



The USA and the 'old lady'

Will we sellout Israel for a barrel of oil?

It's one of those classic dramas. The rich old lady returns to her hometown and offers its inhabitants one billion dollars to murder her former lover.

The townspeople are indignant. "Madam," they say righteously, "our honor is not for sale."

But she continues to dangle her juicy reward in front of them. The townspeople are poor. Before long they start eyeing the man whose death would change their destinies.

Hasn't he ever broken some law? Surely he's guilty of some hidden crime? Doesn't he, in fact, *deserve*, to die?

In the end they kill him in the name of honor and justice—and the money starts coming in from the old lady.

I doubt, seriously, if the Swiss dramatist, Duerrenmatt, had the nation of Israel in mind when he wrote *The Old Lady*. Yet the parable is alive in the Middle East today.

Only in this case the old lady wears a *kafeyah* and the reward to the free nations of the world is—you guessed it—oil.

Ever since her birth (or rebirth) in 1948—a direct fulfillment of prophecy—the little nation of Israel has been marked for extermination.

Until Anwar Sadat traveled to Israel, no Arab nation would even recognize Israel's right to exist. To have an Israeli stamp in your passport still means you will be turned away at every Arab border—except Egypt.

But many nations did not share this hatred of the Jews. Most free nations of the world—especially the USA—stood with her in her struggle to put down permanent roots in the rocky soil of promise, given by God through Abraham. Despite the proffered reward of petrodollars, we said to the rich Arab sheiks: "Madam, our honor is not for sale."

But the crunch has now grown critical. Is it worth it—paying \$2 a gallon—just to protect a bunch of arrogant Jews who insist on their own way? And what about all those misplaced Palestinians who were run off *their* homeland? Maybe the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) is justified in using terrorism. Maybe we ought to at least listen to the old lady.

So we, who were so thrilled back in 1967, now ask piously, "Was Israel justified in unifying Jerusalem during the Six-

Day War?" And when Prime Minister Begin moved the capital from Tel Aviv to East Jerusalem—that portion which had been taken from the Jordanians—many heads began to nod. "Perhaps the old lady is right after all."

When Saudi Arabia—our greatest oil ally—called for a *jihād*, a holy war, by Moslems and Christians against Israel, the USA did not rise up in indignation. Instead we joined, in silent assent, by refusing to veto a U.N. Security Council resolution calling for all nations to withdraw diplomatic missions from Jerusalem.

The Israelis called it "oil blackmail." Begin said: "The ancient people of Israel do not need the recognition of the Security Council for Jerusalem to be the capital of the Jewish state."

But one by one the oil-starved nations capitulated to the old lady. Switzerland,

"By giving in to Hitler in the beginning, after he had already started his anti-Semitic measures, the West was also responsible for the outbreak of World War II. It is happening again today."

Great Britain, even Holland moved their embassies from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv to protest Israel's insistence on a unified Jerusalem. The USA, true to its recent image, opened two embassies: one in Jerusalem to please the Jews, another in Tel Aviv to please the old lady.

The defection of Holland to Arab pressure was especially devastating. So many Dutch Christians, including people like the legendary Corrie ten Boom, had suffered untold agony to protect Jews from tyranny. Dutch Christians, in protest, placed an ad in the *Jerusalem Post*.

"By giving in to Hitler in the beginning,

after he had already started his anti-Semitic measures, the West was also responsible for the outbreak of World War II. It is happening again today. We are trying, as Chamberlain did in Munich, to save our own skins, our oil, and our economy . . . and let Israel pay for it. Don't leave Israel alone!"

The plea fell on oil-clogged ears.

Now the question remains: Will the USA also abandon Israel?

There is much sympathy for the Palestinians—those Arabs who formerly lived in what is now Israel. Many are homeless. Most without political representation. In desperation Yasir Arafat and the PLO have turned to the only course of action they see open—terrorism and murder.

The Jews, though, a stubborn people, refuse to recognize the PLO.

There are 1.2 million Palestinians living in the "West Bank"—an area that includes much of the midsection of Israel. Jordan accuses Israel of atrocities against the Palestinians by forcing them to live under virtual martial law.

But if you travel through Jordan—off the tourist routes—you find the Jordanians have put their Palestinians in horrible refugee camps. They don't want them either. And to make the Jews look bad, they insist on the PLO as the only proper spokesman for the Palestinians.

It's a sticky mess—one in which the whole world has a stake.

It's easy to say the problem belongs to them. However, there is a problem American Christians must face: Do we believe God gave Israel to the Jews? And that Jerusalem is their rightful seat of government?

Despite the huge amounts of money being poured into Israel by our government (which needs to maintain a democratic ally in the Middle East) and by the United Jewish Appeal, there is a gradual eroding taking place.

In short, the old lady is wearing us down.

Many American Jews are growing weary of supporting this little nation which is on the verge of bankruptcy. Besides that, there are an alarming number of *yordim* (Israelis who have left Israel—mostly for economic reasons).

But the factor which instills the most horror in the hearts of the people of Israel

is our gradual recognition of the terrorist PLO as a legitimate organization.

The Jews have seen their young men slaughtered—and mutilated. They have seen their schoolchildren blown to pieces by grenades. Every week a PLO bomb explodes on a bus in Israel. They sense the old lady is getting to us.

In the evolution of politics we may be forced, one day, to deal with the PLO. After all, we now recognize Menachem Begin who was once, himself, something of a freedom fighter.

But somehow our politicians fail to recognize the tide of the centuries which is pushing the nation of Israel to her destiny. And in trying to compromise, or even side with the children of Ishmael, they are actually trying to hold back the prophesied move of God.

Israel will *never* yield ground on Jerusalem. The Jews will negotiate about the West Bank, about Gaza, even about the Sinai. But they believe Jerusalem was promised them by God.

That is why it is sad to see Christians, like the honorable people in Duerrenmatt's town, conclude that oil and money are more important than honor and truth.

So the question remains: Do Christians have responsibilities in this matter?

God loves the Palestinians. We should pray they find freedom to live and govern themselves. But for the USA to ever capitulate to the demands of the old lady—and deny Israel's right to exist and her right to a unified Jerusalem—is to go against God's design for the universe.

Whan can we do?

- Write your congressman and senators stating your support for Israel. In that letter oppose arms shipments to nations dedicated to destroying Israel. (50 percent of all Israeli tax dollars go to protect Israel from Arab nations who are being armed with American-made weapons. As a result the nation is in deep economic crisis.)

- Pray daily for the peace of Jerusalem—for as Israel goes, so goes the kingdom of God.

The old lady's dangling offer will go away only when Christians of the world make it known we will stand with our Jewish brothers of the covenant—and die (or ride bicycles) rather than sell our souls for a barrel of oil. ➡