

**כל המקיים נפש אחת –
כאילו קיים עולם מלא**

**Whoever saves one life –
has saved an entire world**

Shortly after midnight. A man writhes in terrible pain, collapses and loses consciousness — a severe heart attack. Within minutes the blue-jacketed members of a Paramedic team arrive, administer cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, until pulse and respiration are restored. The patient is then rushed by the MDA Mobile Intensive Care Unit to the nearest hospital, while the team members continue the treatment en route. The patient's life is saved.

A sunny, tranquil beach. Suddenly — an outcry. A child has drowned. Brought ashore by lifeguards, the apparently lifeless youngster is given mouth-to-mouth resuscitation by the Magen David Adom volunteer stationed at the beach. Slowly the youngster's faint pulse beat is felt.

Before dawn in a border village. The still of the night is broken by shots, the explosion of hand grenades. Four terrorists have infiltrated the village from across the border, have slain men, women and children in their sleep and have taken the young pupils of the local boarding school as hostages. The Army and Magen David Adom are called in. MDA ambulances are deployed in readiness for the evacuation of the wounded, and an emergency field station is set up. A special Army Task Force storms the school building and rescues the children, many of them injured, nearly all of them in shock. MDA First Aid teams now go into action, attend the wounded, assuage the children, working at a feverish rate. Scores of ambulances from the various Magen David Adom Stations in the region rush the children to the nearest hospitals.

Late afternoon. An urgent appeal is received by the Magen David Adom National Blood Services from a hospital in the Negev desert. A critically ill patient requires immediately ten portions of blood of a very rare type. Within a few hours the blood has been collected from members of the MDA Blood Donors Association and is carried immediately to the hospital.

Givat Ye'arim, a farming village in the Judean Mountains: A young woman is gripped by intense birth pangs. An ambulance is summoned from the nearest MDA Station, to transport her to the maternity hospital

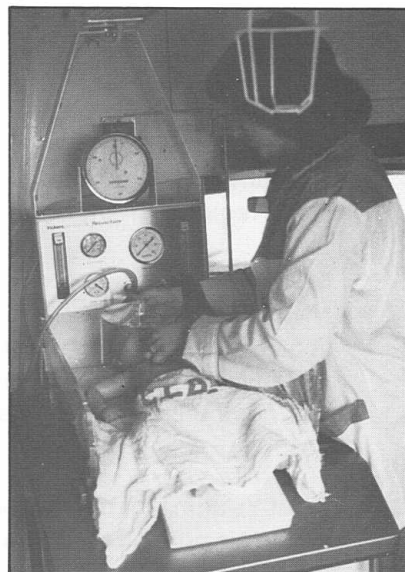


▲ Young accident victim receives First Aid at MDA Station in Akko

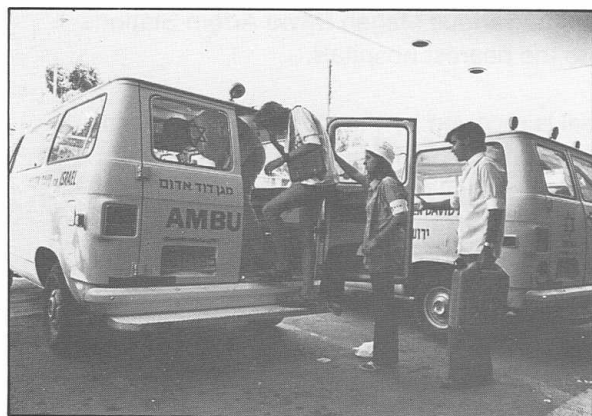


▲ **Top:** Time is of the essence: victim of shock receives infusion en route to hospital

Bottom: Prematurely born baby receives loving care in Mobile Intensive Care Unit for the Newborn



MDA Youth volunteers set out on tour of duty



in Jerusalem. En route, the birth begins. The driver, trained in obstetrics, as all MDA ambulance drivers are, helps the woman to give birth to a healthy baby boy.

This is Magen David Adom in Israel — the organization whose task it is to save lives, to alleviate human suffering, to provide emergency health services and blood and plasma supplies for all the inhabitants of the country. It is the Society which, under a special law enacted by Israel's Parliament, the Knesset, carries out all the functions of a national Red Cross Society.

All Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies have common aims and goals, yet each is unique in some respects. Magen David Adom is unique in that, due to the exigencies of a young, rapidly growing nation, often beset by wars and crises, it must carry out tasks that are beyond those usually fulfilled by a Red Cross Society. It is unique also in its name — *Magen David Adom* (MDA for short), "Red Shield of David" — and its emblem, the six-pointed Star of David, from which its name emanates.

Unfortunately no consensus could be reached so far between the International Committee of the Red Cross, the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and Magen David Adom in Israel regarding the question of a common emblem. The ICRC and the League officials consider the Red Cross and the Red Crescent as neutral emblems, whereas Magen David Adom in Israel and the great majority of men and women all over the world recognize in them religious symbols, thus strengthening MDA's claim that the Shield of David as expression of the religion which formed the basis of Christianity and Islam, should be given equal recognition.

Sadly, political antagonism has prevented Magen David Adom from becoming a full member in the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Nevertheless, Magen David Adom in Israel cooperates with its parallel bodies in other countries, extends aid to the best of its ability when natural disasters, epidemics or famine strike a region anywhere in the world, and it exchanges visits of youth delegations with the Red Cross Societies of other countries.