

DESTRUCTION OF LIFE

A Wise Rabbi's Words

As so often before, Rabbi Manfred Swarsensky said it best.

Frustration. Indignation. Horror. Shame.

"We have not come into this world to hurt, to hate, to hunt — but to love, to build, and to preserve God's creation," he said at the funeral of Robert F a s s n a c h t, the young father murdered in the bomb blast here Monday.

"Research wantonly interrupted can be resumed, but a life, sinfully destroyed, can never be restored."

The rabbi chose a word that has almost dropped out of use: sin. To the generations before us it was the ultimate in horror, the offense against God and man. It fits.

"He who preserves a single human life is like one who has preserved an entire world. He who has destroyed human life is like one who has destroyed an entire world," he said, quoting the Talmud.

"Everyone's job is our job; every-

one's sorrow is our sorrow."

". . . We, all of Madison — yes, our whole nation — feel so deeply with all those to whom Bob's life was their world . . ."

And yet the rabbi could reach for hope, praying for rededication "to build the better society which is still our vision —

"Life is still worth living. America is still worth saving. This great country of ours is still man's last and best hope on Earth."

The wise and courageous rabbi knows something about hope, something about A m e r i c a, something about its worth and its promise.

When he came to Madison years ago it was from a concentration camp in Germany. He was one of the 15 rabbis of Berlin. On Nov. 9 and 10, 1938, the Nazis destroyed every J e w i s h synagogue in Germany.

People deplored the violence, of course, but they found excuses.