

A Letter from the Publisher

Over the years, reporters covering Israeli internal affairs have found that the politics of that freewheeling democracy are noisy, but usually nonviolent. This emotional climate may be changing, as members of TIME's Jerusalem Bureau learned while preparing this week's cover story on the Israeli crisis generated by the Beirut massacre commission report. When a hand grenade was thrown into a crowd of demonstrators in Jerusalem, TIME's Robert Slater was standing 100 yards away, near the front door of the Prime Minister's office. "In the past decade," he says, "I have spent hundreds of hours doorstepping Israeli Cabinet meetings, and I always had the sense that this area was immune to violence. But after that grenade thundered in the air, I thought: How ironic. The most violent place to be is not with the Israeli army in Lebanon, but here." Jerusalem Correspondent David Halevy, a native-born Israeli who has reported on his nation for TIME for 15 years, was shocked by the Israeli violence. "We can either remain a unique democratic society," Halevy



Bureau Chief Harry Kelly covers a Jerusalem demonstration

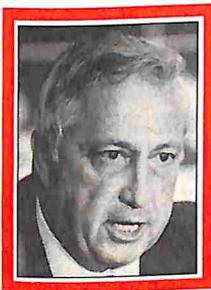
says, "or become just another Middle Eastern state." Jerusalem Bureau Chief Harry Kelly found that despite the strains in the political fabric, most Israelis, from Foreign and Defense Ministry officials to chance acquaintances, are more than eager to talk. Says Kelly: "They prefer, actually insist, that their names not be used." Kelly is a veteran of political skirmishes in Chicago and Washington. He worked for the Chicago *Tribune* and, from 1979 to 1981, for the Washington *Star*, where he served first as assistant, then as associate managing editor. Kelly arrived in Israel last fall after a year at TIME's New York Bureau and discovered that Jerusalem cab drivers are just as garrulous as their New York City counterparts. "A lot of Israeli cabbies speak English," he says, "and they're always willing to point out how wrong you are." Kelly speaks no Hebrew, but he does have at least limited aspirations. "I want to learn enough," he says, "to tell the laundry not to starch my shirts."

DAVID RUBINGER

John A. Meyers

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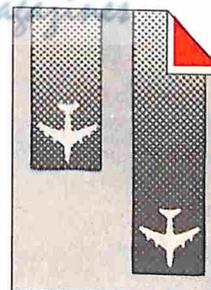
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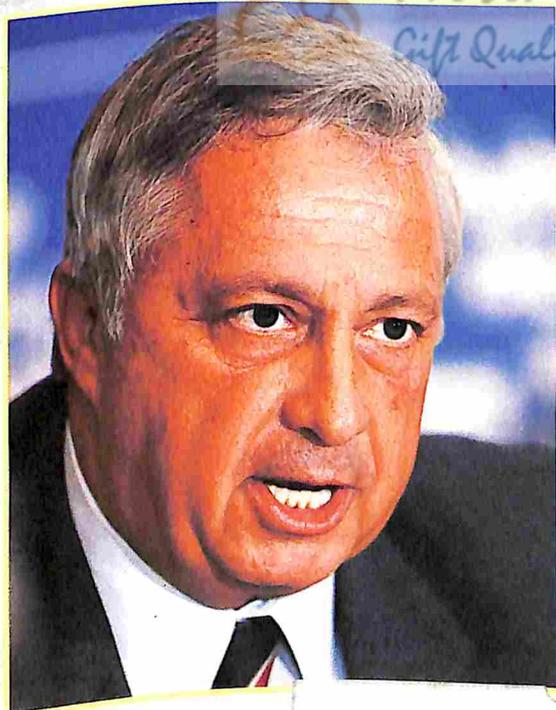
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