

Oral History Interview

with

ABRAHAM FEINBERG

Business executive and philanthropist. Active in the cause of immigration to Palestine and in the creation of the State of Israel, 1945-48. Friend of President Harry S. Truman.

August 23, 1973
New York, New York

by Richard D. McKinzie, Harry S. Truman Library

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MCKINZIE: Mr. Feinberg, historians are interested in the kinds of people who become close to national government and politics. Could you narrate what you consider to be the most important events in your personal development--your business career, your education, and the circumstances under which you entered business?

FEINBERG: Well, let's take them in order. I got into business for economic reasons, I came from a family which could not afford to send me to college, so I had to earn some money in order to sustain me during my college years. The educational system in New York provides, theoretically, for free

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education right through the four years of college studies, but sustenance is also part of education. So, I went to work at an early age, first during the summers while I was attending Townsend Harris High School. Townsend Harris was our first ambassador to Japan, That school no longer exists. It was on the campus of the City College but was closed after the college grew to the point where it needed those facilities. It was a very intensive high school course. One could not enter the school without a straight A average from public school. It offered a four-year course in three years, and it was the old type classical course of college preparatory work, where you had intense mathematics, intense English, and intense languages, including obligatory courses in Latin or Greek. I wish we had those things today. I think that they are important for preparation.

MCKINZIE: Were you headed for anything in particular?

FEINBERG: I was headed for college. Because of the fact that I could do four years in three, this

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particular school was attractive to me, and fortunately I qualified. In my last year at high school (this would be when I was fourteen, because I entered at twelve and got out at the age of fifteen), I took summer courses at night at the City College, which was on the same campus, in order to provide me with additional credits so that I could get finished with my college work earlier than

four years. So, essentially I entered City College at the age of fourteen, though not as a matriculated student, because I was not yet qualified for that. From the point that I graduated high school onward, in terms of education, I always went to school at night. I entered City College at night when I graduated high school. In the course of my studies there, I decided I would try for law school, In those days you didn't need four years, you needed two years. Well, I had more than two years of credits. By this time, I was working for a company in the textile field, which has always been, up until eight or nine years ago, the area

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in which my business career was pursued. I entered Fordham University for their afternoon-evening session. Some courses carried over from 2:30 to 6:30 or from 3:30 to 7:30. At that point my employer said that I couldn't leave early to take 2:30 classes or 3:30 classes, so I went to work for my father at a salary less than one-half of what I was getting with this company.

I pursued the study of law, although I had no intention of ever practicing law. I thought that it was a practical and necessary course of training for a businessman, not only in the knowledge of law, but in the knowledge of how to think, because a lawyer has to think on both sides of the question.

I graduated from Fordham in 1929 and was married that September. I pursued my job with my father, and eventually in 1933 we wound up as equal partners through investment. Each of us put up the same amount of money. Before going further with respect to business, I decided, in 1936, to take a master's in law at N.Y.U. The

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Roosevelt years had begun, and there was a great field of new law, particularly in the administrative end of Government, which was never taught before. So I did that. I took my first examination for the master's degree on the night of the day that my second child was born. This was under Professor Arthur Vanderbilt. There's a Vanderbilt Hall at N.Y.U. now.

Now, my father and I started this partnership in 1933. I don't have to tell you that that was not "a good year for wine." But we managed to survive it and grow with it. He became ill in 1939, so the business was on my shoulders. He died in 1943. During that period our business had grown. We changed the nature of our business from being agents for hosiery mills to manufacturing.

The years leading up to World War II resulted in a very prosperous time for all manufacturers, even hosiery manufacturers. The Government's need for supplies, and the restrictions on silk and on nylon (these were all ladies' hose) meant that anyone who had production could sell anything

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he made, whether it was cotton hosiery or rayon hosiery. The business prospered, and by the time my father died it was in reasonably good financial shape.

During the last year of his life, I was called for military duty, I actually had gone through the physical examination and had opted for the Army but had gotten a 30-day stay to wind up my business affairs. In the winding-up planning I came to an understanding with a friend of mine, who was also a customer, that he would oversee my business while I was gone, on a 50-50 basis. It was an easy thing for him to do, because, as I say, all you had to do is have the production facility. In any event, during that 30 days the rule for married men with two children was changed, so I was deferred. I was able to continue working. My friend no longer had to run my business, but our relationship developed into doing partnership deals, he out of his business, me out of mine. We were, in effect, partners in everything other than our own businesses. That eventually

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developed into a merger of our interests, and we became partners.

I think I failed to mention that in the pursuit of the law, I had taken and passed the bar examinations here in New York, although I never practiced. Also, a third degree in law, which is an honorary degree, was given to me by Brandeis University. I was chairman of the trustees for seven years.

Anyway, we now became partners. That business prospered very well, to the point where we brought in a third partner who brought certain advantageous assets. My original partner died of cancer in 1952. That left me with one partner, and we together bought a company called Julius Kayser and Company which was a very old company in the hosiery, gloves, and lingerie business. It was a listed concern on the big board.

The second partner died in 1954, also of cancer, so I was left alone with a very large enterprise. I sought a merger with another

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company to provide me with additional managerial talent and enlarge the company. That was the origin of a company called Kayser-Roth, which came into being in 1959. At that time, I made a condition that I would not stay for more than five years, and it was only a little over five years when I resigned. So, my stock remained close to the company but divorced from it and free to pursue whatever business career I wanted from then on, which principally has been in banking and in real estate. Through my prominence in the Israel field, when the Coca-Cola Company decided that it wanted somebody to have the franchise in Israel they came to me in 1967. The franchise began to produce in 1968, so this is the fifth full year of production and everybody--knock on wood--in Israel likes Coca-Cola. I also in that period have done a considerable amount of building and real estate in general.

In 1933, coincidentally with the election of Roosevelt, came the emergence of Hitler on the scene as head of Germany. This began to stimulate

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me first in the area of commitment. I realized very quickly that Hitler was a great threat, not only to the world, but particularly to my people because of his announced policies. So, I began to be active organizationally in Jewish affairs. In those days, the only area for activity on the part of a young man in a struggling business was try to help through philanthropic endeavors, to get the hosiery industry organized for what was then the United Palestine Appeal. The objective was to help people in Europe either get out of Europe or to support them in their economic travails. So, I became interested in the hosiery division of the United Palestine Appeal. I realized that you could not be active in such an enterprise without indicating your own participation in terms of finance. We didn't have very much money, but the amount of money which I was able to commit was so out of proportion to what other people in the industry were committing that I came to the attention of the leaders of the industry as this crazy young man who is obviously giving more than he or his

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father could afford. So, I quickly rose to a leadership position through this freak of, maybe, overcommitment at that time. From the hosiery industry, I began to be sought out by the National Committee of the United Palestine Appeal.

I had the capacity to articulate. I was a prime example for them of a young man, 25 or 26, who was doing more than he could obviously do in terms of finances. Therefore, I probably could convince other people to give more money. So, that area of my formal connection with Jewish matters began to grow.

MCKINZIE: Could you briefly describe the program?

FEINBERG: Well, the United Palestine Appeal later became the United Jewish Appeal, which is today an extremely important arm of aid to Israel and to Jews all over the world, not only in Europe, but in Africa, Asia, etc. Their program was to raise as much money as they could and then siphon that money to organizations which were helping to provide food, clothing, or even

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transportation for people who were in trouble. Now, at that time the immigration laws in the United States didn't provide for much chance for immigration to this country, so the Jews in Europe really went on the run. Those who felt that they were in danger came to France or England. They politically were not welcome, although the doors were much more freely opened than they were in the United States. Some went into what was then Palestine, though not many. The real quest for immigration to Palestine didn't come until after the Holocaust. It was those who were left who decided that that's where theyought to go rather than any other place in the world.

Well, inevitably, the interest in the philanthropic end of my people led to the realization that there had to be political action if the problem was ultimately to be resolved. So, it was then that I

sought some entrance into the higher halls of politics. I had decided that it would be fruitless in terms of the time element to start the routine of political advancement or political

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recognition. You join a local Democratic club and through participation you get to be known. You get to know your Congressman or your Senator. That's a long process, and often a fruitless one regardless of the objectives. Many young men unfortunately, and particularly at that time, became disheartened with the normal political process, because of the compromises they had to make and the sometimes (to them) demeaning work they had to do. The ringing of doorbells, the addressing of envelopes was not attractive to people of ambition and intellectual capacity. So, if you want to get into the higher political areas, where do you start? You start with the President, if you can. Through close business associations, I had become friendly with, a man who was then a very powerful political figure nationally. His name was Robert Hannegan. He was a close friend of a friend of mine in St. Louis, and I brashly said to my friend, "I want to meet Mr. Hannegan and for the purpose of finding a way to talk to Mr. Roosevelt."

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Now, I had met Roosevelt at mass Democratic dinners or other affairs, but I had no connection with him in the sense that I could say, "May I see you?"

Hannegan was extremely cooperative. When I got to the point of meeting with him, he suggested that maybe I ought to first meet with the Vice President. In those days you had to look in the phone book to find out who he was.

MCKINZIE: Do you happen to recall now the subject you wished to discuss at that first meeting?

FEINBERG: I told Hannegan that I was dissatisfied with the routes that the Jewish organized community was using, through the Zionist organization, in presenting its case to the President or the Secretary of State. I felt that the use of threatened pressure was not going to be productive.

MCKINZIE: You felt that many of the organizations were using this tactic?

FEINBERG: Yes. They were, largely because the leader

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of the Zionist movement at that time in America was a Republican by the name of Dr. Abba [Hillel] Silver, who was a Rabbi, a very arrogant, brilliant speaker, and a despotic type of leader. He was a very close friend of Senator [Robert] Taft. And so his innate feelings toward Roosevelt were inimical. I felt that he was directing the whole movement in the wrong way and if one could establish a man for man relationship with the President and then subsequently the Secretary of State, you could reason things out without threatening. Any President worth his salt will not respond to political blackmail. And I explored all of this with Bob Hannegan. He

understood it and made the suggestion about meeting the Vice President first. I wasn't, frankly, too happy about that, but I thought it was one step further up the rung. The occasion came when Truman came to New York to speak at a fundraising dinner for the National Jewish hospital in Denver. Hannegan suggested that I come to a small cocktail party which he was running for Truman at the Savoy Plaza. There were only

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going to be fifteen or twenty men there, so I would get a chance to get to know him and subsequently pursue that. This was the end of 1944. When we gathered, awaiting for the Vice President, I noticed four Secret Service men coming into the room. Then came the Vice President. In those days the Vice President had no Secret Service detail. It immediately struck me that something was going on and that perhaps Hannegan was smarter than I thought when he said to meet the Vice President, If they were protecting the Vice President this strongly and under these unusual circumstances, there must be something wrong with the President. And, of course, the President was dead within four or five months.

I did strike a mutually friendly note with Truman that afternoon. In the evening when he came to the dinner, I had the opportunity to see him with my wife and it became very warm. He was a very warm man, if he liked you. Between that time and the time that Roosevelt died there was contact, but nothing more than modest social contact. All

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the time more warmth and more friendliness, I think, was developing.

MCKINZIE: You did have an opportunity to discuss your ideas?

FEINBERG: No, I only discussed my people, not my objective, Obviously, the opening was there, because he did come for a Jewish affair--the National Jewish Hospital which was then devoted to helping people with tuberculosis.

When Roosevelt died, I was with a group of customers at a cocktail party celebrating the opening of a new warehouse here in New York. Of course, when the news came in, the party was over, and we went upstairs with the heads of the company. Everyone wrung their hands. "Look what we're left with. How is this country going to survive?" And I was regarded as an idiot when I said, "You don't know the qualities of Truman. I do, and I tell you that we have nothing to worry about." As it turned out, we (not meaning Jews, but "we" meaning America) had nothing to worry about.

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Naturally, his accession to the Presidency gave me a ready opportunity, which I seized. I had a strategy--if it could be called "strategy," because there's an overtone in the use of the word "strategy" which is not quite pleasant. Anyway, in pursuing my plan, I realized that it became important for me to know the people now around Truman. Of course, Hannegan I knew. There

was a Jew in the White House during Roosevelt's days by the name of David Niles. Niles was a greatly underestimated man in the Jewish world. His official job with Truman was Secretary in charge of minorities. I don't think the title was so explained, but that was his job. Blacks, Poles, or any minority that had problems had to go through Niles. And Niles was not the greatest admirer of either Abba Silver or the Zionist movement in the posture it was taking. I sensed this as soon as I met him. He was a very lonely man. His whole life was the President, either Roosevelt or, later, Truman, and he really became devoted to Truman, which is an odd thing. There

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weren't many of the Roosevelt acolytes who became Truman acolytes. In any case, he and I developed a warm friendship, as soon as he understood that I was not speaking as a fanatic Jew but rather as a commonsense American, trying to help solve this problem. Through him I became friendly with Matt Connelly, who by chance happened to be a graduate of Fordham Law School as well, so that we had something in common. And all of this happened very quickly, because they all became important very quickly.

MCKINZIE: Did you find them approachable men?

FEINBERG: Yes, they were approachable, first because Hannegan was very important. When Hannegan said to Dave Niles, "This is my friend, Abe Feinberg," the scene was set. I could foul it up if I were not the kind of person who could impress Niles or Connelly. It also became important to know the secretaries of these men, because I wanted to get through to them. No matter how friendly you are, if they're busy, they can't see you. So, it all was done, and then

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Mr. Truman became more accessible to me, even though he was in a semi-dazed state when he first took over the Presidency. In the first meeting I had with him he said to me (by this time he was calling me Abe), "When I came into this office I asked for all the documents that I should know about. The documents were piled around my desk, higher than the desk from the floor."

In retrospect, this is a terrible way for a President to handle the office of the Vice Presidency. I would hope that the Presidents in the future would see that the Vice President was kind of a partner in case of a tragedy like this. Anyway, Truman was receptive for several reasons. Coincidental with my gradual approach to him, Eddie Jacobson became much more important than I in his usefulness, since he was an active member of the B'nai B'rith, which had a large political following. The B'nai B'rith embraced then, I think, about 400,000 people. He had been a partner of Truman and a very close friend. Eddie was a

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wonderful man. He was not a creator. He was a follower of ideas, which were presented to him to present to the President. But he did that job very well and he was able, obviously because of his association with the President and with the knowledge of the President that there was

political muscle behind this organization. And they were not using their muscle the way the Zionist organization was. They were using it much more temperately and, I think, much more wisely.

MCKINZIE: Did you meet Eddie Jacobson in that early period?

FEINBERG: I knew him before but I met him intimately afterwards, because we would exchange views. He obviously was acting as an individual, he was committed. But he also had the capacity to talk to the President on a personal basis as a friend. The President understood that I had no political strength qua organization. Yet, I felt a political obligation. I felt that if a President was friendly, was disposed to help, that he should be supported

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politically. When the crunch came in 1948, when everybody was deserting him, I felt that win, lose, or draw it was my obligation to try to organize support for him, which I did in some at dramatic circumstances. He probably was at his lowest ebb in September of 1948, not long before the election. There was no money, the polls couldn't have been worse. Within his own organization there were people urging him not to run. They were urging him to urge [Dwight D.] Eisenhower to run as a Democrat. Well, if ever a courageous man had to show his courage, it was in those days, and Truman showed it. As President he certainly showed courage.

Deviating from the years before 1948 and the relationship of Truman to Israel, I want to cover this political area. Some of us were called to the White House in early September, as I remember. He got up on a settee on the famous Truman portico and he said, "Boys, if I can have the money to see the people, I'm going to win this election. If I had money, I would put my own money in first. Now, you all go back to the Democratic Committee and see

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what you can do about it."

It was as blunt as that. In that group there were only two Jews, myself and Ed Kaufmann, who owned the Fay Jewelry stores and who was a very close friend of Niles and a very warm admirer of Truman. Having lived in Washington all his life, he was close to many Senators, many Congressmen. He had known Roosevelt and he was a fine gentleman. He could not come to the Democratic headquarters, but I went. It was presided over by Howard McGrath, who was then chairman of the Party. And it was a wake. We just all sat there, the whole group of theoretically powerful Democrats, and nobody said anything. Then Howard said, "Well, boys, we have a problem."

Again, nobody offered any kind of a solution. He said, "The President has to make a trip from coast to coast. He wants to do it by train, he wants to see the people, and there is no money."

MCKINZIE: Do you think that the quietness of the . . .

FEINBERG: It reflected their desperation. They knew

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that he wasn't going to win anyway. There was no doubt--the whole tenor of the group was, "We're licked."

I had to get back to New York and I got up. I was the youngest of the group, and maybe for that reason the brashest. I said, "Howard, the President has done a great deal for my people. I feel that we owe him a great deal. We certainly owe him a chance, and I will pledge on behalf of Ed Kaufmann and myself that within two weeks we'll have \$100,000 towards this trip."

Well, there were cheers, whistles. I said, "I'm sorry I have to leave," and I left. Louis Johnson chased me out to the elevator. He said, "Are you serious about what you said?"

I said, "I never make a promise that I can't keep."

He said, "In that case I'll take the finance chairmanship," which he took. This was in the middle of the week. My recollection is it was a Wednesday, because instead of two weeks, in two

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days I called Matt Connelly. In those days on Friday evenings Truman used to go out on the boat with some of his buddies to play poker and have some relaxation. I said, "I wanted to catch you before the President goes sailing tonight. Tell him he can make the trip." Matt knew what that meant. I had already got the commitments for the \$100,000 from people around the country, all of whom understood that without Truman, Israel would have had very difficult days and times trying to even come into existence. As that train went into towns where there were Jewish communities, I arranged that a Jewish delegation would ask to see the President and be received on the train and that, in as many cases as possible, they would bring him donations above these original commitments. So, the trip was a triumphant trip from his point of view as a politician, forgetting the money, He was right when he said, "If I see the people, I can be elected." And that made the difference. He often said, "If not for my friend Abe, I couldn't have made the trip and I wouldn't have been elected." This

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is not true. The trip would have been made one way or another. But I think it was helpful to him to know early that the problem of making the trip was behind him.

Now, the business with Palestine and then Israel was front page news in the world largely because of [Ernest] Bevin and Bevin's attitude, which was impossible. Even when the concentration camps were liberated, he refused to let any numbers of the survivors go to Palestine, which was then a British protectorate. I, meanwhile, was deeply involved in the preparation of Israel for self-defense.

There had been, historically, a series of Arab assaults in 1922, 1929, and 1936. The Arab leader, the Mufti of Jerusalem, had joined Hitler and was living in Berlin with a rather large complement of soldiers. He was certainly pro-Hitler, the Arab world was certainly pro-Hitler, and the Jews were in a weak position. The weakest of their position was that it was unlawful for them to have arms. Britain said, "No go. We're the real protection."

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Even during the war, when the Jewish community enlisted volunteers for the British army, Britain put those volunteers, until enough pressure was raised by them, purely in a service end of the army. There were no people who knew the Mediterranean terrain better than these men, who were willing to fight, I think the expression was, "We shall fight the war as if there were no white paper"--the white paper was the limitation of immigration--"and we shall fight the white paper as though there were no war." I think this was the way it was expressed to justify their joining the Allied forces. Out of this, of course, came the understanding of most of the Jews of the world that after the war the Jews were going to have to protect themselves somehow. So, in 1945 Mr. [David] Ben-Gurion came here and met with a small group. He outlined the fact--and this had nothing to do with the possible creation of the State of Israel--that the Jews had to have a way of protecting themselves against 40 million Arabs. They also

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had to have the immigration of all the Jews, wherever they were, who needed to be helped. This didn't mean that American Jews had to go to Israel. It meant the European Jews, the African Jews, the Asian Jews who had no place to go, and certainly the DP's who couldn't come to this country. I think a token thousand were allowed into Oswego, New York, and Canada.

They were not received with open arms, and they were really expected to be a burden to the community. And one might justify the rationale, but you can't justify it on the basis of humanitarianism. Our doors were not open here. The doors of Palestine were open, if the British would open them. I got involved in this whole movement. I went to the DP camps and lived for a couple of weeks in 1946; I spoke to the Jews who were in the camps to see whether they would come to America, if they could come. I came illegally, I was not allowed to go officially, and I came with the underground organization which

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was known as the Haganah, which means "defense," who had agents in Europe by this time. These were Jews from Palestine who had agents in Europe trying to help the DP's. They had agents during the Warsaw Massacre to stimulate the people to fight back. The first time the Jews resisted going to the concentration camps was in Warsaw, and their leaders were Jews who left Palestine and died with them. Anyway, I was convinced, from speaking to these people, that they wanted to go to Palestine. As they put it, "We want to go to our people. We don't want to come where we're foreigners, where it will take us a lifetime to learn the language, to become integrated, to get into business. We want to go to Palestine where we would be with our own people. We would be received by them as friends and not as burdens." I would say--I think

without equivocation--that 95-97 percent of those I talked to wanted to go to Palestine. I talked to several thousand individually and in small groups in twenty-two different camps, so it wasn't a selective group.

I had, with this group in America, been work-

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ing on illegal immigration.

MCKINZIE: How did that work?

FEINBERG: Well, we had to buy ships, to begin with, and redo them so they could accommodate numbers of people. We had to arrange for ports of departure after they left the States. We had to work with the apparatus in Europe who could secretly spirit people out of the camps to the ships. Most of the American Army, and Eisenhower in particular, were most cooperative in that respect. They closed their eyes. They knew what was going on. The Russians were tough. The British were tough. But wherever the Americans were in charge, it was not too difficult to get people out. In this several weeks in the winter of '46, I personally engaged in covertly spiriting people out by truck at night. In one case, 200 kids went by train openly from the city of Ulm to Marseilles. This was right in front of the American Army, who just closed their eyes. We sent those kids in closed cattle cars.

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All they had was one crust of bread and part of a roll of toilet paper, and there were no latrines in cattle cars.

MCKINZIE: Were the kids from the DP camps?

FEINBERG: Yes, they were surviving children with no parents. It was a pathetic thing to see these little kids. One had a little violin, one had an accordion, a balloon, all the little precious treasures.

There was a constant flow out of Europe to Marseilles or to ports in Italy, and then on to so-called illegal ships which would come to Palestine. They would be received by the people in the Palestine settlements on the beaches, who would immediately change clothes or change identity cards with the refugees, so that when the British caught them they didn't know who the hell they had. Did they have a native or did they have an immigrant? Well, they soon stopped that by simply capturing the ships before they could get near the beaches. They never could get near a port. What they did was unload them a

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mile offshore, and either they swam in or little boats came out to get them. But that was stopped. The British captured the ships and interned the people first in several camps in Israel. When

those became overcrowded they sent them to Cyprus. And there were some poignant of one ship actually being shipped back to Germany.

MCKINZIE: Do you have any recollection of the number of people who were brought to Palestine in that manner?

FEINBERG: The figures are available; they were in the tens of thousands. It was not a small number. And it was a great blow to Bevin. This had been going on in a smaller way, to the point where the request was made that an immediate 100,000 visas be granted out of those who were in the camps. Bevin resisted, and an Anglo-Palestine commission was appointed. I think it was about the tenth or fifteenth commission that England had set up, but this was the first Anglo-Palestine Commission. On that commission were Dr. [James

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Grover] McDonald, who was a historian of note, and Bartley [Cavanaugh] Crum, who was a lawyer of note, and who was brought to public attention by his defense of the Hollywood Ten. He was a very liberal Irishman and charming--I called him a leprechaun. Anyway, Bevin said to them at a meeting before they left from London to Palestine, "If you come back with a unanimous report, I'll grant 100,000 visas." They came back with a unanimous report and he refused. This obviously stimulated self-induced pressure on Truman to say something.

MCKINZIE: Did you have any discussions with President Truman, David Niles, or Matt Connolly about these 100,000 visas? Truman did push very hard for the British to grant the 100,000 visas.

FEINBERG: Yes, I not only engaged in the discussions but waited anxiously for their report and then, with chagrin, reacted to Bevin's double-cross. Obviously, Truman wanted to do something. He freely expressed his opinion that the 100,000 certainly should come. We talked about that, and

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I suggested to him that a good time to make his position known was just before the holiest day in the Jewish year, Yom Kippur, the day of atonement. Even unobservant Jews, such as myself, tend to go to the synagogues on the night before, which is a most somber night. The Jewish religion says that beginning with the day of the new year, which is usually ten days before, and ending with the day of atonement, the Lord will have decided who will live and who will die, who will be sick and who will be well. There is a whole liturgy in the service, So, this brings people--and it happens even today--in the greatest numbers to the synagogues. On this night the rabbis use their most dramatic efforts in their sermons. So, when talking with the President, I said, "If you will make the announcement before that night, every single Rabbi in every single synagogue will broadcast what you say. Forget the newspapers, forget any other of the media. You will have word directly to the Jewish people. I think, it was a very sustaining statement for them, because the Jewish

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community was simply shocked at the idea that you had something like 600,000 or more DP's rotting in camps. I don't know what the concentration camps were like, but I would not like to live in a DP camp for more than a day or two. They were the same camps that the Nazis used, by the way, with the same barbed wire, the same gallows, the same ovens. I was in those places, so I know the shock is merely seeing the ashes that were not yet scooped out of the oven. I'd spent three days in Dachau in the business of smuggling, out of Dachau and neighboring camps, people to their ultimate destination.

Two or three weeks ago, just by chance, my grandson was in Munich with his father. It happened that his father, my son-in-law, took him to Dachau, which is now a museum. I haven't spoken to the boy personally--I've spoken on the phone because he lives on the coast--but I'm anxious to get the reaction of the third generation, of what he saw there, because the museum is incredible. They have, in typical German systematic fashion, a

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listing of the amount of gold taken out of the teeth; the value of the clothes; the amount of lamps that were made from the skin, the value of the slave labor, which was the input of the camp members who were not yet cremated. It's something to see. Anyone, never mind a Jew, should see this relic and this proof of what went on. It's in detail form just as you would expect a German bookkeeper to do.

Anyway, Truman made the declaration. Of course, it was wildly received here, badly received by Bevin. It was a great sustenance to the people in Palestine. This accelerated the movement to make sure that the Jews had a chance to defend themselves, because now more were coming in. The British were becoming stricter, more abusive in confiscating arms, and certainly in what they did in sending these people to Cyprus.

I had gone to Palestine in the summer of '46. All this experience in the DP camps was in the winter, I had gone there to meet a ship that we

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were outfitting in Staten Island which was going to pick up a shipment of people in Italy to bring on to Palestine. It was a Canadian corvette and had a crew, originally in the Canadian navy, of 30 men, with living quarters for them. When I got out to Staten Island, I spoke to the Palestine captain, and there was carpentry work going on down below, refitting to accommodate more people. And I said, "How many people are you going to be able to handle?"

He said, "Four hundred."

I said, "You're insane."

He said, "Look, there'd be berths for 200 down below."

The berths are only 18 inches apart. You couldn't even turn over, or you'd have to get out of your berth to turn over from your stomach to your back.

But he said, "It will only be a four or five day trip, and we'll sleep 200 below and 200 on deck. They'll alternate each night, so that we'll accommodate 400."

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I said, "I don't believe it and I'm going to be there. Our apparatus will let me know when the ship is due," I got there just before the ship was captured. And it was in Haifa Harbor along with several other ships that had been captured. This was the middle of July, the hottest possible time, and in a harbor, the hottest possible place, The British would allow no one off any of those ships on the grounds that there was black plague on the ships, which was absolutely not true. I insisted that I be allowed to go on the ship, never mind letting anyone get off the ship. And I raised enough hell to get on this particular ship. I'm not going to ask you to guess how many were on, and I know you're not going to believe how many were on, but there were 1,800 people on that ship, women, men, and children. There was one toilet. They stood all day in line to get food--they got one meal a day--and all day and night in line to go to the bathroom. Every child was filled with impetigo. There were two

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doctors on the ship to take care of people. Every child was covered with gentian violet, that's the treatment they used then. I don't know what they use now. The odor was something that I can smell today, when you went down below where people had been living for four or five days. Naturally, not all could get to the toilet. It's just impossible to imagine. And they were kept on that ship until finally enough pressure was raised. There was still room in Atlit, a camp to which captured refugees were brought. There was enough pressure raised for the ships to be unloaded. It was obvious that there was no disease--no black plague, anyway.

The camp was enclosed in barbed wire. When I went to visit the camp, the children were all hysterical because here they saw barbed wire again. They had just left barbed wire and everything associated with, it.

Well, to make a long story short, everyone in our apparatus here in America was determined that the Jews were not going to be defenseless. That summer, on my last day, I was imprisoned by the British on suspicion of bringing out military information. This

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was the time when everybody had fled or was jailed, except Golda Meir, of course; she was a woman. They allowed her to walk around. But [Moshe] Sharett, who later became foreign minister and then prime minister, was in jail. Ben-Gurion was in Paris.

There had been a report on the Syrian-Arab armies drawn by a Jew by the name of Sassoon, who later came in to the cabinet. He was Arab in appearance and was really an Arab in his upbringing. He spoke Arabic fluently. He had spent over a year secretly in these countries, drawing a report on what their military strength was, and he was due to leave Palestine to see Ben-Gurion on the same plane with me.

The British knew that this guy was suspect for spying. In Palestine at that time, there was an automatic death sentence, if you were a Palestinian, for being a spy. The British have not as good a record as people think with regards to

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their colonial people. Anyway, the material was given to me and sewn into a small camel's skin traveling case as part of my luggage. The Haganah sent a chauffeur with me to the plane, and his instructions were not to leave until that plane took off. The plane was going to Cairo. In those days you had to change in Cairo and wait a day or two. So, he waited, and at the last minute Sassoon and I were taken off the plane. Sassoon was stripped naked. His shoes were cut, his belt was cut, his luggage was cut in their looking for what they wanted. He was a Palestinian under their jurisdiction, and therefore they could pretty near do anything they wanted. Then they started on me. I said, "No, you don't touch me." Incidentally, they knew that I had some influence, because I had sent a cable to Truman while I was there, protesting this business of the black plague and telling him that it wasn't true. They had censorship and the cable didn't go, but they knew that obviously I had some connection with Truman. So, I said, "If you want to search me, you search me in front of the

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American Consul. And you find him for me now." Well, he was pro-Arab and he couldn't be found. So, I said, "In that case, send my luggage back to the hotel and I'll wait here for him."

They said, "No, you will wait in Ramleh jail." That's where they hung Eichmann later. They foolishly had allowed my luggage to go back. They kept me in jail. The next day the consul didn't show up, but by the time I got there my case had been replaced with an identical case without anything in it. The man who did that job is the new Ambassador to Great Britain--he was the U.N. Ambassador here--Gideon Rafael.

Anyway, now I was delayed; you can't get the plane everyday from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The British accommodated me. They said they would get me on since they had delayed me. Rafael came to me and he said, "The information still has to go, and you're the only one now who can bring it."

I said, "Where is it now?" I didn't know.

He took out a cigarette lighter. It was on microfilm in there. The new arrangements were

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that I wasn't going to Paris. I had to go through Portugal to get home. He said, "There will be a man on the plane who will contact you in Cairo. Just give him this and he'll get it to Ben-Gurion." This was done. So, I was able to tell to Niles and to the President what the restrictions were in Palestine, what the British were doing and, therefore, what help Israel needed. Of course, I was able to recount to our apparatus here, which consisted of hundreds of men around the country, what was needed in the way of normal supplies and what was needed in the way of abnormal supplies. The drive was intensified and was, I think, very helpful, particularly after Truman forced through the U.N. decision in 1947 which led to the creation of the state.

MCKINZIE: Did you give any kind of report to President Truman or his staff when you returned in the fall or winter of 1946?

FEINBERG: Oh, yes. I gave a report when I returned in the summer and certainly again in the winter,

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but I had also seen him in between. That consul, by the way, was removed within a very short time and assigned to Syria, where he married a Syrian woman. But he was no good--he was not acting in the interest of an American citizen, let me put it that way.

So, we had the period leading up to the U.N. decision. Truman's position was certainly not a secret. The State Department's position was not a secret. Truman was helpful in directing me to the State Department and helping me try to get the point of view across. Almost at the last minute the possibility of the United States voting against it was there. The suggestions that maybe it shouldn't be a separate state, it should be a trusteeship and all that sort of thing, were reversals of what Truman originally had decided on. He had pressures from within the Government. Peculiarly, Clark Clifford was a great ally in all of this. He loved Truman, he was his counselor, and he had empathy and understanding of the situation. I shouldn't say

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"peculiarly," but one would not expect a handsome WASP to get involved. Still, he was.

Anyway, there was great drama in the hearings at the U.N. Dr. [Chaim] Weizmann came. In fact, we had a magnificent dinner for Dr. Weizmann several days before the actual U.N. decision, when it looked like it was pretty safe. The dinner was scheduled for the Weizmann Institute of Science, of which I am presently Chairman of the Board. There was [Sergei] Koussevitsky in the orchestra, Jascha Heifetz--I've never seen anything like it. The New York Philharmonic was the orchestra. Again, still being young and brash, I made a statement--I didn't even make it a guess--that the first President of Israel was going to be Dr. Weizmann, which he was and which was the headlines the next day in the New York Times. There was no Israel yet, there was no U.N. decision yet; it was that kind of an evening.

When the deciding vote came (they needed two-thirds), I was with my wife and children at the

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Waldorf at a bar mitzvah. I went upstairs to the radio room of the Waldorf to listen to this, and as soon as the vote came in I ran over to Dr. Weizmann, who was at the Plaza Hotel. He was alone, peculiarly enough, the man was almost blind in those days. But I guess that those of his staff who could, were at the U.N. and the rest had left him alone because they realized the drama of the moment. And he actually opened the door himself when we came. He was in his shirt sleeves. He used to wear a stiff collar, but the collar was off and he had this neckband and striped shirt; I remember it clearly. And the tears were coming down. He just sat down, and we said nothing but embraced each other. We were very close friends. My wife gave him a kiss. And all he said was, "At last." It was a kind of a moment where you realize that that was all. You don't say anything more; you leave him alone. I wanted to be there as soon as I could. I was, and I was happy that I was able to be, because we talked about it many times later. Beginning with

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his Presidency came the internal struggle in Israel between the sophisticated Western Jew Weizmann, as constitutional President but really ceremonial President, and the activists like Ben-Gurion and Sharett. Sharett, who had a great respect for Weizmann, was very loyal to Ben-Gurion and he was always trying to be the intermediary, although Weizmann never got very far, except through his prestige worldwide. Ben-Gurion had always fought basically what Weizmann wanted, which was a less activist role.

Anyway, there was one point in which there was great agitation about at least allowing some of the Arab families to reunite. Truman sent me over to see what I could do to get Ben-Gurion and Weizmann together. So, the four of us, Weizmann, Ben-Gurion, Sharett and I, met. And I said, "I have to tell you that I'm a messenger from the President. He would like to see you do something." And something was done. There was a small amount of reuniting of families, Arabs who had stayed with their kinsmen who had left. There was a

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certain amount of reuniting permitted, though not much, a few thousand. Of course, the pressure was, "You drove these people out, you must let them all come back." This was the next line of the Arabs. Well, historically they weren't driven out. They were forced out by their own leaders who said, "You'll be killed if you don't go out. In ten days we'll have the country and you'll have all the Jewish mansions." There were recordings of this--radio recordings. This is not propaganda.

Now, Truman interceded and helped. There came the time for Truman and Weizmann to get together in regards to some aid. The aid could only be relief, not military aid. There was no chance of getting anything like that through Congress. I was sent over to bring Weizmann, which I did, and he stayed at Blair House. The meeting was very successful. Truman had a high

regard for Weizmann, and he did recommend a considerable amount. My recollection is that it was 100 million dollars of aid to Israel in the form of a loan.

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MCKINZIE: In regard to this negotiation for aid and previously, how did you manage to keep any kind of a relationship with the Department of State, where it's rather clear that leadership was very much pro-Arab?

FEINBERG: Truman gave me access to Acheson, and we finally developed a warm relationship. Acheson was a Brahmin. He knew [James Vincent] Forrestal, who was against us; [Stuart] Symington, who was for us; so, I was able to establish myself with Acheson as a Jew who was not a part of the pressure group, who was committed but who was speaking as objectively as he could be. Also, I had the warmest kind of connections with the leaders of Israel. I didn't mention it before, but that developed very quickly once Truman became President and they recognized that I had the relationship with him. And there were my activities in this American branch of the Haganah, if you want to call it that. Mr. Ben-Gurion, Mr. Sharett, Caplan (the finance man)--there wasn't anybody amongst the leadership

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that I was not very close to. Of course it was Weizmann principally. And all the men who were clerks then were my friends. So, this was important to Acheson as well, if he wanted to get the State Department point of view across. He had someone who could speak as a personal witness to what he was saying, not as a formal ambassador.

The man who became Eliahu Elath was the first ambassador of Israel to the United States. He was formerly named Eliahu Epstein and had represented the Jewish agency in Washington and was a beloved man. Niles liked him; everybody liked him. But whatever he did was a formal act. He went by appointment, through all the protocol. Though he reflected exactly what Acheson said or what any of the other State Department people said, it was not Acheson talking to an American, it was Acheson talking to a representative of Palestine and then of Israel. So, I think that Truman did a great service for me, of course, and I was able to get more cooperation in the thinking of Acheson.

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Acheson had a very high regard for Truman, and there couldn't have been two men more different. But he soon learned that this was a man and a President, so he respected his judgment. If his judgments were pro-Israel, Acheson was going to be, as much as he could be, pro-Israel. And I think he was helpful, in the sense that he wasn't prohibitive in directions to the State Department. The State Department is today rife with people who are for the Arab cause. It's a constant problem. I had the occasion to tell that to the Mobil Oil people the other day. I had a meeting with them about the energy crisis, which they are trying to pinpoint on the shoulders of Israel. This is not so at all, but I'm not going to get into that because it would take too long.

But that was the situation up to the time that Truman retired, which was a very sad day for me and the Jewish people in general, and, I think, for the United States Government. I don't think he could have beaten Eisenhower, but I just wish to hell held taken the chance of doing it. But I

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think he was right in his decision because his energies were waning. I think his seven years in the White House were killing him.

MCKINZIE: I'd like for you to talk a little bit more about the 1948 election. You came up with a pledge to raise the money for a whistle stop and you evidently had confidence that a lot of people didn't have, right down to the very end. You mentioned a little story about going on a business trip previous to the election. I wonder if you might recount that for the record?

FEINBERG: Well, my partners and I used to make regular trips to our mills. Durham, North Carolina, was where we were goint this day. One of my partners was a small but avid bettor on football games and baseball games, and he had a fellow who was almost a house bookie. He used to come during the week every week and line up the bets, \$50 a game, \$20 a game. This fellow was in the office as we were leaving on this election day. Pete was his name, and he said, to me, "How about a bet on the election?"

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He said, "Well, you can almost take your pick, 15 to 1, 20 to 1."

I said, "Pete, I wish I had money to bet, because you're going to lose And he waved at me and laughed. My partners, both of whom had supported Truman and given me money for the campaign, also laughed. But we finished our work--we had voted already--and we were having dinner and waiting for the reports to start. Both of them were convinced that Truman had lost. In the early hours it looked like they were right. It wasn't until somewhere about 10:30 or 11 that there began the glimmering of an idea that this thing wasn't going to turn out the way everyone thought. At least, to me, it began, because I knew some of the key election spots from my association in Washington. They say, "Watch this place or that place." In the '52 election at 8 in the evening I told my wife that [Adlai Ewing] Stevenson had lost. Max Lerner called me and I said, "It's over."

He said, "What are you talking about."

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I said, "Eisenhower is winning in the labor district in Bridgeport, Connecticut, and if he can win that, he's going to sweep the country."

And Max said, "You're crazy."

Anyway, that night I stayed up until 5 in the morning and dashed--because I woke them up--up to Washington. Truman wasn't back in Washington, but Howard McGrath was there and, of course, we wore ourselves out patting each other on the back, as everybody else did. It was a tremendous victory, and I hesitate to think what the country would have been like for those four years with as rigid a person as Tom Dewey would have been. I think of the whole business of the Marshall plan, the Truman Doctrine, all the things that really brought a renaissance to the world--which renaissance is plaguing us now, because it was so successful. I'm sure it would either have been delayed or never have occurred. So, during the election, I just worked my head off to get him support wherever I could and got him a lot of support.

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MCKINZIE: Was this through personal contact?

FEINBERG: Yes. I never was a member of committees or anything like that, or out in front even in terms of publicity. I went from door to door around the country (when I say "door to door," I mean "group to group"), and I simply laid it on the line that you had to support this man who, in minutes of the declaration of Israel, had recognized the country, I have in my possession one of the seven pens he used for the de jure recognition within minutes of the declaration.

I really laid down the law and I wasn't bashful about it. There was good response, a warming response, even though everyone thought they were throwing their money out. That's the interesting thing. They owed Truman a debt, and certainly they owed him support. He got the votes in the Jewish communities, and he got a lot of financial support.

MCKINZIE: Do you recall how widely you traveled?

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FEINBERG: Yes. I traveled as far as the coast; I traveled everywhere. I had one very dramatic meeting on the coast, when some of the boys really thought I was crazy. I said, "Maybe I am, but you have got to pitch in," and they did. I went to every major community. Of course, you had allies. In Chicago, you had Jack Arvey, who was reluctant about Truman's running in '48. But once he decided, he was on the bandwagon. Jack is still a staunch and loyal Democrat.

MCKINZIE: What about '52? Were you enthusiastic about Stevenson and do you think Mr. Truman was enthusiastic?

FEINBERG: I think that Mr. Truman came to the conclusion that Stevenson was the best image for the party to project. Do I think that he thought that Stevenson would win? I don't know. I do know that he was very hurt that, having been offered the chance of the nomination, Stevenson said no and had to be convinced. I admired Stevenson's intellectual capacity and certainly

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his ability to articulate. Stevenson was not the kind of a man that you could fall in love with, as you could with Truman, where you could say, "Gee, this is such a wonderful person. I'd like to almost embrace him." I could do this with Weizmann. I say it with Truman, although I never did it. Stevenson was the kind of a man whose mind you could admire and enjoy. It was almost awe inspiring at times and, of course, there was his articulation and his humor. He was not at all enthusiastic about Israel, and he was not at all enthusiastic about one Abe Feinberg, who was allied with Truman and who bore the stigma of the "mess in Washington." He was not overawed by or prone to seek out any of the people around Truman. This was, I think, a very stupid decision he made. It wasn't until long after he was nominated--and I was at that convention--that he finally got in touch with me. I had made up my mind, "So be it. If he wants to brush me off, that's his business. If he's elected, it's bad for me, maybe even bad for Israel, but I'm not going to go begging."

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He finally did call me, and we met at the Biltmore Hotel. It must have been five or six weeks after the nomination. And obviously, he was putting his best foot forward. He said, "Abe, I know a lot about you and your interest in Israel."

I said, "Fine, let's get to that right away. What can I do to tell you about the need for continued support of Israel?"

"Well," he said, "I first have to tell you my problem. I was in Iran for the State Department in 1946 when the Russians made their move into Iran. It was I who activated the United States, through the State Department, to threaten to resist that move. That incident endeared me to the Arabs, and I have many friends in the Arab world?"

So I said, "How many votes are there in the Democratic party in the Arab world?" That was the only thing I said, and he understood that I meant he was being impractical. A President should have friends in the Arab world. I think

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it would be very helpful for a President to have friends in the Arab world to whom he could talk man to man, without being blackmailed with oil, and friends in Israel to whom he could talk, man to man.

Anyway, he understood that he wasn't dealing with a patsy from that point on, and I think he respected that. We became friends. But I never could have the feeling for him that I had for Truman or later for Kennedy or Johnson. I was disappointed when he wasn't elected, because I thought it was a blow to the Democratic Party and to the country. I was never happy about a general being President; I still am not and would not be.

MCKINZIE: I understand that you went on a short trip with Mr. Truman and campaigned for Adlai Stevenson.

FEINBERG: Yes, I did. I worked hard for Adlai Stevenson, and I raised a lot of money for Adlai Stevenson, It was easier to speak for Adlai Stevenson

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among my colleagues than it was to speak for Harry Truman when I spoke for him in '48. But it didn't do any good. I think that Eisenhower was unbeatable in any case, once Truman was out of the picture. I kept a good relationship with Stevenson even to the next election. In fact, it grew more intimate. In order to bring him to the Jewish public in better context, I made him the guest of honor at the Weizmann dinner, which is the key dinner, really, in the country. It is for a scientific institute. It attracts a most intellectual audience, and, therefore, it was a very good platform for anyone. Since Stevenson did not have a favorable image in the Jewish community, even after he lost, because of his reluctance to be all out for Israel, I thought this would be a good way of reviving his image and placing him in a position to get the nomination again. And really from that first meeting on, I think the barriers were broken concerning our ability to talk to each other. Now, that had nothing to do with my inability to embrace him. But we could talk. We did talk and he listened.

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He was a troubled man, always. Even when you convinced him of your point of view, you could see the wheels going on before he finally was convinced that this was something he should do. He might have had the conviction that you were right, but how to translate that into action? It was very difficult for him, even the damn business of writing a speech. He labored over these things. He sat there and wrote and wrote, and nobody else could help him. It's too bad. I think he could have been a great force for this country, but he died and we have to live with the fact that he died.

MCKINZIE: Among the Presidents you've known and supported, how would you rank Harry Truman as a man and as a statesman?

FEINBERG: Well, I've told you my feelings concerning him as a man. Of course, I'm not sure the question is easily answered, because statesmanship depends upon the world environment at the time. I think Truman was a great statesman, internationally as well as in the country. There were the things

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that he foresaw in his time of office. Even his courage with respect to Korea was admired and backed, whereas a similar act on the part of Johnson years later brought Johnson down. So, you could say Truman was a great statesman for stopping communism or attempting to stop communism in 1950 or '51. Johnson was a poor statesman because his policy failed in the sixties. Now, I don't think it's fair to equate. I think he was a better statesman than Kennedy, although you can't tell because Kennedy had no chance. My answer is that Truman was a great man, a great humanitarian, and I think he indicated great statesmanship in those things which happened in his term of office. All the world was changed.

Johnson and I were extremely close. Kennedy and I were close, but our age was a difference. Kennedy was much younger than I. With Truman, the age gap was great, but it was he who was older. It was easier for me to relate to him as an older man as President, and it was difficult for Kennedy to relate to me on a real warm personal basis.

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We were good friends. We had great and humorous times together. Certainly, there was never any access denied me either by Truman, Kennedy, or Johnson. Of the three men I would say that I was closest on a personal basis with Johnson. We were of about the same age; he was six months younger than I. Also, I had become sophisticated in the years, so that the Presidency qua Presidency was not overawing to me as it was in the Truman days.

I literally made it a policy never to take a picture with Truman touching him, embracing him, or putting my arm on him--except shaking hands. When I see pictures of Sammy Davis hugging Nixon, I think that that's an insult to the Presidency for anyone to do that. I'm not talking about Sammy Davis as a black man or as a Jewish black man. I'm talking about the public familiarity with the President. I think it is demeaning to the Presidency. Even with Johnson, even in times when I would be at the ranch and his own photographer was there, I never got into a posture of familiarity--warmth, yes. We were photographed talking to each

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other, even swimming in the pool together, but not where I was embracing him or "hail-fellow," that kind of a relationship. I don't think anyone should have that publicly with a President. Johnson, in his own way, would embrace me or, embrace my wife, or I would kiss Mrs. Johnson in greeting, but never if the cameras were on. Maybe I'm wrong about this, but I think the Presidency has a certain aura which should be preserved. However, between '48 and '63, when Johnson came in, I was not overawed, so I was more comfortable and, therefore, could develop a warmer personal relationship. On a relationship of respect, I'm sure that Truman had respect for me, as I had overwhelming respect for him as well as Kennedy. I had great respect for Kennedy's incisive mind. There was no fooling around with Kennedy. He could see to the problem, once you described it, and act on it. "Call in Mike Feldman, call in O'Connell, call in this one, let's talk this out." He was very quick about those things. He had that Irish prescience and, of course, he was charming.

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I suppose Nixon's got friends who can understand what's going on now and who are sympathetic. Maybe people have had experiences with him which make them think that this is a poor, beleaguered man. I watched him last night. I knew Nixon when he first came into the House. I wasn't happy about how he got to the House in beating Jerry Voorhes. I was very unhappy about how he beat Helen Gahagan Douglas. Of course, I had been twice against him when he ran, even though it was difficult to support George McGovern.

MCKINZIE: In '47 and '48 when you were trying to get people to Palestine, there were efforts to increase the amount of permissible immigration to the United States. I had the impression that not all the Jewish community was of the same mind on that subject.

FEINBERG: That's correct. A small segment of the Jewish community did not support the aspirations then of a Jewish State and today do not support the aspirations of Israel. This is not the Orthodox group that I'm talking about. This is the

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carryover of the old Brahmin Jews of the earlier days. They aren't as vigorous in their antagonism as they were. They are what you might call "closet anti-Israelis." There was and there is an organization as part of the UJA, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, which takes care of Jews who come here and helps those who want to come here. It's part of the apparatus of the UJA, so it is certainly not an anti-Israel part of the Jewish society. There are Jews in Russia today who want to get out and who have relatives here. This committee could help them come here and want them to come here. They should be supported to come here. There's nothing that says that every Jew has to go to Israel. My position is that every Jew who wants to go should be permitted to go, whether they are in Russia or in Ethiopia. This is what the big argument is about with Russia. They should be permitted to emigrate anywhere. If they want to come to these states, God bless them, and we should do everything we can to help them when they get here.

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MCKINZIE: At that time did you find very many people who did not think that the European Jews should be permitted to come to the United States? Maybe my impression is off, but I had a feeling that there were some.

FEINBERG: I think there was some feeling expressed by some Jews but really not stimulated by the Jewish community at all, It was stimulated by the isolationist American, whether he was Jew or not. "Why are you gonna let those greenhorns in?" This happened to the Kennedy's when their family came from Ireland. It happened to Muskie's family when they came from Poland. It was that type of opposition which exists even today. You know how often you've heard the expression, "Tell them to go back where they came from," and particularly in the anti-black movement, "Tell them to go back and climb the trees." That's un-American to begin with, and it certainly is shortsighted. This country couldn't have grown without that amalgam. One of the reasons Israel is growing is the amalgam

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which it has, even though it is all Jews, or practically all Jews. The cultures of the Jews who will come from different parts of the world are making Israel in miniature a society similar to the United States. But the energy, the ambitions, the creativities of all these different cultures are put to work in a society in which "keeping up with the Jones" has not yet become the standard.

It doesn't make any difference who you are, you still got three rooms, two rooms, or one room. The Prime Minister gets 7,500 bucks a year and rides around in a Dodge, not a Cadillac. That kind of spirit still exists. I don't know if it will exist in the next several generations; I hope it will. It is good for a country to have an amalgam; it's good for America. I hope that some of the Russian Jews can find their way here. They might prefer to go to Israel, which they say they do, and I can understand that. It's hard for people of middle life or even in the early years, twenties or thirties, to come to a country where they are complete foreigners. When they come to

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Israel they're not complete foreigners. They may not even speak the language, but they are with their people. They share a history, they share customs, and they are welcomed; they are not intruders. But I cannot say that in the period we were talking about that there was any strong feelings that European Jews should not come to America, at least not on the part of Jews. There was no stronger feelings against that idea than there are against Italians shouldn't come or Polish people shouldn't come. There is a core feeling here. Those were the guys who constituted the greatest support of Nixon and of the Republican Party. They are Americans, and they don't want anybody else to be an American at their expense. I think that's the best way to describe it.

MCKINZIE: Thank you very much.

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