

*SPECTOR AWARD RESPONSE*

*JUNE 1, 1994*

*BY SYLVIA M. ROBINSON*

*THANK YOU, STANLEY, FOR YOUR VERY KIND WORDS. I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO EXPRESS MY APPRECIATION TO THE SPECTOR AWARD COMMITTEE FOR THIS HONOR.*

*THE ROOTS OF THE COMMITMENT THAT BROUGHT ME HERE TONIGHT STARTED WHEN I WAS A CHILD AND BECAME AWARE OF MY MOTHER'S AND FATHER'S COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT. THE EVENT THAT CEMENTED IT WAS MY FIRST UJA MISSION TO EUROPE AND ISRAEL IN 1959.*

*AT THAT TIME, I MET THE PEOPLE AND SAW THE PROJECTS THAT OUR WORK AND OUR DONATIONS WERE HELPING. INTERACTING WITH THESE PEOPLE, LEARNING OF THEIR SUFFERING AND THEIR NEEDS, SEEING THE DIFFERENCE WE COULD MAKE IN THEIR LIVES AND HEARING THEIR SINCERE EXPRESSIONS OF APPRECIATION MOVED ME DEEPLY.*

*IT STRENGTHENED MY COMMITMENT TO GIVE OF MYSELF AND TO GIVE FINANCIALLY. I REALIZED OVER TIME THAT I WAS RECEIVING MORE THAN I WAS GIVING. ALL THE WORK I HAVE DONE, ALL THE COMMITTEES ON WHICH I HAVE SERVED HAVE HELPED ME TO GROW AND HAVE GIVEN ME A GREAT DEAL OF SATISFACTION.*

*THERE ARE TWO TIMES THAT STAND OUT AS THE MOST CHALLENGING AND THE MOST REWARDING:*



*THE FIRST WAS THE 1973 YOM KIPPUR WAR WHEN I CHAIRED THE WOMEN'S DIVISION CAMPAIGN. ALL OUR PLANS FOR THE YEAR CHANGED AND WE STARTED AN EMERGENCY CAMPAIGN. THE RESPONSE OF THE CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE AND THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE WAS IMMEDIATE AND STRONG. IT MADE US ALL FEEL WE HAD PARTICIPATED IN A MOST IMPORTANT TIME IN OUR HISTORY.*

*PERHAPS, MY MOST SATISFYING EXPERIENCE WAS THE CREATION OF THE DISABLED ISRAELI WAR VETERANS PROGRAM. IT WAS A SUCCESS BEYOND MY WILDEST DREAMS. MANY OF YOU IN THE ROOM ARE AMONG THE HUNDREDS OF FAMILIES WHO OPENED THEIR HOMES AND THEIR HEARTS TO THESE VETERANS. THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE PROGRAM HAVE GIVEN OF THEMSELVES IN A MOST PERSONAL WAY BY WELCOMING A DISABLED STRANGER INTO THEIR FAMILIES.*

*THERE AREN'T ENOUGH THANKS FOR THE FAMILIES, THE PEOPLE WHO CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROGRAM AND THE CHAIRPEOPLE WHO PLAN EACH YEAR'S VISIT. LITTLE DID I KNOW THAT THE PROGRAM WOULD ENJOY 19 YEARS OF CONTINUED COMMUNITY SUPPORT. WE HAVE BEEN GRATIFIED THAT MANY OF THE FAMILIES INVOLVED NOW HAVE A GREATER INTEREST IN OUR COMMUNITY AND ISRAEL.*

*THE PROGRAM'S SUCCESS SPEAKS TO THE BROADER ISSUE OF JEWISH CONTINUITY. WE ARE NOW CHALLENGED WITH IMPROVING MANY OF THE AGENCIES IN OUR COMMUNITY THAT MUST BE BROUGHT UP TO A STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY. THIS CHALLENGE*



*REQUIRES US TO ALL WORK TOGETHER TO MAKE US A STRONGER AND MORE COHESIVE COMMUNITY.*

*I AM ENCOURAGED TONIGHT BY THE MANY YOUNGER PEOPLE HERE WHO ARE COMMITTED TO FURTHER OUR WORK BOTH HERE AND ABROAD. THIS PORTENDS THE CONTINUITY OF COMMITMENT NECESSARY TO MEET OUR CHALLENGES NOW AND IN THE FUTURE.*

*MY WORK HAS BEEN A SHARED EFFORT WITH MY HUSBAND, DON, WHO HAS ALWAYS SUPPORTED AND ENCOURAGED ME. I MUST ALSO THANK MY CHILDREN, STEVE AND CAROL, WHO WERE MORE THAN PATIENT WHEN THEY WERE YOUNG, EVEN IF THEY DIDN'T KNOW WHAT ALL THOSE MEETINGS COULD POSSIBLY BE ABOUT.*

*I WAS SURPRISED, HONORED AND HAPPY TO HAVE BEEN SELECTED TO RECEIVE THIS AWARD FOR THE MANY YEARS I SPENT DOING WHAT I FOUND INTERESTING, EXCITING, REWARDING AND I HOPE MEANINGFUL. I HIGHLY RECOMMEND THIS INVOLVEMENT TO ALL OF YOU.*

*THANK YOU.*