

Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association RESOLUTION

ISRAEL AND THE PERSIAN GULF CRISIS

1991

The Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association voices its solidarity with the United States Government, the Armed Services and Allied Troops in the Persian Gulf. We are grateful to see an end to the war.

We would have hoped for a peaceful resolution to the conflict, but recognize that the terror and tyranny inflicted by Saddam Hussein on his own people, on Kuwait and the entire region, and the arsenal, including nuclear and chemical weapons, which he was building had to be challenged and stopped.

We have expressed our outrage at Iraq's unprovoked missile attacks on Israel. We have applauded the remarkable restraint of Israel's government in the face of Iraqi provocation, even as we have affirmed Israel's right to respond as her security needs require.

In the aftermath of the Persian Gulf War, we look forward to the creation of a true and lasting regional peace that addresses issues of border security and moves toward agreements on regional disarmament and economic development.

Such a regional peace should involve bilateral negotiations between Israel and each of the surrounding Arab countries within the context of United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 and the principle of territory for peace. This principle must be elaborated to provide for Israel's security and recognition, as well as legitimate Palestinian political rights.

We deplore attitudes of prejudice and expressions of ill-will against Arab-Americans, and we call upon our congregations and havurot to develop dialogue with Muslims in the United States and Canada in order to address our fears, concerns and hopes for peace.

We call on our congregations and havurot to reach out to the bereaved and to the wounded in body or spirit as a result of the war and to serve them through acts of Gemilut Hasadim and Tzedakah.

We pledge our support for the ongoing mitzvah of Pidyon Shevuyim taking place in Israel as she resettles hundreds of thousands of Jews from the Soviet Union and tens of thousands of Ethiopian Jews who have continued to arrive even in the midst of the recent crisis. We reaffirm Israel's stated position that immigrants will not be directed to the occupied territories.

We deem it in the best interest of peace and the preservation of our natural resources that we reduce world dependence on oil. Therefore, we support measures to increase conservation, improve energy efficiency, and encourage the development of renewable sources of energy.

We support those movements in Israel that urge dialogue and cooperation between Arabs and Jews and we link hands with all who labor for a Just peace.

The Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association designates the Sabbath of March 22-23, 1991, Shabbat Hagadol as a Sabbath of Thanksgiving and Reflection in the aftermath of the Persian Gulf War. In anticipation of the celebration of Passover, our ancient Festival of Freedom, may we be impelled to work for the freedom, security and peace of Israel and her neighbors and to promote freedom and fellowship among all peoples.