

DEDICATION CEREMONY AT THE NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR 1964-1965

AMERICAN-ISRAEL PAVILION



OCTOBER 14, 1963



COVER

The American-Israel Pavilion is situated at the crossroads of the Avenues of Asia and Africa, occupying a site of 14,438 sq. ft. in a landscaped section of the International Area. Rising like a spiral to a height of forty-two feet, the pavilion will be faced with redwood mahogany; the entrances will be decorated with stones from Jerusalem and King Solomon's Mines and the symbols of the Twelve Tribes of Israel. In addition to the historical, cultural and industrial exhibit, the pavilion will include a shopping mall for Israeli products and a snack bar serving kosher foods and Israeli food specialties.

Excerpts from transcription of remarks made by officials of the American-Israel Pavilion and the Fair at dedication ceremonies for the American-Israel Pavilion at the New York World's Fair, October 14, 1963.

DR. ROBERTO de MENDOZA [Deputy Chief of Protocol] Senator Keating, Mr. Straus, Mr. Caplin, Mr. Sitchin, Mr. Weitz, Mr. Moses, Mr. Beach, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. A wonderful event has brought us together this morning: the dedication ceremony of the American-Israel Pavilion. Rabbi Harold Gordon will now give the invocation.

RABBI HAROLD GORDON: O God of all time, whose spirit fills all space, we come before Thee with joy and thankfulness as we participate in this dedication ceremony for the American-Israel Pavilion at the World's Fair. Since Hebraic mortar cemented the foundations of American democracy, grant O Lord that both America and Israel continue to enjoy each other's friendship and support one another's goals. May the waters that wash the shores of the Mediterranean and the Atlantic carry aloft on the crests of their waves the good tidings of mutual cooperation and amity.

While others may tear down, we here will build; while others may breathe hostility, we here will speak of brotherhood; while others may hurl their shafts of war, we here will stretch forth the hand of peace. May it be Thy will, O Father, that this building, linking the largest democracy

and one of the smallest, will become a beacon light to the millions from the four corners of the globe who will come to these grounds for inspiration and edification. We ask Thy blessing on the creators of this pavilion and its supporters, the leaders of the World's Fair, and the distinguished statesmen who will bring us the message this day.

May our hopes for this structure and the vast collection of mankind's material and cultural productivity to be displayed here be realized in a world of peace. Amen.

DR. de MENDOZA: Our first speaker is Mr. Allen E. Beach, director of International Affairs and Exhibits at the Fair.

MR. ALLEN E. BEACH: Thank you, Dr. de Mendoza. Senator Keating, Mr. Caplin, President Moses, distinguished guests. Governor Poletti is traveling abroad for the Fair. I talked to him by phone in Copenhagen yesterday and he sent this message to read to you here today:

"Please tell Senator Keating, Mr. Caplin, Mr. Straus, Mr. Sitchin, Mr. Weitz and others present at the groundbreaking ceremony that I am sorry I could not be present at this important event. Please also tell them that I am delighted that there will be an American-Israel Pavilion at the Fair. This exhibit will have an interesting as well as significant story to portray to the millions of visitors to the Fair. This pavilion is also a welcomed and valuable addition to the International Area. My best wishes for its success go to all that are there today, and to those who



have worked so hard to make the American-Israel Pavilion a reality go my heartiest congratulations."

This is the message from Governor Poletti. May I add my congratulations? Thank you.

DR. de MENDOZA: Thank you, Mr. Beach. Our next speaker is, as we say, the big boss at the Fair. I have the honor to give you the Honorable Robert Moses, president of the New York World's Fair Corporation.

MR. ROBERT MOSES: Senator Keating, Mr. Straus, Dr. de Mendoza, friends. I join Governor Poletti in thanking the American committee which finally brought about this pavilion.

I've often said that it doesn't make a lot of difference how big a pavilion is, or how much money is spent on it. Its outward appearance is important, but it is what is inside, the imagination and talent that go into the making of exhibits, that really counts. Of course, there's always a difference of opinion as to what to emphasize—in this case, whether you put the emphasis on culture or put it on science, you have both, and I assume that both will be represented here. I also hope there will be something about the Dead Sea Scrolls, something about desalination, atomic energy, and such things that Technion has been working on.

You all know about the Pietà and the Vatican Exhibit. Protestant organizations are well represented as is everything that touches on religion. As to the countries in the

Near East, most of them are in. We've given a great deal of help and support to the new nations among which this is one. We've devoted a lot of time to the new republics. They are new, they are ambitious, they are enthusiastic. They want to create a good impression. They want to send their new image around the world. But they lack not only the money, but the experience. Many of them have comparatively little to show, especially on the industrial side. That's not true of Israel, which has made enormous progress in those fields, and has a great deal to show. Thank you.

DR. de MENDOZA: Thank you, Mr. Moses. It is now my great pleasure to introduce the chairman of the Board of the American-Israel World's Fair Corporation, Mr. Harold S. Caplin.

MR. HAROLD S. CAPLIN [Chairman of the Board, American-Israel World's Fair Corp.]: Thank you, Dr. de Mendoza. Rabbi Gordon, Senator Keating, Mr. Beach, Mr. Moses and other distinguished guests. It is with great pleasure that I welcome you, and I wish to express my deep appreciation for your presence at this dedication ceremony of the American-Israel Pavilion. Several months ago, when I was approached by Mr. Sitchin, Mr. Straus and Mr. Weitz, and asked to finance this pavilion as an investment banker, little did I realize what a mark in history we are making.

As you can see from the sketches of our pavilion, we

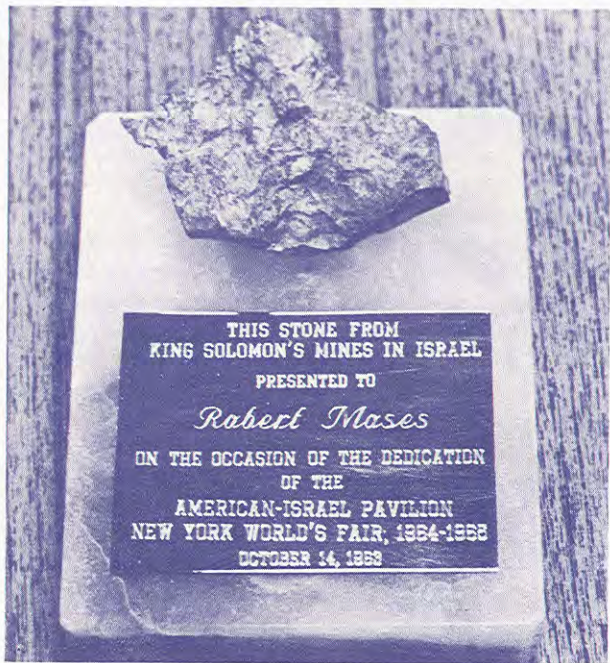


hope to enhance, in a special way, the International Section of the Fair. As Americans we can all trace our history from other lands. Two thousand years ago, the Romans conquered Palestine and drove the Jews from that country. Today, the State of Israel exists as the second largest Jewish community in the world. The area is just slightly larger than the State of New Jersey. The United States has the largest Jewish community in the world, and as Americans we are proud to take part in the creation of the American-Israel Pavilion.

We expect that this pavilion will depict history from thousands of years ago to modern-day Israel. As part of this history, one cannot help but remember King Solomon, the son of David, the king under whom Israel reached its greatest prosperity and glory. Significantly enough, his name came from "shalom," a Hebrew word meaning "peace." In the fourth year of his reign, 966 B.C., Solomon began building a temple. He finished it in seven or eight years, and used gold and silver worth as much as four billion dollars. His extravagant building eventually led to his downfall.

We here, in recognition of the ultimate destruction of most pavilions at the end of the Fair, and because we don't have four billion dollars and seven or eight years to build, hope nevertheless to create a pavilion at the Fair which we know will be a great success.

Mr. Moses, Senator Keating, in recognition of your



Memento presented by Mr. Harold S. Caplin, chairman of the board of American-Israel World's Fair Corporation, to Mr. Robert Moses and Senator Keating: a stone from King Solomon's Mines with an inscription on a silver plate commemorating the occasion.

being here today, and on behalf of the American-Israel Pavilion, I take great pleasure in presenting to each of you a genuine stone taken from King Solomon's Mines in Israel. These stones are small samples of larger ones which will grace the entrance walk of our pavilion.

DR. de MENDOZA: Thank you, Mr. Caplin. I now have the honor to present the president of the American-Israel Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and chairman of the Advisory Board, American-Israel World's Fair Corporation, Mr. Straus.

MR. NATHAN STRAUS, III. [Chairman of Advisory Board, American-Israel World's Fair Corporation]: Senator Keating, Mr. Moses, distinguished guests, friends. I'm here, as you can tell from the introduction, in a dual capacity. I'm proud to be here in both of them. The initiative for this project came from the Chamber of which I have been president for the past ten years, since its inception. We decided, in the Chamber, when the Israel Government determined that it would not participate in this Fair, that this created a gap which should be filled and that we should do something about it.

We weren't alone in this opinion. We discussed it with friends in this country and in Israel. We found not only agreement, but, I would say, unanimous enthusiasm on the part of everyone we spoke to. We decided that the pavilion should perform the function in which the Chamber is primarily interested: to promote Israel's products



Shown above at the dedication ceremony for the American-Israel Pavilion are: (left to right) Mr. Emil Weitz, vice president, secretary and director of the American-Israel World's Fair Corporation; Mr. Zechariah Sitchin, president and director of the American-Israel World's Fair Corporation; Senator Kenneth B. Keating; Mr. Nathan Straus, III, chairman of the Advisory Board, American-Israel World's Fair Corporation; Mr. Robert Moses, president of the Fair; and Mr. Harold S. Caplin, chairman of the board and director of the American-Israel World's Fair Corporation.

and services. But this is a World's Fair, not simply a trade fair, and therefore we should have a project which would also depict the history and culture of the Jewish people in relation to the Holy Land and the era of the Old Testament.

The American-Israel World's Fair Corporation was therefore formed, and the most important thing in a significant venture such as this, is to get proper management for it. We released Mr. Sitchin from his position as executive director of the Chamber to become full-time president of this corporation, and obtained the service of Mr. Weitz as vice president and manager of the pavilion. We did the same thing in getting an underwriter to raise the funds after initial capital was put in by a few of us who initiated the project.

We have Mr. Caplin, who has a fine reputation and has lived up to it in operating this phase of the venture on the highest possible level. We have a fine architect, Mr. Ira Kessler. We have competent builders, Mr. Goldman and Mr. Kagan, who report that they are right on schedule and will get us open on time. We have a capable interior designer who is doing a good job for us, Mr. Zvi Geyra. And we are grateful, also, to our attorney, Judge McGoldrick, who has gotten us through the legal requirements in fine form.

And we are ready to go. I am confident, as chairman of the advisory board of this venture, and as president of

the American-Israel Chamber of Commerce, that when this Fair is over and we look back upon the accomplishments of our Chamber for the first decade, this pavilion will represent the finest single contribution that our Chamber has made to the achievement of its goals during those first ten years. Thank you very much.

DR. de MENDOZA: Thank you, Mr. Straus. It is now my privilege and great pleasure to introduce the Honorable Kenneth B. Keating, Senator from New York.

SENATOR KENNETH B. KEATING: Dr. de Mendoza, Rabbi Gordon, Mr. Moses, Mr. Straus, Mr. Caplin and members of the board of this Corporation. We are gathered here today to give tangible expression to what only a short time ago was simply an idea in the minds of public spirited citizens. In a sense, the creation of the American-Israel Pavilion is the reflection on a smaller scale of the inspiration which created the entire Fair. The recognition that the world's boundaries grow smaller every day, and that now we must work for closer economic ties, better understanding and peaceful cooperation with all nations of the world, was the inspiration for both this building and for the Fair itself.

The United States, which, it has been pointed out, contains the largest Jewish community in the free world, is proud of its contribution in helping Israel. With United States encouragement, Israel has brought its own resources to a state of development at which it now con-



tributes substantially to other new nations seeking higher material and cultural welfare. And, I might say, if all our friends and allies did as much proportionately as this small, courageous State of Israel in assisting the underdeveloped countries, we would have quite a different world in which to live.

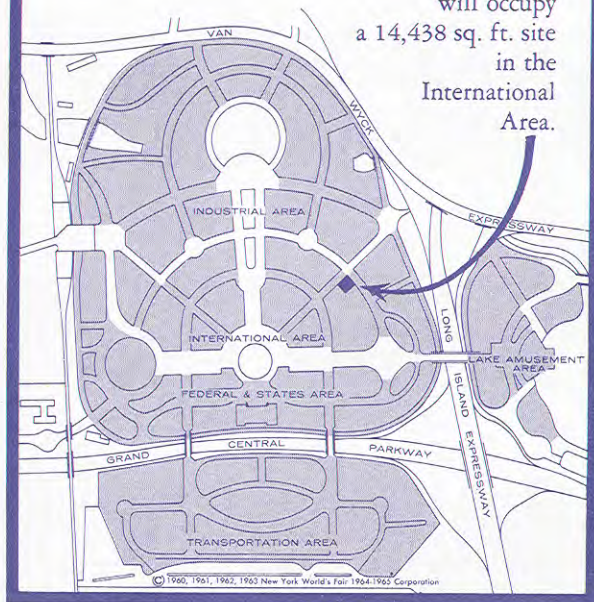
The contributions to the western world from the area which is today Israel actually started, as we all know, thousands of years ago, for it is this Holy Land of Israel which contributed the origin of the Judaic-Christian ethics. It's almost prophetic that this site lies physically at the corner of the Avenues of Asia and Africa and close to the Vatican Exhibit and Protestant Center.

This pavilion will be a sculptural expression of the Hebrew concept of "Aliyah," the surging impulse of hope rising over despair. The eternal dynamism of those laws on which our western culture is still based underlies the architecture of this pavilion. The American-Israel Pavilion will encourage the viewer to picture himself as part of the life and times of the people of the Holy Land, so that he can more readily appreciate the significance of the antiquity and of the sculpture which he will see.

This pavilion is a worthy tribute to the enduring vitality of the ethical precepts that were born some four thousand years ago. It is both a personal pleasure and a great privilege for me to be part of the official dedication of this American-Israel Pavilion. Thank you.

THE AMERICAN-ISRAEL PAVILION

will occupy
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International
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AMERICAN-ISRAEL PAVILION

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MR. ZECHARIAHU SITCHIN, *President and Director*
MR. EMIL WEITZ, *Vice President, Secretary and Director*
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MR. ZVI GEYRA, *Art Director*

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