It is a pleasure to be here. I am honored to have the privilege to address you. My staff and I work closely with Morris Amitay, Ken Wollack and others in AIPAC. They are doing a good job and you should be proud of their efforts.

There has been lots of talk lately about the appropriateness of the kind of work that you are engaged in. And much of that talk has been down-right silly and uninformed.

Columnists and editorial writers have warned us about "ethnic lobbying" -- especially in the foreign affairs field. We've heard careless and even reckless things about the powerful "Jewish lobby", the Greek lobby, the Turkish lobby, etc, etc.

I want you to know that I approve of what you are doing. Not only because I happen to agree with the program that you are advocating.

But above all because I think it is good for this country, good for the basic democratic process, that people who have convictions about what American public policy should be take the time to get their fellow Americans and their public officials to understand what they believe and to urge their support.

It will be a sad day for this country when its citizens stop using the precious guarantees in the First Amendment to petition their government.

If oil producers can spend millions of dollars in their lobbying efforts to get special tax breaks -- if sugar companies and shoe companies and clothing manufacturers can seek trade and tariff and quota policies that will benefit them -- if workers can seek favorable labor legislation and doctors can work against national health insurance -- why can't Americans be concerned about the cultural or physical genocide of their co-religionists and relatives in the Soviet Union or in the Middle East?

There's nothing new about lobbying on behalf of causes in foreign places.

It's as American as a hot dog or apple pie.

We are a nation of immigrants even in our two hundredth year. And we care about the lands of our fathers -- be it Poland or Italy or Russia -- be it England or Ireland or Africa.

You have every right to urge the Congress and the Administration to pursue policies that you deem to be correct.

Now, I want to turn to the major topic before us this evening.

* * *

Twenty-eight years ago, Israel's first Prime Minister -- the beloved David Ben Gurion -- proclaimed to the world that the Jewish people have a right to a free and independent nation.
And this new nation -- a land of immigrants and a land of hope -- rekindled the ancient Jewish prayer, to be in Jerusalem again, to return again to the land of their fathers.

Israel reborn was a poor land which awaited the rich in spirit to renew the covenants between a land and its people.

Israel reborn was a small nation surrounded by hostile neighbors who vowed to destroy it at the very moment of inception.

But they failed.

For Israel reborn was not alone in the world.

This small nation was sustained by the sacrifices of world Jewry. Befriended by the world's most powerful democracy -- the United States of America -- it went on to win its struggle for freedom.

Why did Harry Truman use the power and prestige of his great office to befriend the Jewish state and inaugurate a commitment which has been crucial to Israel's security?

Because Harry Truman was a compassionate and moral man with a deep sense of history.

He saw in Israel's rebirth the fulfillment of a biblical prophecy.

He saw in Israel's rebirth the creation of a democracy at a time when democracy was threatened.

And he saw in the creation of Israel relief and haven for a people who had been the victims of fascist tyranny.

There is a lesson for us today in Harry Truman's recognition of the state of Israel.

It was clear from this and other policies that Truman put a premium on support of democracy.

He understood the need for the United States to aid and support those people and nations who chose to form governments guided by democratic principles.

Today, as in Harry Truman's time, the preservation of democracies must be at the top of our foreign policy agenda -- in Israel, in Greece, in Portugal, in Japan and the nations of southern Africa.

As Ambassador Pat Moynihan observed so well in his all too brief tour at the U.N., there are so few real democracies in this world that we can not be indifferent to their needs and their principles.

Within the limits of our resources and with our security objectives clearly defined, democracies merit the support of America.

For our democratic heritage is shared by Israel. Our system of liberty and equality gives Israel its national vitality. And America's love for freedom is a cornerstone of Israel's independence.

These values are the heritage of a democratic Israel. They are the values of our nation as well. And whether here in America or in Israel, we must stand for their preservation and protection.
We must never forget Israel's claim to moral right based in its strong democratic institutions.

Jews around the world have recently celebrated Passover -- a festival of thanksgiving and freedom. We must now look ahead and ask:

Will Israel be free at next year's Passover?

Will Israel be free on its fiftieth anniversary and in the years beyond?

To all Americans who believe in freedom, cherish it and who will sacrifice to preserve it, the answer must be YES.

But let us understand that preserving Israel's freedom will not be an easy task.

Today Israel celebrates its independence at a time of uncertainty over the true intentions of its neighbors, at a time of diplomatic isolation, and at a time of great economic hardship.

-- Its citizens are taxed at a rate of unprecedented hardship and sacrifice.

-- Its enemies have skillfully used international bodies and their own great economic power to try to turn world opinion against Israel.

-- And the momentum of peace started with an American initiative has been nearly halted by those nations and groups who know how critical peace is to Israel's security.

But it seems that a new element has been added to Israel's struggle for freedom during these troubled days.

I am deeply concerned that a series of Administration actions and attitudes over a brief period have given the impression that the United States is weakening its commitment to Israel.

I refuse to believe that this Administration deliberately seeks to call into question the basic American commitment to Israel at the most difficult time in its history. I refuse to believe that President Ford would knowingly abandon Israel. If this were to happen the stated policies of five American Presidents would be abruptly reversed.

But through inattention, inadvertence, and insensitivity, this Administration has taken steps which have the effect of eroding the historical bonds of trust and confidence between the United States and Israel. This erosion has been gradual. But it has been profound. It is alarming for the future of Israeli-American relations.

At this point let me state that I have absolutely no disagreement with the goal of securing the trust and friendship of the Arab world. In fact, I believe it to be imperative. But while we are pursuing this policy we should not forget that Israel for the United States cannot be regarded as just another nation among many nations in the Middle East.

We must declare without embarrassment and without apology that Israel has earned a special relationship with America.

The Arab world must understand that if it desires better relations with the United States, it must accept our good relations with Israel. No Administration should ever mislead any Arab leader to believe otherwise.

Whoever will be President next year should assure all nations that we are ready to have constructive and positive relations with them, but we will not do so if the price is ending our special relationship with Israel.
We must never forget that the world watches intensely what our nation does in the Middle East. The Soviets, Arab nations and the non-aligned follow our every move. We must never give the impression through our acts that we are relegating our relationship with Israel to a second place status. Perceptions in the world of diplomacy are as important as outright actions.

Let me review this record which causes me such great concern:

-- In October 1973, during a grave moment of the Yom Kippur War, the United States finally began resupply efforts only after incredible pressure was exerted by members of Congress on the Administration, using all of their muscle with President Nixon and Secretary Kissinger.

I shall never forget those critical first days of the war when we were not sure whether the U.S. would provide aid quickly to the embattled Israelis.

-- Prior to the Secretary's Sinai peace initiative, the Administration launched a "reassessment" of American policy which included a halt in the delivery of critical military items and needlessly and painfully increased Israel's apprehension at a moment of growing isolation.

Let me be frank about this reassessment. It followed the unwarranted, public scolding of Israel after the breakdown of the spring negotiations. Friends do not accuse one another in such a manner even at difficult times.

-- At the United Nations we have stood idly by on too many occasions while nations tried to humiliate Israel and impugned its motives.

-- For too many years the Administration countenanced an unjust and odious boycott of Israel by powerful corporations and Arab nations. And we still await an initiative from the Administration which will declare that the U.S. should use its power to enact and enforce laws which impose on American corporations a standard of conduct in their overseas dealing fully as strict as that required at home. It will be only at this moment that we say to the rest of the world that we will not participate in or tolerate an economic boycott of Israel or discrimination aimed at American citizens.

-- Finally, the President of the United States has threatened to veto a foreign aid appropriations bill if it contains funds for Israel allocated in conformance with our new Budget Act to cover a three month period called the "transition quarter."

Let me set the record straight. I telephoned Secretary Kissinger as Chairman of the Foreign Assistance Subcommittee on January 29, to determine the Administration's position on providing Israel with $550 million in transition quarter funding. He told me that he personally approved such an idea but could not speak for the OMB.

Well, the OMB and the White House have spoken.

President Ford and the OMB have obviously overruled the Secretary of State. The President has lobbied House members personally to prevent Israel from receiving these funds. When he failed, he threatened a veto.

What good does it do for a Secretary of State to say, as he did on April 4, that "The United States will help keep Israel strong...", while the President threatens a veto of a bill containing funds vital to Israel's security. The two are a contradiction in terms.

Israel knows this.

The Congress understands this.

And the American people will not be fooled.
But this dangerous series of events which seems to weaken the American commitment to Israel continues unabated.

The Administration attempts to start a significant military relationship with Egypt only to be told directly by the Congress that we will not permit this to happen.

And let me say here that we must not undertake a full fledged military commitment to Egypt -- a commitment that can only increase the risk of war and pose a threat to peace.

I and my colleagues have no disagreement whatsoever in providing Egypt with the means necessary to better the lives of its people. This is the type of positive relationship which should be encouraged. I applaud the fact that neither Israel or this organization has ever opposed such assistance.

And the Administration is determined to sell vast quantities of arms to a great number of Israel's potential enemies if they just put the cash on the barrelhead.

The Ford Administration simply does not understand that actions which are perceived to weaken the American commitment to Israel will not bring peace to the Middle East. They can only bring confusion and postponement of peace. A final peace is all that Israel seeks -- a peace that will end the hatred and a peace that will provide security.

Why must Israel remain economically viable and militarily strong? For three simple reasons:

One, no Arab nation has recognized Israel or has expressed a great willingness to do so.

Two, no Arab nation has been willing to abandon the systematic scheme of boycott and diplomatic pressure on Israel.

And, three, no Arab leader has accepted Israel's invitation to come forward and negotiate directly.

A weak Israel with an uncertain relationship with the United States will not make sacrifices for peace in the face of the three factors I've just mentioned.

Nations take risks for peace when they are either very secure or extremely desperate.

I never want to see Israel make sacrifices and compromises for peace out of desperation. And the U.S. must never be a party to such an eventuality.

I call upon President Ford and Secretary Kissinger to act more prudently in the execution of American policy toward Israel.

Actions which are perceived to increase Israel's insecurity are not in the interest of peace in the Middle East. And they are inimical to our moral values.

The time has now come for the Administration to step back, to pause and to recognize the dangers which lie ahead if it continues to act with insensitivity and carelessness in our relations with Israel.

I am confident that if Israel is aided to overcome its severe economic problems and to remain strong, it will make sacrifices for peace. I believe that Israel has the moral courage and fortitude to grapple with the tough issues of the West Bank, the Palestinians and the problem of new settlements. But to ask that it do so in the absence of a full-fledged effort on our part is an unfair and unfriendly act.
It is difficult to discuss these issues without recalling my last visit to Israel's capital of Jerusalem just a short time ago. As I stood on the Judean foothills before the panorama of the City of David, I could see the Parliament, the Dome of the Rock, Mount Zion and the Old City. As I walked through the Jaffa Gate down the ancient cobblestones, I made my way to the Wailing Wall.

Standing before the holiest shrine of the people of Israel and Jews around the world, I was told that the people of Israel come to the Wall to lament over the destruction of the Second Temple, to shed spiritual tears for those who have given their lives in defense of Israel and the Jewish people.

For centuries tears and sorrow have marked Jewish existence. Jews have shed tears for the ancient exile, the Czar's pogroms. They have wept for the victims of Auschwitz, the heroes of Warsaw and the sons and fathers who died in defense of a united Jerusalem and a free, independent Israel in 1948, in 1956, again in 1967 and once again in 1973.

Too many tears have been shed throughout the centuries, too many young men have given their lives in defense of Israel's freedom and the right of Jews to be free wherever they live.

It is time to end the tears, to end Israel's pain, to restore her confidence and to bring her to peace for which she has fought for 28 years.

As Israel's anthem "Hatikvah" proclaims, once again the land of Israel must be filled with hope -- and with that hope she will prosper. When this comes to pass, people will rejoice for the miracle of Israel, whose people will make the desert bloom in security and in peace.

# # # #
REMARKS OF SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

AMERICAN-ISRAEL PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

WASHINGTON, D. C.

MAY 3, 1976
IT IS A PLEASURE TO BE HERE. I AM HONORED TO HAVE THE PRIVILEGE TO ADDRESS YOU. MY STAFF AND I WORK CLOSELY WITH MORRIE AMITAY, KEN WOLLACK AND OTHERS IN AIPAC. THEY ARE DOING A GOOD JOB AND YOU SHOULD BE PROUD OF THEIR EFFORTS.

There has been a good deal of talk lately about the appropriateness of the kind of work that you are engaged in. And much of that talk has been down-right silly and uninformed.

Columnists and editorial writers have warned us about "ethnic lobbying" -- especially in the foreign affairs field. We've heard careless and even reckless things about the powerful "Jewish lobby", the Greek lobby, the Turkish lobby, etc, etc.

I want you to know that I approve of what you are doing.

Not only because I happen to agree with the program that you are advocating _but also_
BECAUSE I THINK IT IS GOOD FOR THE BASIC DEMOCRATIC PROCESS THAT PEOPLE WHO HAVE CONVICTIONS ABOUT WHAT AMERICAN PUBLIC POLICY SHOULD BE TAKE THE TIME TO GET THEIR FELLOW AMERICANS AND THEIR PUBLIC OFFICIALS TO UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY BELIEVE AND TO URGEE THEIR SUPPORT. IT WILL BE A SAD DAY FOR THIS COUNTRY WHEN ITS CITIZENS STOP USING THE PRECIOUS GUARANTEES IN THE FIRST AMENDMENT TO PETITION THEIR GOVERNMENT.

IF OIL PRODUCERS CAN SPEND MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN THEIR LOBBYING EFFORTS TO GET SPECIAL TAX BREAKS -- IF SUGAR COMPANIES AND SHOE COMPANIES AND CLOTHING MANUFACTURERS CAN SEEK TRADE AND QUOTA POLICIES THAT WILL BENEFIT THEM --
IF WORKERS CAN SEEK FAVORABLE LABOR LEGISLATION AND DOCTORS CAN WORK AGAINST NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE -- WHY CAN'T AMERICANS BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE CULTURAL OR PHYSICAL GENOCIDE OF THEIR CO-RELIGIONISTS AND RELATIVES IN THE SOVIET UNION OR IN THE MIDDLE EAST?

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But they failed.

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This small nation was sustained by the sacrifices of world Jewry. Befriended by the world’s most powerful democracy -- the United States of America -- it went on to win its struggle for freedom.

Why did Harry Truman use the power and prestige of his great office to befriend the Jewish state and inaugurate a commitment which has been crucial to Israel’s security?

Because Harry Truman was a compassionate and moral man with a deep sense of history.

He saw in Israel’s rebirth the fulfillment of a biblical prophecy.

He saw in Israel’s rebirth the creation of a democracy at a time when democracy was threatened.
HE SAW IN THE CREATION OF ISRAEL RELIEF AND HAVEN FOR A
PEOPLE WHO HAD BEEN THE VICTIMS OF FASCIST TYRANNY.

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OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL.

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PREMIUM ON SUPPORT OF DEMOCRACY.

He understood the need for the United States to aid and
SUPPORT THOSE PEOPLE AND NATIONS WHO CHOSE TO FORM GOVERNMENTS GUIDED
BY DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES.

Today, as in Harry Truman’s time, the preservation of democracies
MUST BE AT THE TOP OF OUR FOREIGN POLICY AGENDA -- IN ISRAEL, IN
GREECE, IN PORTUGAL, IN JAPAN AND THE NATIONS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA.
As Ambassador Pat Moynihan observed so well in his all too brief tour at the U.N., there are so few real democracies in this world that we cannot be indifferent to their needs and their principles.

Within the limits of our resources and with our security objectives clearly defined, democracies merit the support of America.

For our democratic heritage is shared by Israel. Our system of liberty and equality gives Israel its national vitality. And America's love for freedom is a cornerstone of Israel's independence.

These values are the heritage of a democratic Israel. They are the values of our nation as well. And whether here in America or in Israel, we must stand for their preservation and protection.

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But through inattention, inadvertence, and insensitivity, this Administration has taken steps which have the effect of eroding the historical bonds of trust and confidence between the United States and Israel. This erosion has been gradual. But it has been profound. It is alarming for the future of Israeli-American relations.
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