

# Magen David, Unsung Hero

Jerusalem: --A great deal has been written about the bravery of the Israeli army which stemmed and threw back the massive invasion that swept across the frontiers on Yom Kippur.

Much has been said--and understandably so--of the courage displayed by the people called upon to make every sacrifice demanded of it, including the offering up of its sons. Hospitals, welfare and fund raising organizations all met the challenge efficiently, a fact that their sizeable, hard working public relations departments have been quick to point out.

But there is one unsung hero of the war whose name has been only rarely mentioned in the anglo-Jewish press, although it is (and I hesitate to use the expression) a household name in Israel. It is the Magen David Adom, the Red Magen David, Israel's Red Cross.

The role that it played in this last war, (or, more accurately, the present one, for it has not yet ended) like the role it has played in peace and war during the past 43 turbulent years, cries out for recognition.

As soon as the news of the outbreak of fighting reached the country at prayer, the MDA swung into action. Its emergency headquarters in Tel Aviv alerted each of the 59 branches throughout the country to stand by to render immediate assistance. Within two hours its 500 hundred volunteer workers who augment the small, regular staff were at their stations. Nineteen thousand more Israelis rushed to offer their services, pleading to be given some role in the life saving activity of the MDA, foremost of which is the providing of blood for wounded soldiers and civilians.

Thanks to the provisions which had been made by the MDA, the army had on hand sufficient supplies from the MDA blood bank to meet its initial requirements. Additional supplies were immediately flown to the fronts. "Not one soldier went without blood when he needed it," emphasizes Dr. Avraham Atzmon, the head of the MDA's National Emergency Committee.

"In a normal year," notes Dr. Atzmon, "we provide about 80,000 units for military and civilian use. With the outbreak of fighting, we were besieged by thousands of people from all walks of life lining up at our clinics and mobile stations to contribute blood. They ranged in age from teen agers to octogenarians, and included business men, housewives, workers, yeshiva students, and the like. Even prison inmates participated. It reflected the whole gamut of Israeli society. During the fighting from Oct. 6th until Oct. 24th, MDA provided 27,000 units, a figure that rose to 40,000 within a six week period. We had to turn away thousands of would-be donors and inform our overseas offices, which had provided an additional 40,000 units, not to accept any more blood."



LOD--MAGEN DAVID ADOM (MDA), ISRAEL'S RED CROSS SERVICE IN READINESS TO TRANSPORT RETURNING ISRAELI POW'S FROM THE AIRPORT TO THE SHEBA MEDICAL CENTER IN TEL. HASHOMER.

Getting the blood to the wounded, and the wounded to hospitals kept MDA busy day and night. Its fleet of four hundred ambulances throughout the country (which continued to maintain its regular service) was mobilized for the task. Refrigerated blood and plasma were rushed to waiting planes where they were immediately flown to the fronts. The ambulances stood by for the return run; transporting the wounded, who were brought back by plane, to hospitals which had been placed on a pre-planned war footing, where the staffs were awaiting the first arrivals.

NEW YORK, N.Y.-- The American Zionist Federation, 515 Park Ave., N.Y.C. 10022, coordinating body for nine leading U.S. Zionist organizations, has organized a series of "Solidarity & Study Missions" to Israel at a special all-inclusive fee of \$599 which covers round trip economy fare jet transportation, all meals, tours, lectures, briefings and first class hotel accommodations. This first Mission will depart from New York on December 16th and subsequent tours have been scheduled for December 23rd, January 13th, January 30th, February 3rd, February 17th, and March 3rd.

### NO US PRESSURE

JERUSALEM (WNS) Defense Minister Moshe Dayan, upon his return from a short visit to the U.S., said there was no pressure being put on Israel and he did not hear of any conditions Israel had to comply with before the Geneva conference. Dayan said he held detailed discussions with U.S. Defense Secy James R. Schlesinger and his aides on Israel's arms needs. "When the Russians continue to supply the Arabs with modern and sophisticated arms, we should have the right to answer it," he said. "The Americans understand what we need and reveal sympathy toward our requests."

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