. Bronfman

I am deeply moved by the warmth of the reception I have received from this great assembly.

I am equally moved by the generous and friendly introduction I have received from one who has earned the respect of all Canadians; Mr. Sam Bronfman, a man who has never hesitated to back any good cause in the finest traditions of the best citizenship. Perhaps he will permit me - even though I am a few days late - ~~me~~ to offer him my most sincere congratulations on having reached seventy years of achievement and service, from which both Canada and Israel - and, may I add - the United States have all benefited.

ADDRESS BY  
THE HONOURABLE LESTER B. PEARSON  
13TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF  
THE STATE OF ISRAEL  
MONTREAL, APRIL 16, 1961

I am not unaware that this year marks the tenth anniversary of the Israel Bond Sales program. For it was in 1951 that the Independence Issue first was created as a matter of Israeli Foreign borrowing policy. I am told that since that day 470 millions of dollars of bonds of the State of Israel have been sold to Jews and non-Jews in many parts of the world; and over \$31,000,000 in Canada alone or almost 7% of the total. When this effort is viewed as something over and above the "gift-dollar" program to which most members of Jewish Communities everywhere subscribe, the grand record of "diaspora" support for the people of Israel is remarkable indeed.

I realize the importance of these various programs, including this bond program, for Israeli economic development, as well as for helping Israel meet her difficult balance of payments problems. Such payments problems are not unique to the people of Israel. The richest nation in the world- the United States - has been suffering from a difficult balance of payments situation in recent years. In Canada we face it chronically. Why should we expect Israel, moving, in less than a generation, from a broken mandate to a free state, "ingathering its exiles", to be in any less need of the overseas help that all new countries require as they establish themselves in the stream of modern economic development.

The citizens of Israel, by their own heroic efforts and with this help they have received, have brought about an economic, social and cultural development that has made that small state a symbol of dynamic, stable democracy on the edge of the restless middle eastern world. In all of this progress the millions of dollars of bond sales are a central part. Pipelines and railways, industrial development and the opening of new areas for settlement, canals and harbours; the development of the Yarmuk and the Jordan, to help irrigate the Negev; all of these staples of economic development are the fruits of the bond conception and its vigorous execution in a decade of vigorous achievement.

This is another - and an even more important - anniversary year. The State of Israel on May 14th is celebrating its thirteenth birthday.

On this birthday a Hebrew boy celebrates his most significant and most meaningful anniversary. On this day he becomes "Bar-Mitzvah"; confirmed. He acquires maturity in his status as a member of the Jewish people, with all the traditional ceremonials at the Synagogue by which he is inducted and assumes full responsibility for all his acts to God and to man.

1961 will be known, no doubt, as Israel's "Bar-Mitzvah" Year. It is being confirmed. It has grown to maturity. It has proven that it is able to assume its full responsibility towards all mankind, as a member of the family of nations.

In Israel, Judaism has once again become a nation as well as a race, a religion, a culture; a mother country, in the full political, as well as in the sentimental sense of the word. This has been a development of far-reaching historical importance -

and I was privileged to watch and participate in some of the international diplomatic negotiations at the United Nations leading up to it fourteen years ago.

I shall never forget those days of high, if unfinished, drama - of tragedy too - when the Israel of today was born out of the force employed by those who fought against any kind of birth; even that of a small Jewish state in Palestine alongside an Arab Palestine state; and with a special regime for Jerusalem, that city of holiness and history for all Jews and Christians and Moslems; that symbol of peace - Eer Sholom - which is now so tragically divided by barbed wire, and even more, by fear and hostility.

In spite of all, Israel, surrounded by *un*friendly and apprehensive neighbours, who will not admit her right to peaceful or, indeed, to any form of national existence; Isreal exists. Her people

gathered together from all parts of a turbulent world and from the dark past of persecution and suffering, live and work and achieve, in a free society of their own choice. They have shown what democracy, combined with devotion, and determination, can do in a land not flowing in milk and honey; with not much living space, with troubled borders and hostile neighbours. The dedicated people of Israel have brought new meaning to pioneering. Through their efforts the hard past has been converted into a present of high adventure.

Because of the achievements of a free Israel, Jews who remain in other lands can hold their heads higher. To those lands, <sup>their Jewish citizens</sup> ~~they~~ give not less, but a fuller loyalty and service; something that was not possible - and which there was no right to claim - in the bad days of old when they were rejected as full citizens.

The existence of a separate, independent, State of Israel raises no contradiction between a Jewish citizen's full loyalty to his own country and his deep feeling for Israel. The Scots and the Irish - and others - have that dual emotional pull too; and no conflict arises - except perhaps on St. Patrick's or St. Andrew's Day!

It was more than 2400 years ago when the Jews first lost their separate political identity in the Middle East, when they were deported to the "concentration camps" by the Assyrian and Babylonian Imperialists.

In the seemingly endless diaspora that resulted, they never lost faith in Zion's destiny. Without a state of their own, despised often in the states in which they lived, they tenaciously clung to their own identity as a community. They never gave up. Theirs was a rare and wonderful demonstration of the indestructibility of the soul and of the heart. The result is Israel in 1961.

The dual task of reclaiming a land placed as Israel is today, and of restoring a dispersed people to normal national living, involves both economic and human problems of such extreme difficulty that responsibility for dealing with the issues concerned could hardly have been assumed by present-day Jewish leaders were it not for the intensity of the Jewish feeling of revolt against cruelty and discrimination suffered in Europe since medieval times and brought to an awful climax in Nazi rule. That revolt was also the expression of a stubborn hope, of an inflexible determination to survive which has typified Jewish life and inspired Jewish legend. The same qualities serve Israel well now. And they are needed.

Israel is a small area - no larger than Lake Erie - which the Jewish people are now seeking to use as the geographical territory within which their

national survival shall be assured. Nor is the present population of Israel large. As a result of mass immigration in the past four years, the total has now reached approximately the level it had attained before the Arab exodus, but even now, after these four years of heroic rescue work, it is not much larger than the population of greater Montreal.

The stature of a land, however, is not measured by a surveyor's instrument, nor the greatness of a nation by the census-taker. Israel's future rests on many things which mere statistics cannot show. This land now represents for a gifted, but scattered and often frustrated, people the possibility of realizing the twin principles of self-liberation and self-help which were advocated in the last century, by Leon Pinsker and others, as the only adequate answer to anti-Semitism.

That great Jewish sociologist, the late Dr. Arthur Ruppin, to whose courageous work as one of the builders of Israel Dr. Weizmann has paid special tribute, stated in his book, "The Jews in the Modern World", that the original source of anti-Semitism is the group instinct, which, like the herd instinct of animals, welds men connected by common descent, language, customs and interests into a cohesive community while it causes them at the same time to distrust members of other groups. When the Jews first migrated to Europe, he went on to say, they were admitted only as outsiders and long remained strangers by reason of differences of race, religion, culture, occupation. They had to make their way as representatives of one of the ancient eastern civilizations in the midst of a more primitive western culture. So anti-Semitism had its rise then in Europe as part of the general fear of, and prejudice against,

strangers which permeated ancient and medieval society and still lingers on today in one form or another.

Civilized man, however, has learned - even though he often refuses to act on the knowledge - a good deal more today than was known a thousand years, or even a hundred years ago, about the deep and secret springs of human prejudice and fear, and about the most effective means of securing release from that fear, either for groups or for individuals. So there are factors which give some hope that the initial struggle to secure the establishment of a Jewish state, and the fears and the tensions which have inevitably accompanied that struggle, are not to be a permanent feature of the environment in which Israel finds itself.

An honest recognition and a searching analysis of such fears, which beset human beings in various stages of their development, is essential as a means of reducing and removing them.

There is one deep-seated fear held by her Arab neighbours that has caused Israel much harm and even now threatens her development; that the new Jewish state might adopt a policy of both territorial and economic expansion at Arab expense.

I do not myself think that the territory preferred above all others by the Jewish people for the purpose of national regeneration and development, will necessarily prove to be inadequate for that purpose. Even in the past, without the aid of modern scientific progress, the same land has supported a relatively large population in comfort, and we are assured by scientists and agronomists that it can do so again without threat to the territorial integrity or the economic and cultural self-determination of neighbouring peoples.