

Israel and the Middle East - 1973

On the 25th Anniversary of the State of Israel, we salute that valiant nation which is a profound source of pride and a spiritual center for the Jewish people of the world. We warmly congratulate Israel on her varied and remarkable achievements, including her welcome to Jews escaping from persecution in many lands, as well as her successes in science, agriculture and industry; her development of quality educational, social and health services for her Jewish and non-Jewish residents; the substantial technical aid she has freely given to a number of disadvantaged countries. These achievements in so short a time, against grave odds and the unrelenting pressure to maintain both military defenses and the security of her land and people against attack, have no historical precedent. While yearning for peace she has ironically and tragically seen her sons and daughters fall upon the battlefield.

With pride we note that there are in Israel women's groups of congregations of the World Union for Progressive Judaism which are united with us in service to Judaism and to our people. We gratefully acknowledge their achievements and we invite them, as well as all members of our Sisterhood fellowship, to participate through NFTS in the furnishing of the Sisterhood Library at the Leo Baeck High School in Haifa, Israel.

We too note with strong approval not only that the headquarters of the World Union for Progressive Judaism has been established in Jerusalem but also that the World Educational Center of Reform Judaism will likewise be built in the Holy City. From these centers, we know there will be developed ever-deepening ties between Israel and Reform Jews of the Diaspora.

Now, on behalf of the United States affiliates of the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods and in the hope that Jewish women in other countries will likewise join in these efforts through their own governments and sources of contact, we resolve:

1. To request the United States government through the United Nations and other diplomatic channels, to persuade Arab nations, notably Syria and Iraq, to end the persecution of their Jewish minorities and to permit free and speedy emigration without penalty for those individuals and families who seek to leave their lands.
2. To call upon all nations of the world to resist unequivocally Arab terrorists and their demands, while affording maximum protection to innocent victims of their hostile acts.
3. To express to the United States administration and Congress the urgent necessity to continue to provide Israel with the weaponry essential as a safeguard for her security; we note with profound appreciation the support the government of the United States has rendered to enable Israel to protect herself.
4. To resist attempts from any source to make Israel an issue in the energy crisis and to express abhorrence of any effort by an oil company or other business to influence the foreign policy of the United States or any nation against Israel.
5. To urge all Sisterhoods and their members community-wide, publicly and privately, to purchase Bonds for Israel and to contribute to the United Jewish Appeal, the Emergency Fund for Israel and to the American Red Magen David for Israel (the Israel Red Cross) to the point of sacrificial involvement. At the same time, we remind all members that while unstinting support must go to our people in Israel, we must maintain in full the strengthening of our Reform movement and institutions everywhere since to a large measure Israel's own security depends upon the American Jewish community and all of the Diaspora.
6. To support Israel's leadership in its efforts to gain an early exchange and return of prisoners of war,

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adherence to the Geneva Convention on treatment of prisoners in Arab hands and a political settlement that will guarantee the State secure borders which will lead to ultimate peace and development for the nations and peoples of Israel and the Middle East.

7. To encourage Israel's leadership to continue to pursue all avenues of negotiation in the spirit of forbearance, generosity and realistic compromise.