
LETTER DATED 10 JUNE 1948 FROM THE ACTING REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TRANSMITTING THE REPLY OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL TO THE CEASE-FIRE AND TRUCE PROPOSALS OF THE UNITED NATIONS MEDIATOR

Sir:

I have the honor to convey to you, for the information of the Security Council, the observations made by Mr. Moshe Shortok, Foreign Minister of Israel in his communication to the United Nations Mediator, Count Folke Bernadotte, in accepting the cease-fire and truce proposal made by the Mediator. I have received the text of these observations in a cable from the Foreign Minister of Israel reading as follows:

"1. The Provisional Government of Israel has given careful consideration to the communication addressed by you to the undersigned on June 8, 1948, indicating the date and hour on which the proposed cease-fire and truce arrangement is to come into effect, and setting out interpretations of the resolution and decisions as to its application adopted by you.

"2. The Provisional Government of Israel desires to inform you that it has decided to accept the cease-fire and truce proposal and is prepared, if the other side accepts likewise, to issue an order for a cease-fire and the cessation of acts of armed force for the period of four weeks commencing on Friday, June 11, 1948 at six o'clock in the morning, G.M.T., corresponding to ten o'clock in the morning Israeli time.

"3. While the Provisional Government of Israel attaches no conditions to this decision, it finds it necessary to make certain observations which are set forth in the following paragraphs. In this connection we beg to point out that forty-eight hours elapsed between your last meeting with the undersigned in Haifa and the receipt of your communication under reply here. We cannot but assume that during this time the representatives of the Arab League, or of the governments composing it, had opportunities for further consultation with you by direct contact and by oral elucidation of various points at issue, opportunities denied us by the fact that you were in Cairo.

"4. The Provisional Government of Israel maintains the position set forth in my message to you of June 7 as regards restrictions you intend to impose on the entry into Israel of Jewish immigrants of military age

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during the truce period. It regrets its inability to agree that the policy you propose to adopt in this regard accords with the Resolution of the Security Council of May 29, inasmuch as that Resolution embodies no other limitation on the immigration of men of military age than that they should not be mobilized or trained for military service during the truce, which limitation the Provisional Government of Israel had accepted from the outset. As a result of the interview between the undersigned and yourself at Haifa on June 3, and your oral message transmitted through Mr. Reedman on June 4, the Provisional Government of Israel felt justified in assuming that you agreed that no numerical limitations would be imposed on the entry of immigrants of this category and that you accepted as adequate the arrangements agreed upon in that interview and further specified in the subsequent message, regarding the surveillance of such immigrants after their arrival in Israel during the truce period. Most of the details in these arrangements had in fact been proposed by you and accepted by the undersigned. The Provisional Government of Israel regards your present interpretation as a departure from the text of the Resolution and from the agreement of June 3 and 4, and begs to express the hope that you will so exercise your discretion as to eliminate this discrepancy as far as possible.

"5. Regarding paragraph 5 (4) of your communication, I must point out that the Resolution of the Security Council did not envisage measures preventing or delaying the entry of Jewish immigrants into Israel, irrespective of their age or sex. While the Provisional Government of Israel is ready to cooperate fully with the Mediator in order to facilitate his task of supervision and control, it will regard as unjustified any attempt to interfere with the normal flow of Jewish immigration into Israel.

"6. With reference to paragraph 6 (8), the Provisional Government of Israel assumes that the provision regarding the form of relief will not affect the parts of Jerusalem in Jewish hands to the extent that the safety of passage to and from them, and the supply of food to them, may have been secured by the operation of Jewish forces at the time of the commencement of the cease-fire and truce.

"7. With reference to paragraph 6 (9), the Provisional Government of Israel assumes that an attempt by any Arab Government to impose a commercial blockade on Israel by confiscating or holding up cargoes of normal supplies consigned to it will be regarded as a warlike act and as prohibited.

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"8. The Provisional Government of Israel notes with satisfaction your statement transmitted yesterday through Mr. Reedman that you accept as valid its contention conveyed to you in my message of June 7, that it would be unwarranted to institute strict control on the movement of Jewish immigrants in the initial phase of the truce while leaving unchecked possible movements of troops and war material from one Arab country into another or into Palestine. The Provisional Government of Israel welcomes your assurance that you will adjust your policy accordingly.

"9. If the truce is rejected by the other party and the whole matter is referred back to the Security Council, the Provisional Government of Israel reserves the right to revert to its original position regarding interpretation of the provisions of the Resolution of May 29, without it being committed to any concessions implied in the present acceptance of the cease-fire and truce proposal.

"10. The Provisional Government of Israel confidently hopes that if the cease-fire and truce materializes, you may find it possible to make such arrangements as will ensure complete equality of contact with you and access to you for both parties concerned."

May I request that the contents of this letter be made available to members of the Security Council as soon as possible.

I have the honor to be Sir,
Your obedient Servant

(signed) Aubrey S. Eban
Acting Representative
Provisional Government of Israel

