

A LETTER HOME

from Jessica Fishman, daughter of Leslie and Susan Fishman. Jessica made Aliyah last summer

Today was just like any other day when I woke up this morning . . . I woke up late. I rushed to put on my IDF uniform, with pride. I woke up at 7:15 versus 6:30 and I knew that I would have to run out the door as quickly as I could, since it was Sunday, the first day of the Israeli work week. The buses were going to be crowded and the traffic jams were going to be bad. As I rushed to work, at the IDF spokesperson unit, in order to defend my country's right for self-defense and duty to protect its citizens, I was already tired with the thought of all the work I had in front with the Hague hearing on the Security Fence taking place the next day. I got onto the bus in Jerusalem from Emek Refaim and waited impatiently on the bus for my arrival at the central bus station in Jerusalem, where I jettied off the bus, to sprint to the bus that would take me to my base in central Tel Aviv. No less than two minutes on the bus, I fell asleep. I then woke up less than an hour later to my phone ringing while I was entering into Tel Aviv. It was one of my fellow soldiers from the spokesperson unit, asking me where I was . . . I thought I was in trouble because I was a few minutes late . . . however, it turned out that she was calling to make sure I was safe. There was a SUICIDE BOMBING, another one in Jerusalem, on the bus that I had just taken less than an hour ago, at the bus stop right after I had gotten on to the bus. I did not have time to contemplate the what ifs . . . I quickly called all my friends to make sure everyone was ok and then I had to get to work defending Israel and our RIGHT to self-defense. My day became dedicated to the necessity of the Separation Fence to the rest of the world. I don't know if I can prove it any better than the terrorists proved it themselves today. What else needs to be said after 8 innocent people are killed and over 66 innocent people injured. They, the terrorists and the Palestinian Authority, are not going to stop trying to kill us through terrorist acts, and that has been proven over the past three years. I don't understand, as a Jew, as an Israeli, as an American and as a human being, why there is any debate about creating a Security Fence to stop us from being killed. You would put a fence around your home if someone was trying to constantly kill you. My guess is that you would probably do more. The fact of the matter is that we need a barrier, a shield to protect ourselves from terrorists trying to kill us, and there should be no debate that we have that right—and in fact the duty—to protect the citizens of the State and the State's existence. The Security Fence is truly a shield that has proven to decrease terrorist attacks. While the world continues to debate the fence, we continually bury our dead. The main reason that the terrorist attack was able to be carried out today was because of the areas of the fence that are still not completed.

Sometimes I get so sick of trying to show people things that are so self evident. However, one thing that I think that is important to focus on is the importance of Israel to the Jewish people. It wasn't so long ago that Israel didn't exist and, at the same time, it wasn't so long ago that nearly the entire world was trying to kill the Jewish people. We often forget, in our comfortable lives, that most of the world doesn't really like the Jewish people. Just take a look around, open your eyes to the anti-Semitism around the world, and yes, even in America. Israel is closely tied to the existence of the Jewish people, and your specific existence also. The fact of the matter is that Israel acts as a protector for all Jewish people, and that there are people in Israel that would give their life for you . . . can you say the same for Israel? I'm not asking you to do anything, just to be aware of the reality in Israel and be knowledgeable and educate others.

At the end of the day, we all go about our lives in the regular way, even in Israel (as difficult as it is). After I was done at work, and got back to Jerusalem, I got back on the same bus number that I got on in the morning, bus number 14, so that I could go home.



Benefit for Israel

The Minnesota Cantor's Association will present a concert to benefit the State of Israel on June 6, 2004. Included will be a joint synagogue choir, children's choir, and pre-concert Israeli food fair and gift/art sale.

Coming this Spring... our 3rd semi annual Leadership Development Program.

This program was undertaken to address the need to develop an ongoing means to create continuing lay leadership for the congregation. Many people who participated in the first set of sessions are now active leaders in the congregation either on committees or the board itself. It's proved to be a wonderful way to create a dynamic core of leaders, committed to the values of this special congregation. If you're interested in this program, please call Geoff Marshall (651) 699-0861 or email to <geoffm2@comcast.net>