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### **MS-4787: Abba Hillel Silver Papers, 1902-1989.**

Series I: General Correspondence, 1914-1969, undated.

Sub-series A: Alphabetical, 1914-1965, undated.

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Jewish Agency, Israel, includes statement by AHS on  
proclamation of Jewish State, 1948.



May 14, 1948

STATEMENT BY DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER

ON PROCLAMATION OF JEWISH STATE

The decision has been taken. The Jewish people have kept their appointment with history. The Jewish State, the dream of twenty centuries of homeless wandering, is today a reality.

Summoned into existence by the urgent need of the Jewish people, the Jewish State has been fashioned by that people's creativeness, built by its labor and sacrifice, defended and made secure by its blood.

It was logical that the expiration of the Mandate in Palestine would be followed by the fulfillment of the Mandate's high purpose, the transformation of the Jewish National Homeland into a sovereign Jewish State. It was equitable that the two peoples living in Palestine should each be afforded the opportunity to achieve independence and self-determination. Logic and equity dictated the decision of the United Nations.

But it remained for the Jews themselves to implement that decision. When the United Nations, put to a critical test of its efficacy and authority, faltered and capitulated to the counsel of convenience and the intimidation of lawlessness, the Jews were abandoned to their own fate. It was for them -- and them alone -- to decide their future. History has taught that freedom is never bestowed. It must be won. It has been won.

We Jews who live in America have been fated to witness the darkest and the brightest moments in Jewish history. But a few years ago, we were helpless spectators of an unrestrained madness which brought agony and death to our people. An enfeebled world, its conscience blunted by compromise, was seized with paralysis and permitted Hitler to destroy 6,000,000 Jews -- one-third of our people. Our pleas and protests were in vain. Nothing was left to us but to hope that there might arise from this frightfulness a new Jewish people, secure in the exercise of its own national will, safe on its own national soil.

Today, we may give thanks that we have been spared to witness the realization of that hope. In the expression of our gratitude, we must be conscious that we stand but at the beginning. There is much to be done -- much that we must do.

The Jewish State must translate Jewish precept into action. The prophetic teachings must come alive in a progressive democracy whose example will shine throughout the world.

The people that has been a minority everywhere in the world for twenty centuries, that has suffered the disabilities of minority status, now has an opportunity to demonstrate that discrimination is a scourge that must and can be stamped out. The Arab minority in the Jewish State will be granted complete equality of opportunity.

It was in ancient Israel that the sages preached the Golden Rule. The Jewish State must practice it. It will be a good neighbor. It will work with the surrounding Arab States to advance the interests of all. Granted peace, it will strive earnestly to secure it.



The people that has reclaimed a barren land and has made the desert bloom like a rose will build a state which will seek abundance for all its people. It will not create monopolistic wealth by artificial restrictions on capacity and productivity. It will raise the standards of all its people.

The people that has been the victim of every aggression and the target of every tyrant will make itself secure. It will need weapons to defend itself. But its strongest weapon will be that which achieved its triumph in the hours of its creation, its undefeated spirit, the love of its land and the will to die, if needs be, in its own defense.

The people of the Book, restored to its native land, will build a state that will be the instrument of its cultural renaissance. On its own soil once again, Jewish culture will rise anew. Here, as in ancient days, the Jewish people will be free to make its fullest contribution to civilization.

Emerging into statehood as a consequence of enlightened action by the world community, the Jewish people will seek to strengthen that community. In its relations with other states, the Jewish State will be guided always by the interests of the United Nations. It will seek admission to that body and in its deliberations it will record its judgment as a free and independent state, orientated always to the United Nations and to the United Nations alone.

With fidelity to the Charter of the United Nations, the Jewish State will strive for world peace and cooperation.

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# DRAFT

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But it remained for the Jews themselves to implement that decision. When the United Nations, put to a critical test of its efficacy and authority, faltered and capitulated to the counsel of convenience and the intimidation of lawlessness, the Jews were abandoned to their own fate. It was for them - and them alone - to decide their future. History has taught that freedom is never bestowed. It must be won. It has been won.

But the victory in Palestine does not belong to the Jews alone. Their triumph will be shared by the United Nations. A great decision, reflecting the collective judgment and will of international authority, has been vindicated and upheld. If the Jews were indebted to the United Nations for the decision of November 29, 1947, that debt has now been more than repaid.

We Jews who live in America have been fated to witness the darkest and the brightest moments in Jewish history. But a few years ago, we were helpless spectators of an unrestrained madness which brought agony and death to our people. An unfeebled world, its conscience blunted by compromise, was seized with paralysis and permitted Hitler to destroy 6,000,000 Jews - one-third of our people. Our pleas and protests were in vain. Nothing was left to us but to hope that there



might arise from this frightfulness a new Jewish people, secure in the exercise of its own national will, safe on its own national soil.

Today, we may give thanksgiving that we have been spared to witness the realization of that hope. In the expression of our gratitude, we must be conscious that we stand but at the beginning. There is much to be done - much that we must do.

The Jewish State must translate Jewish precept into action. It must above all honor the equality of all men before the state and before each other. The prophetic teachings must come alive in a progressive democracy whose example will shine throughout the world.

The people that has been a minority everywhere in the world for twenty centuries, that has suffered the disabilities of minority status, now has an opportunity to demonstrate that discrimination is a scourge that must and can be stamped out. The Arab minority in the Jewish State must be granted complete equality of opportunity.

It was in ancient Israel that the prophets preached the Golden Rule. The Jewish State must practice it. It will be a good neighbor. It will work with the surrounding Arab States to advance the interests of them all. Granted peace, it will strive earnestly to secure it.

The people that has been homeless for fifty generations will build a state that is a haven for the homeless. In an age which has ceased to understand that people are the world's most valued resource and have a right to live in it, the Jewish State will throw open its doors to those who seek entry. It will preach to the world that doors are meant to be opened, that peoples must once again be free to enter where they will.

The people that has reclaimed a barren land and has made the desert bloom like a rose will build a state which will seek abundance for all its people. It will not create a fictitious and monopolistic wealth by artificial restrictions on capacity and productivity. It will raise the standards of all its people.

The people that has been the victim of every aggression and the target of every tyrant will make itself secure. It will need weapons to defend itself. But its strongest weapon will be that which achieved its triumph in the hours of its creation, the love of its land and the will to die, if needs be, in its own defense.



The people of the Book restored ~~it~~ to its native land, will build a state that will be the instrument of its cultural renaissance. On its own soil once again, Jewish culture will rise anew. Here, as in ancient days, the Jewish people will be free to nurture its music, its art and its music, its art and its letters, and to make its fullest contribution to civilization.

Emerging into statehood as a consequence of enlightened action by the world community, the Jewish people will seek to strengthen that community. In its relations with other states, the Jewish State will be guided always by the interests of the United Nations. It will seek admission to that body and in its deliberations it will record its judgment as a free and independent state, orientated always to the United Nations and to the United Nations alone.

With fidelity to the Charter of the United Nations, the Jewish State will record its vote for world peace and cooperation.



# Proclamation of the New Jewish State

**TEL AVIV, Palestine, May 14 (AP)**—Following is the text of the Declaration of Independence of the Jewish state:

The land of Israel was the birthplace of the Jewish People.

Here their spiritual, religious and national identity was formed. Here they achieved independence and created a culture of national and universal significance. Here they wrote and gave the Bible to the world.

Exiled from Palestine, the Jewish people remained faithful to it in all the countries of their dispersion, never ceasing to pray and hope for their return and restoration of their national freedom.

Impelled by this historic association, Jews strove throughout the centuries to go back to the land of their fathers and regain statehood. In recent decades they returned in their masses. They reclaimed a wilderness, revived their language, built cities and villages and established a vigorous and ever growing community, with its own economic and cultural life. They sought peace, yet were ever prepared to defend themselves. They brought blessings of progress to all inhabitants of the country.

In the year 1897 the First Zionist Congress, inspired by Theodor Herzl's vision of a Jewish state, proclaimed the right of the Jewish people to a national revival in their own country.

## Balfour Declaration Cited

This right was acknowledged by the Balfour Declaration of Nov. 2, 1917, and reaffirmed by the Mandate of the League of Nations, which gave explicit international recognition to the historic connection of the Jewish people with Palestine and their right to reconstitute their national home.

The Nazi holocaust which engulfed millions of Jews in Europe proved anew the urgency of the re-establishment of the Jewish state, which would solve the problem of Jewish homelessness by opening the gates to all Jews and lifting the Jewish people to

equality in the family of nations.

Survivors of the European catastrophe, as well as Jews from other lands, claiming their right to a life of dignity, freedom and labor, and undeterred by hazards, hardships and obstacles, have tried unceasingly to enter Palestine.

In the second World War, the Jewish people in Palestine made a full contribution in the struggle of freedom-loving nations against the Nazi evil. The sacrifices of their soldiers and efforts of their workers gained them title to rank with the people who founded the United Nations. On Nov. 29, 1947, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a resolution for re-establishment of an independent Jewish state in Palestine and called upon inhabitants of the country to take such steps as may be necessary on their part to put the plan into effect.

This recognition by the United Nations of the right of the Jewish people to establish their independent state may not be revoked. It is, moreover, the self-evident right of the Jewish people to be a nation, as all other nations, in its own sovereign state.

Accordingly we, the members of the National Council, representing the Jewish people in Palestine and the Zionist movement of the world, met together in solemn assembly by virtue of the natural and historic right of Jewish people and of resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations, hereby proclaim the establishment of the Jewish state in Palestine, to be called Israel.

We hereby declare that as from the termination of the mandate at midnight this night of the 14th to 15th of May, 1948, and until the setting up of duly elected bodies of the state in accordance with a Constitution to be drawn up by a Constituent Assembly not later than the first day of October, 1948, the present National Council shall act as the Provisional State Council and its ex-

ecutive organ, the National Administration, shall constitute the Provisional Government of the State of Israel.

## Equality to All Promised

The State of Israel will promote the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; will be based on precepts of liberty, justice and peace taught by the Hebrew prophets; will uphold the full social and political equality of all its citizens without distinction of race, creed or sex; will guarantee full freedom of conscience, worship, education and culture; will safeguard the sanctity and inviolability of shrines and holy places of all religions; and will dedicate itself to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

The State of Israel will be ready to cooperate with the organs and representatives of the United Nations in the implementations of the resolution of Nov. 29, 1947, and will take steps to bring about an economic union over the whole of Palestine.

We appeal to the United Nations to assist the Jewish people in the building of its state and to admit Israel into the family of nations.

In the midst of wanton aggression we call upon the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to return to the ways of peace and play their part in the development of the state, with full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its bodies and institutions, provisional or permanent.

We offer peace and amity to all neighboring states and their peoples, and invite them to cooperate with the independent Jewish nation for the common good of all. The State of Israel is ready to contribute its full share to the peaceful progress and reconstitution of the Middle East.

Our call goes out to the Jewish people all over the world to rally to our side in the task of immigration and development and to stand by us in the great struggle for the fulfilment of the dream of generations—the redemption of Israel.



AHS

60 East 66th Street  
New York 21, N.Y.

May 19, 1948

FOR RELEASE: 2:00 P.M., Wednesday, May 19

Establishment of special mail service to the State of Israel via chartered plane was announced today by Gottlieb Hammer on behalf of Palestine Emergency Deliveries, Inc., 60 East 66 Street.

Until normal mail delivery to Israel gets under way, the newly-formed corporation will provide mail service to the new state at the sender's risk. Arrangements have been made with the Postmaster General of the State of Israel, who will accept this mail for delivery.

To be acceptable for delivery by PEDI, mail must be prepared as follows:

1. Sealed letters addressed to individuals residing in the State of Israel should bear and have affixed the requisite United States postage (twenty-five cents per half ounce or fraction thereof).

2. An additional service charge of twenty-five cents per half ounce or fraction thereof to cover the cost of handling must be paid in coin or postal money order.

3. The sealed letters and the service charge must be enclosed in another envelope and addressed to Palestine Emergency Deliveries, Inc., 60 East 66 Street, New York 21, N.Y.

Cancellation of the mail will be made in the PEDI offices and the letters will be sent to the central Israeli post office in Tel Aviv by chartered plane. Mail addressed to areas outside of Israel and parcels will not be accepted. Only air mail will be handled.

The corporation was set up as a result of the need for mail service. Air mail service to Palestine was interrupted on May 1 a few weeks after other mail services were discontinued.

Established under the auspices of a number of Zionist organizations, the corporation is headed by Abraham Dickstein, secretary of the American Palestine Trading Corporation, who is president; Dr. Sidney Marks, of the Zionist Organization of America, vice president; Miss Sarah Behrman, secretary of the Palestine Foundation Fund, secretary; and Gottlieb Hammer, comptroller of the New York office of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, treasurer.



21st May 1948

AHS  
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It is exactly one week since the British troops withdrew from Jerusalem. The situation in the city since that time has been adequately described in a "Report on Jerusalem" written by Walter Eytan. The purpose of this document is to place on record for reference all attempts which were made with a view to a cease fire or truce in the city of Jerusalem, or any part of it, and the reasons for the various failures.

On Friday morning, May 14th, the British left Jerusalem. Simultaneously Jews began to take over all Jewish-owned property in the so-called security zones. These were principally the Generali building, the Anglo-Palestine Bank building, the Post Office, etc., in what is known as "Bevingrad", and Jewish property in Zone B, right down to David Building which formerly housed the Public Information Office.

With the withdrawal of the British, heavy firing broke out all over the city, when the Arabs attempted to resist or interfere with Jews taking over their property. It should be noted that in many cases, i.e., in the case of "Bevingrad" local private arrangements were made with British commanders in order to take over the property intact before the Arabs had a chance of destroying them. At the same time our forces entered Sheikh Jarrah. By agreement reached at a meeting attended by General McMillan, GOC Troops in Palestine, and Col. C.R.W. Norman on the one hand, and Mr. E. Kaplan and Major V.C. Herzog on the other, the Jews were to receive prior warning of the time of the British withdrawal from that district, so that they could re-take the buildings from which they had been driven earlier in the week by the British, and thus ensure the safety of the road leading to Mt. Scopus. However, in spite of last minute reminders, the British did not keep their word and our troops were obliged to enter Sheikh Jarrah by force.

On the morning of Friday, the 14th, Walter Eytan and Haim Berman visited the French Consulate to discuss with the Consular Truce Commission a cease-fire with a view to an ultimate truce. It was decided that both sides should accredit a liaison officer to the Truce Commission to negotiate on whatever terms would be proposed. I was instructed to proceed forthwith to the French Consulate and to remain there until further notice. At the same time a letter was addressed to the Chairman of the Truce Commission agreeing to a cease-fire for Jerusalem so as to give that Commission an opportunity to pursue their negotiations, and declaring that armed Jewish forces had been ordered not to attack, or move into any areas in Jerusalem inhabited by Arabs as long as we were not subjected to attack from such areas. A copy of this letter is attached herewith (Appendix A).

By approval with the commander of the Haganah in Jerusalem, Walter Eytan and Haim Berman agreed to a cease-fire at mid-day on May 14th. This was observed by the Jewish forces but the Arabs did not observe it, claiming they could not get orders to their troops in time. The time for the cease-fire was then extended to 13.30 hours. Again the Jewish forces complied.

At 13.30 hours, in accordance with instructions I had received, I set out for the French Consulate. Going into Julian's Way from Wauchope Street, an American car preceded mine and we were both subjected to heavy fire from Arab positions. The American car was hit, crashing and a member of the Consular Staff was severely wounded. Our car managed to reach the Consulate. As we entered the French Consular compound we were again fired at and our driver was wounded in the head. It soon became obvious that the Arabs had once again not sent out instructions for a cease-fire, or were unable to do so because of the loose chain of command that existed within their ranks.

The Consul General received me coldly and I was informed that our representatives had deliberately deceived them because they now learnt that Jews were advancing into Zones B and C. I pointed out that our representatives had in the first place not discussed this matter with the Truce Commission at the previous meeting to which they referred, and that in any case there had been no intention of considering the taking over of Jewish property by Jews as a matter for



discussion. The houses into which the Jews were entering, including the central buildings in "Bevingrad" were Jewish property and this could not be called advancing in a military sense, as in each case the buildings had been handed back to their rightful owners by the military hirings authority. The French Consul was dissatisfied and kept on repeating that we had deceived him. He then ~~launched~~ launched into a tirade against the Jewish Agency and said that they considered it a direct insult to the Security Council by the Jewish Agency that none of the Jewish leaders, namely Mr. Ben Gurion, Mr. Shertok or Mrs. Myerson, had seen fit to come to Jerusalem to speak to them in the last decisive week before the termination of the Mandate. He there and then, in great fury, proceeded to draft a telegram to the Security Council in this sense and as he was about to hand it to the clerk for despatch, his Jewish radio operator was wounded in the arm, shot by Arabs from the Citadel. Since then the French Consulate's radio station has been out of action.

At this point a very heavy fusillade of shots hit the room in which we were sitting and the officer in charge of the French Guards announced that the shots had been directed at the Consulate by Arabs from the Old City. The result of this very heavy attack was to cause us to evacuate the Consul General's room for safer but less dignified quarters and to improve his temper towards me generally. It should be pointed out here that the one man who throughout backed me up and did his best to understand our case was Colonel Lund.

At 15.30 hours attempts were made to get in touch once again with the Arabs, both directly by phoning Dr. Izzat Tannous, and a Friar Emile in the Old City, the French Consul General's contact with the Arabs. Repeated requests were made for the Arabs to send a liaison officer immediately but they claimed they could not leave because of Jewish sniping. I phoned the Haganah who agreed once again to a cease fire for several hours beginning at 17.00 hours. This was transmitted to the Arabs who agreed to comply and to take advantage of the lull to send a liaison officer to the Consulate.

At 17.00 hours exactly the Jewish forces stopped firing throughout the city and maintained this cease-fire practically throughout the night. The Arabs were then asked to send their representative and maintained the whole time that they were being sniped at by Jews. At this point the French Friar rang up to say that a mortar shell fired by Jews had landed in his school near the New Gate. All over the city one could hear shells landing (despite the cease-fire) and the French Consul once again launched into a tirade against the Jews, became extremely excited and resigned from the Commission. I at once phoned up a number of places in the city and obtained a list of the points where such shells had fallen. I took out a map and marked the shell hits on it and by simple military calculation proved to the Commission that the shells, including the one which had hit the Friar's school, must have been fired by the Arabs from Deir Abu Tor. Col. Lund confirmed that my calculations were correct and took this to the French Consul General, who then returned to the meeting and became extremely eloquent and rude on the subject of the Arabs! There was evidence, however, from all the numerous telephone conversations taking place that the Arabs seemed to be willing to talk peace, although our people had the impression the whole time that they were playing for time in order to bring up re-inforcements.

When the Arabs were asked why they did not cease firing at 17.00 hours, they replied that they had come to another arrangement with M. De Reynier of the Red Cross which was to commence at 18.00 hours. This upset the calculations of the Commission who by now were somewhat confused. The Commission then understood from the Arabs that they preferred the Red Cross cease-fire to that of the Consular Truce Commission because the terms of the former seemed to be more favorable to the Arabs. A great deal of confusion arose out of this and for the first time during the day Mr. Ascarate took part in the discussion to protest at the fact that the Red Cross were carrying on independent negotiations. It appears that the Jewish authorities, too, were somewhat guilty of taking part in dual negotiations without proper coordination. Thus, when I rang up to check the story that the Arabs had passed to the Commission that Jews were treating with the Red Cross, the Haganah Commander informed me that his instructions were not to treat with the Red Cross but only with the Truce Commission. This information ~~was~~ satisfied the Commission, but I was placed in an extremely awkward situation when half an hour later other Jewish repre-



representatives phoned the Belgian Consul General, Chairman of the Commission, and indicated they were negotiating independently with the Red Cross as well.

As the night wore on and as the shooting continued and the number of wounded in the Consulate grew, it became evident that no useful purpose could be served in staying on as the Arabs were not prepared to send their liaison officer. Col. Lund and I decided to "make a break for it" and we were joined by the Belgian Consul General, two Jews who had been wounded, the U.N. Staff consisting of Mr. Azcarate and Mr. McCabe and a number of others. After a rather exciting trip we managed ultimately to reach safety. I took the Belgian Consul General back to his Consulate in Talbieh. On the way we were stopped by a platoon of Jewish troops moving up into positions. When they heard the Belgian Consul was Chairman of the Truce Commission, the Platoon Commander was extremely indignant about the cease-fire which they had strictly observed under Arab fire, and as a result had lost a number of men. The boy's obvious sincere indignation and undiplomatic approach greatly impressed the Belgian. As I said good night to him he held me back and asked me why we were considering the Red Cross plan at all. He could tell me privately that both Azzam Pasha and Abdullah had agreed to the Consular Truce Commission's proposals. I expressed surprise that the Truce Commission had not seen fit to convey this to our representatives before now and I understand that next morning when the Belgian spoke to Berman about the same thing the latter also expressed surprise, especially in view of the fact that he has been in constant touch with the Belgian Consul, both before and during the present negotiations.

On Saturday, May 15th, Col. Lund met the Haganah Commander of Jerusalem and it was agreed that another attempt would be made to have a cease-fire beginning that evening at 19.00 hours, provided neither forces advanced after that time; that truce negotiations would be completed within 48 hours of the beginning of the cease-fire, and that at least two hours' notice would be given in advance of the commencement of the cease-fire. At the same time members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem met to discuss the question and they asked for an interview with representatives of the Truce Commission that afternoon. This was granted for 16.00 hours. The Executive, accompanied by Dr. Leo Kohn, met certain members of the Commission and discussed the whole problem with them for several hours. The result of their discussions was agreement on the text of a draft Truce Agreement, copy of which is attached (Appendix B). No reply was received from the Arabs by 19.00 hours about a cease-fire. Col. Lund was in constant touch with Fadel Bey, the Iraqi Commander in Jerusalem, who seemed to agree in principle to the cease-fire. He stated, however, that he had to refer the whole matter to Amman and that he expected a reply that night by 22.00 hours. At 22.00 hours Col. Lund was informed by Fadel Bey that King Abdullah and various Chiefs of Staff were still in conference on the subject and that therefore no reply would be forthcoming until the next day. At 10.00 hours the next day Col. Lund received no communication as promised, and did his best to contact Fadel Bey who, throughout the morning, was not available. Col. Lund interpreted this rightly as the Arab way of saying no to an offer ~~me~~ of cease-fire. In fact, from our own intelligence sources it was perfectly clear that the Arabs were not interested in a cease-fire agreement and that they regarded the Red Cross and the U.N. Commission as nuisances and instruments to be used only for their own purposes.

On Monday, the 17th May, Sheringham phoned from the British Consulate and asked whether we had any means of getting the members of the Truce Commission to Haifa by plane with a view to their ultimately going on to Amman. I promised a reply and sent a query to Tel Aviv, but meanwhile we learnt that arrangements had been made for a Red Cross car to take Azcarate and the Belgian Consul to Amman. Eytan and myself lunched with Col. Lund who was to have gone to Amman as well, but did not, and he expressed the opinion that McCabe, the Administrative Officer sent out to Palestine by the UN with Azcarate, was a British Agent who was causing us a lot of trouble.

That same afternoon Dr. L. Kohn who had been lunching with Marti, head of the Red Cross, attempted to point out how the Red Cross was not performing its proper functions and engaging in politics under De Reynier. He tried to bring Col. Lund and M. Marti together so that the Red Cross and the Truce Commission could cooperate. Both were extremely willing to carry this out but nothing ultimately developed from this.



In the meantime the Belgian Consul had telephoned to say that he understood that the Arabs had launched a heavy attack on the Jewish quarters in the Old City. He was very apprehensive of the results of such an attack and feared a wholesale massacre. He begged us to get in touch with him at the earliest possible opportunity if we thought there was such danger so that the Truce Commission could take what steps they might be able to avert a calamity.

✓ On Tuesday morning, the 18th May, the Arabs launched their long awaited attack in the Old City. Half way through the morning the Armenian Patriarch rang to say that the Arabs had blown open the doors of his Patriarchate and several scores of them were firing at the Jewish quarters from there. He sounded very agitated and implored us not to retaliate against his buildings as he was doing all that was humanly possible to get the Arabs to leave his place. In this connection he also phoned the Truce Commission and numerous other religious bodies within the Old City. We telephoned a formal protest to Mr. Azcarate against the breach of the agreement reached with the Trusteeship Council some weeks ago on the subject of a cease-fire for the Old City which had been meticulously observed by our people. Later Mr. Azcarate phoned to say that he had submitted this protest in the strongest possible language but the sound of the heavy firing and the increasing number of explosions testified to the ineffective result of his protest.

All day the news from the Old City was bad and there was constant danger of our garrison being overwhelmed by sheer superiority of numbers and fire-power. Unofficial and indirect approaches were made by private bodies in the city, especially by religious groups who were interested to know what the terms of surrender would be for the Jewish population in the Old City, their prime worry being to avert a massacre.

On Tuesday evening the Belgian Consul and Mr. Azcarate returned from Amman by way of Jericho and entered the Old City. They apparently spent the night at or near the Arab HQ as their telephonic conversations were extremely guarded. The Belgian Consul had however phoned through at 22.30 hours and conveyed the following terms of surrender for the Old City. The mediator had been the Father Custodian of the Holy Places (Custos Terrae Sanctae).

- (1) All men between the ages of 15 and 55, as well as the slightly wounded, were to be taken prisoners of war.
- (2) All women, boys under 15, men over 55 and the severely wounded, were to be evacuated from the Old City by the Red Cross.
- (3) All Arms to be handed over to the Arabs.
- (4) All sacred places to be put under the custody of the Latin Patriarchate or the Moslem Supreme Council, or both.
- (5) All persons who surrendered would be required, before leaving the Old City, to go into their houses to ensure they were not mined.
- (6) The Arabs required the signatures of the Jewish Agency, the Haganah, the IZL and the Stern Group to the surrender terms.
- (7) The persons to be removed from the Old City by the Red Cross would not be released to the Jews until Arab prisoners taken in Jerusalem had been released.

These terms were turned down and the Belgian Consul was informed there was no intention of surrendering in the Old City.



That night the Palmach Battalion "Haportzim" made their historic attack on Mt. Zion and drove into the Old City, effecting a conjunction with the beleaguered garrison inside the Jewish Quarter. (It will be to our everlasting discredit that this historic and gallant action was not properly reported to the world in time because of the inadequate arrangements which we had made to send stories of the battle out of Jerusalem, due primarily to lack of cooperation on the part of our security forces.) Meanwhile all night Jerusalem was being heavily shelled by Arab artillery from outside the city.

Next day the Commander of the Haganah consulted with members of the Political Department and said that in view of the fact that our situation was now improved, he thought it might be possible to renew negotiations for a cease-fire in the Old City, as he had no desire to continue the attack. We had also by now established contact with our forces there and could secure the Jewish quarter and therefore it might be propitious to discuss the matter. A letter was conveyed to the Truce Commission by Dr. L. Kohn, Walter Mytan and H. Berman. Copy of this letter is attached (Appendix C).

Meanwhile the Arab Legion had entered Jerusalem and the IZL garrison at Sheikh Jarrah and the Police School on Mt. Scopus had withdrawn, two columns of armour approaching from the north and from the east.

Later, the British Consul, in a conversation on the telephone, told us that Legion armour was parked near the Consulate at Damascus Gate and asked us to respect the immunity of his Consulate. The shelling during the night and day from Legion batteries intensified and direct hits were scored on numerous hospitals, consulates, public institutions, etc. During the day we learnt from the Truce Commission who had endeavoured to get in touch with the Legion via the British Consulate that there was no prospect of achieving a cease fire in the Old City and it was hinted very broadly that the British had a large part in this. That Consul had at all events not shown very much desire to do anything effective in this connection. That night the shelling was still more intense and the Hadassah Hospital was hit at point blank range by the Legion from Sheikh Jarrah. The operating theatre, the radium institute, the ex-ray department were blasted. As soon as this began we protested to the Red Cross who later phoned and suggested we hoist a white flag, that the garrison surrender, and then they would be prepared to take over the hospital as a Red Cross institution. This was flatly turned down without even referring it to our military people. We also communicated with the American Consul who was informed by the Arabs when he approached them that if the American flag was hoisted on the Hadassah the Legion would occupy and "protect it!" We also made a formal protest to the Truce Commission and asked that it be transmitted to Lake Success. In an effort to save the priceless property at the University and in Hadassah an unofficial approach was made to see if the UN would be willing to take these institutions under its flag, but the UN people intimated they did not think the Arabs would respect their flag and so there was little point in doing this.

We received a report on the conversation between King Abdullah on the one hand and Mr. Azcarate and the Belgian Consul in Amman on Tuesday. He received them in a very undignified manner, being attired in breeches and a lumber jacket. He was in a very bad mood and extremely nervous. He was bellicose in his references to the Jews, and when Mr. Azcarate in his capacity as temporary Municipal Commissioner for Jerusalem asked him about the water supply, Abdullah flared up and said he would let the Jews of Jerusalem die of thirst. He had never before appeared so obviously in the role of a puppet of the British. Glubb Pasha is directing the campaign and Abdullah's orders are thrown into the waste paper basket. They saw ample evidence of this during their journey and also noted the fact that the British Staff is active in this campaign. They met Kirkbride, the British Minister, whose sole constructive remark to them appears to have been that they had come to Abdullah on one of his off-days. Azcarate had taken with him an extremely strongly worded protest forwarded by the Security Council for transmission to Abdullah and this was received with scant contempt by the King who was obviously not willing to listen to reason.



On Thursday, May 20th, the front ~~stabilized~~ stabilized as a result of some six Legion armoured vehicles being knocked out at the approaches to the City.

Eytan and myself had a conversation with Lund in the afternoon in which we tried to explore possibilities still left to the Truce Commission. Lund stated that as the Commission saw it there were three possibilities: either the Jews win, or the Arabs win, or there is a stalemate. In the latter event there was still some useful purpose in their existence.

An attempt was made to find out from Lund whether it would not be possible for Azcarate to assert himself more, both in the eyes of the people of Jerusalem and in the eyes of the world, as the UN Commissioner for Jerusalem. Up to now he had behaved in an apathetic and lethargic manner, not even informing the citizens of Jerusalem that he was the UN Municipal Commissioner. In fact the ordinary man in the street was not aware that such a UN Commissioner existed for Jerusalem. Lund said that Azcarate was afraid of releasing this information only to one side, but we pointed out that there were numerous possibilities of making this known to the Arab world and the Arab civilian population of Jerusalem and once he began to assert himself power would gradually accrue to him. We left Lund with this thought in mind and he promised to see what could be done to impress Azcarate with the importance of this. At the same time he pointed out that McCabe was not playing a clean game and was gradually influencing Azcarate.

The above is a very inadequate attempt to place on record a few of the salient events in the political life of Jerusalem during the first week of the State of Israel. To understand the whole background against which this political game is being played the reader is advised to see Eytan's graphic account of conditions in the city during the first week. The city is suffering from a shortage of food and of water, and there is no electricity with the result that no news is heard on the radio. For the past four days we have been subjected to almost continuous shelling at point blank range. The physical background of the Truce Commission has been equally difficult, although this is in the main due to the obstinate insistence on meetings being held at the French Consulate which is probably one of the most exposed buildings in the entire city and where already six people have been wounded. For the past three days the Consulate has been without a telephone which makes the Commission's work even more difficult.

The Red Cross have shown themselves to be virtually ineffective due to a complete lack of cooperation on the part of the Arabs and also partly to the fact that its director in Palestine, M. De Reynier, has been playing what might be termed as a sinister game of politics. He is certainly no friend of the Jews and in the last few days has been taking an active part in the war of nerves against us. His HQ in the YMCA is entirely staffed by young Arabs of military age and since the UN Secretariat have also moved there, communication with them is also difficult and most unreliable.

Other points which stand out are Col. Lund's sincere honesty and straightforwardness and Mr. Azcarate's ineffectual inactivity. The Truce Commission has succeeded nowhere and is unlikely to succeed until the Arabs have received a number of resounding ~~knocks~~ knocks.

The end of the first week in Jerusalem, after the establishment of the State of Israel, finds the city under heavy gun fire, the Hadassah hospital being blasted at point blank range, and the Truce Commission busy with meetings.

Vivian Herzog

Note: As the Appendices to this document are still in Jerusalem, it is impossible to obtain them in time for despatch. They will be forwarded later to addressees.

Copies to: Mr. D. Ben Gurion, Mr. E. Kaplan, Mr. M. Shertok,  
Jerusalem Office; Mr. E. Epstein, Washington;  
Mr. A. Eban, New York; London Office



הסוכנות היהודית לארץ ישראל

## The Jewish Agency for Palestine

### MEMORANDUM

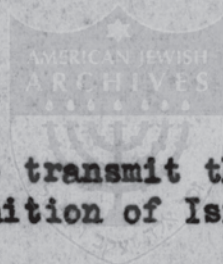
June 17, 1948

To: Members of the American Section  
of the Executive

FROM: Nina Franklin

Mr. Comay has asked me to transmit the attached memorandum dealing with the recognition of Israel, which he has prepared.

encl.





## RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL

The State of Israel seeks recognition on the following grounds:

1. The General Assembly Resolution of November 29, 1947.

The November Resolution, which was adopted by 33 votes to 13, is the legal basis for Israeli statehood. This legal contention has been questioned in certain quarters on two grounds:

(a) It has been suggested that the UNSCOP Plan of "partition with Economic Union" was conceived as an "integral whole" consisting of four main elements -- a Jewish State, an Arab State, Economic Union and the Special Regime for Jerusalem -- and that it could not be fulfilled in part only. This suggestion is the exact converse of the real position. Faced with the Arab rejection of the scheme, the General Assembly set about revising it in such a way as to make the establishment of the Jewish State completely independent of Arab cooperation.

As regards the two states, the revised scheme provided that if the United Nations Commission found itself unable to set up or operate a Provisional Council of Government for one state, it should report that fact to the Security Council, which could then take any other action it deemed fit with respect to that state. (Part I, B, Para. 4) The establishment of the other state could then proceed, without being blocked by the refusal of one state to take the initial steps with regard to itself.

As regards the Economic Union, the original UNSCOP draft provided for a treaty to be signed by the two states; in the light of the Arab attitude, this was altered by the General Assembly, so that all that was required from any one state, in order to attain its independence and be admitted to the United Nations, was a unilateral declaration of willingness to enter into an Economic Union. (Part I, D, Para. 1; Part I, F)

As regards Jerusalem, it was made a "corpus separatum" under direct United Nations administration, and the establishment of the Jewish State was in no way made dependent upon the Special Regime for Jerusalem.

It is clear therefore, that the General Assembly went out of its way to make the different parts of the Plan independent of each other, and to avoid making the Jewish State subject to an Arab veto. Unless the original scheme had been modified along these lines there would have been no alternative but to abandon it altogether.



(b) It has also been suggested that there has been insufficient compliance with the procedure laid down in the Resolution. Even if this were correct, a distinction must be drawn between ends and means, between matters of substance and matters of procedure. The matter of substance here is the Jewish State which was approved by the United Nations and has since been established. This result is not invalidated by any modifications which became necessary in the procedure.

In any case, such modification as there has been was brought about by the United Nations itself, and not by the State of Israel, which has made and is still making the fullest possible compliance with the Resolution.

The Palestine Commission was an ad hoc United Nations organ set up to assist the nascent states to establish themselves. The Commission was to have set up a Provisional Council of Government, and after the end of the Mandate, to transfer full responsibility "progressively" to the Provisional Council of Government. Owing to the convening of another Special Session of the General Assembly, the Commission deferred formal approval of the Provisional Council of Government which had been formed. On May 14 the Commission was suspended by the General Assembly. On May 15, when the Mandate terminated, the Provisional Council of Government assumed full responsibility right away, and declared the State in existence. This was necessarily implied in the suspension of the Commission, and was moreover in full accordance with the language of the November 29 Resolution itself, which "calls upon the inhabitants of Palestine to take such steps as may be necessary on their part to put this Plan into effect."

In its proclamation the Provisional Council of Government furthermore reaffirmed its intention of carrying out all its obligations and international commitments under the United Nations Plan; this reaffirmation was officially communicated to the Secretary General of the United Nations on May 15.

In other words, through the actions of the United Nations organs concerned, the State of Israel was called upon to fill the vacuum in authority at the end of the Mandate, and assume the burden of full responsibility, sooner than had been originally contemplated, and with less international guidance and assistance than had been originally promised. This circumstance would be a curious ground for withholding recognition from Israel.

The legal basis of the November Resolution therefore remains intact as far as recognition of the State of Israel is concerned.



2. The Moral Obligation.

The 33 member-states that voted for the November Resolution assumed a moral, as well as a legal, commitment to recognize the Jewish State once it came into existence. This was a moral obligation not only to Israel, but to the United Nations itself. The obligation is even stronger in the case of those governments whose representatives played an active role in shaping the final solution and securing its endorsement by the General Assembly.

3. The Need for Stabilization.

It may be felt that countries which withhold recognition at this stage are promoting the prospects of a final settlement through the good offices of the United Nations Mediator.

In fact, the converse is the case. Once Israel has been established as a sovereign state, has successfully repelled aggression by Arab armies, and has gained recognition from a dozen different countries (including the two greatest world powers), its independence is no longer open to discussion. There is, however, a wide range of political and economic problems which require to be settled in order to ensure peaceful relations between Israel and its Arab neighbors. No fruitful discussion of these problems becomes possible until the Arab states acquiesce in the fact of Jewish statehood, and become willing to enter into permanent relations with Israel on equal terms. This situation can only be created by conclusively confirming the status of Israel through its general recognition and its early admission to the United Nations. Governments which voted for the establishment of a Jewish State on November 29, but now withhold recognition from it, are unwittingly encouraging the Arabs to believe that this is still an open question against which they should continue to fight. While such a frame of mind persists, there is little prospect of any rapprochement. Recognition of Israel is now the key to final stabilization.

June 17, 1948



C O P Y

[1948]

AHS  
EN

Brief Summary of Talks with Count Bernadotte - June 17 & 18

Count Bernadotte, accompanied by Dr. Bunche, Dr. Mohn and Mr. Reedman, came to the Foreign Office at 3 p.m. on Thursday, June 17, and remained for four hours.

Count Bernadotte started by reporting briefly on his meetings with the Arabs. On June 15 he had had a short formal meeting with the Political Committee of the Arab League, at which he was informed that they had authorized a sub-committee to conduct their dealings with him, and asked him to meet this sub-committee, which consisted of the Prime Ministers of Egypt, Lebanon and Trans-Jordan and Aszan Pasha, the secretary general of the Arab League. He had met this sub-committee at two meetings on the following day. The only decision had been that four Arab representatives would proceed to Rhodes on Monday, June 21, as consultants. It was made clear that these representatives should have no authority to decide anything, but should merely be at the Mediator's disposal for information and advice when called upon. Count Bernadotte told us nothing whatever about the substance of his talks with the sub-committee, but indicated that these talks had been of an exploratory nature and that they had gone fully into the Arab attitude to the question of Palestine.

Count Bernadotte now made of us the same request that he had made of the Arabs - namely, to send representatives on the consultant level to Rhodes. He made it clear that this would not be a round table conference, but that our representatives, like those of the Arabs, would be called in for advice as and when necessary. They would also act as liaison officers with the Israeli Government on questions which required to be referred back here. Mr. Shertok promised that he would let Count Bernadotte have an answer the next morning on whether the Israeli Government was willing to delegate such consultants to Rhodes.

Dr. Bunche at this point interposed to explain more fully the purpose for which the consultants were required. He said that the Mediator and his staff would be sitting down at Rhodes for about five days to get their lines clear on the "basic issues" and to "work out formulations". For this purpose they needed to have experts at hand from both sides to help the Mediator.



Count Bernadotte at this stage invited Mr. Shertok to give him the Jewish Government's views on the main problems at issue.

Mr. Shertok began by saying that Israel was certainly willing to negotiate on the question of peace, but not for a political settlement, because such a settlement had already been effected by the United Nations decision of November 29, 1947, as well as by the facts created by the proclamation of the Jewish State. The facts created by the war had also to be taken into account, as they contributed to the broad outline of a political settlement as it existed. The Provisional Government, Mr. Shertok went on to say, derives its position and authority from the will of the Jewish people. The Government was in effective control of the country and was being consolidated daily. If the truce negotiations were to be regarded as a preliminary to peace, the Government would be very happy to cooperate. If, however, this were not to be the case, the Government and the people would continue the fight. There could be no going back upon what had been achieved.

Mr. Shertok admitted that this position naturally left a number of questions unanswered. The settlement of November 29 was a composite settlement which provided for the establishment of a Jewish State, a Palestinian Arab State, the internationalization of Jerusalem and an economic union. We had accepted this settlement on the understanding that it would be implemented as a whole, and by this acceptance we still stood. If, however, this settlement were to be set aside, and if there were to be any fundamental change, we should naturally have plenty to say on the subject. For example, experience had shown us that we could not rely on the help of the international world to guarantee the safety of Jewish Jerusalem. The Christian world had not fought even for its own interests in Jerusalem, and it was only Jewish forces that had stood between Jerusalem and its enslavement by a Moslem ruler. If there were to be no internationalization of Jerusalem it was only territorial contiguity with the State of Israel that could guarantee the security of Jewish Jerusalem, and such contiguity in fact now existed. For the future, this could be either fought for or negotiated; we, naturally, would prefer the latter, but were quite prepared for the former if the need should arise. Mr. Shertok concluded by stressing that the continued existence of the State of Israel within the boundaries fixed on November 29 was not a matter open to negotiation.



Count Bernadotte said that he wanted to mention an example of the sort of thing that might possibly form a subject for negotiation. He said we would agree that the boundaries of Israel were militarily difficult to defend and possibly other boundaries might prove preferable from the Jewish point of view. He said he had understood from Dr. Goldman, in a conversation he had had with him in Paris, that we would perhaps be prepared to discuss frontier modifications.

Mr. Shertok replied that we wanted to keep Western Galilee. The experience of the war had shown us that we required this for the defense of Haifa. He said that he did not exclude entirely the possibility of slight frontier adjustments, but the Government was not prepared to agree to any far-reaching territorial changes. He pointed out that the Arabs had rejected the settlement of November 29 not on account of the boundaries it laid down, but because of the principle of the thing. As long as the Arabs persisted in this attitude, any discussion of any boundary modification must be meaningless. Mr. Shertok then went on to explain the close link that existed between the boundaries that had been fixed and the plan for an economic union. The plan for an economic union was based on the assumption that the three parts into which Arab Palestine ~~was~~ ~~was~~ divided were to form a single Palestinian Arab State. If such a State were not formed, there would probably be no sense in attempting to implement an economic union.

At this point Dr. Bunche pointed out the importance of friendly relations with the Arab States in the years to come. He asked what path we intended to follow in this regard on the assumption that we ~~had~~ fought the war to a victorious conclusion. Even after we had won the war, the problem of our relations with the neighbouring Arab States still remained.

Mr. Shertok said in reply that the continued existence of the State of Israel was for us a matter that was irreducible. Peace was conceivable only in terms of the Jewish State as a neighbour of the Arab States, and not in terms of a Jewish community endowed with some form of "autonomy" and existing as a tolerated minority within an Arab State. The first step toward peace was the State of Israel itself. Mr. Shertok cited as an example the case of Greece and Turkey which, after centuries of war and accumulated hatred, had entered upon a period of solid good relations once a clearcut decision of the matters at issue between them had been achieved.



In reply to a question by Count Bernadotte as to whether everything had gone in accordance with the Resolution of November 29 more or less as we had expected, Mr. Shertok said that basically this was the case. Three things, however, had come as a surprise. Firstly, there was the fact that 300,000 Arabs had left the Jewish areas of Palestine of their own accord, which he thought was a more spectacular event than the establishment of the State of Israel itself. Secondly, we had been surprised by the extent of British help to the Arabs. Thirdly, we had been disappointed at the absence of any effective international action to help implement the United Nations decision.

Dr. Bunche asked how we explained the violence of the Arabs' reaction to the establishment of the State of Israel. He had gathered that it was due mainly to the Arabs' fear that as the result of the establishment of the State there would be an intensification of international intervention in Middle Eastern affairs.

Mr. Shertok replied that he thought there were three main causes for the violence of Arab reaction. Firstly, and perhaps understandably, there was objection to the introduction of what was felt to be a foreign body into an otherwise unified Middle East. Secondly, power throughout the Middle East was held by a certain group of Arabs, who might be described as the Sunniite ruling class, and the establishment of Jewish independence in this region might lead to a weakening of this class through the encouragement it gave to the Kurds, the Shiites and other racial or religious minorities to assert their own independence. Thirdly, there was fear of the social changes which a modern and progressive State might, by its very existence, bring about in the neighbouring countries.

Mr. Shertok stated further that the Israeli Government could not accept as part of the final settlement any restriction whatsoever of Jewish immigration, whether in respect of its volume or of its source.

Dr. Bunche at this point developed a theory of population pressures, and asked whether population pressure produced by large scale Jewish immigration might not create an internationally dangerous situation in the Middle East. There was a good deal of discussion on this point, in the course of which Mr. Shertok pointed out that if there was to be talk of population pressure at all, it was pressure of the Arab population on us rather than the other way round. It was pointed out further that by accepting the existence of boundaries of the State of <sup>and</sup>



Israel, the Arabs would in fact be setting a limit upon the area into which Jewish immigration was allowed. Up to now Jewish immigrants had been at liberty to settle anywhere within the boundaries of the mandated territories of Palestine; in future, they would be restricted to the much smaller area of the Israeli State.

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Count Bernadotte and his party came to the Foreign Office again for a much shorter visit on the morning of Friday, June 18, at which only three points were dealt with. Firstly, Mr. Shertok informed the Mediator that the Government had agreed to delegate consultants to proceed to Rhodes, as requested on the previous evening. Various details of the journey to Rhodes were fixed and an assurance was given by Count Bernadotte that the Jewish representatives would enter Rhodes with exactly the same status and rights as he himself and the members of his staff enjoyed.

In the second place, Count Bernadotte asked what would be the policy of the Israeli Government with regard to the 300,000 Arabs who had left the Jewish areas; would they be allowed to return after the war and would their proprietary rights be respected?

Mr. Shertok replied that the question could not be discussed while the war was on, and the Government had not yet fixed its policy about the ultimate settlement of this matter. Proprietary rights would certainly be respected, but he could give no undertaking at this stage about whether the Arabs who had fled would be allowed to return.

Finally, Count Bernadotte and Mr. Shertok signed copies of the agreement which had been reached on the subject of the camps at Haifa which were being evacuated by the British.

W.H.



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

HaKiryat, 21 June, 1948

AHS  
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This is the first of a series of reports on the establishment of the machinery of Government of the State of Israel. Each report will deal with a separate Ministry:-

if and how any existing governmental organisation was taken over (before the termination of the Mandate the Jewish national organisations undertook to employ all former Palestine Government officials who offered to serve and whose record gave no ground for refusing that offer);

progress to date in organisation and action;

present problems and plans for the future.

These reports have been prepared in the absence of normal press and other communications to serve as concrete evidence of the de facto functioning of the new State. The information contained in them is in our opinion deserving of wide publicity.

Moshe Shertok

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Copies: Messrs. Eban, Lurie - New York  
Mr. E. Epstein - Washington  
Mr. P. Ginsburg - Geneva  
Mr. I. Linton - London  
Mr. H. Mentor - New York  
Mrs. G. Myerson - New York  
Mr. Sterch - Stockholm  
Mr. E. Najjar - Paris  
Mr. E. Ueberall - Prague



MINISTRY OF FINANCEMinister: Mr. Eliezer Kaplan.

On the 15th May, 1948, the Ministry took over all the financial functions of the Palestine Government without any gap in time or hitch in action, an achievement of pure organisation that would have been astonishing even had there been sympathetic cooperation from the outgoing authority. This change-over was effected by a skeleton staff, since the greater number of Palestine Government First Division Civil Servants, a high proportion of whom were Treasury officials, were cut off in Jerusalem. Moreover, even in the first crowded days, the Ministry initiated action in fields where the Mandatory Government had been in default. Now that the road to Jerusalem is partly open, valuable workers from the former government and elsewhere are being taken over immediately, and the burden of administration is being eased.

Revenue.

As a result of careful preparation beforehand, income tax, customs and excise duties were collected without interruption, and the money flowed through the local sub-accountancies throughout the country to figure on the books of the Accountant General at the seat of Government. The main head of revenue in Palestine has always been and remains customs and excise. Income tax, customs and excise, land dues, postal revenue - all the major and minor sources of the State's revenue - produced £300,000 in the first two weeks after the 15th May and have now passed the £900,000 mark. As Palestine Government revenue, including all moneys from Arab sources, was in the neighbourhood of £2 million monthly, the Treasury professes itself satisfied with the state of revenue and its collection.

Organisation of the Ministry.

The Ministry comprises the following main Departments, all of which are already functioning: 1) Accountant General's Department; 2) Budget; 3) Customs and Excise; 4) Internal Revenue; 5) Department of Economic Planning.

The Budget: At a cabinet meeting on the 19th May, the Provisional Government decided that the Finance Minister should arrange provisional budgets for each of the other Ministries in consultation with the Minister concerned. This stop-gap arrangement, which is in force until the 1st July, meant that



Government services could be got going, salaries be paid, immediate commitments be met. All future budgets will naturally be submitted to the Government Council for its vote.

On 1st July, a provisional Budget will be submitted for the subsequent three months. This period has been decided on because it is at present impossible to foresee the form that the needs of the State will take thereafter. The three months' Budget now being prepared includes the security budget. It is of course intended to present budgets annually in due course.

Part of the financial means for the security budget mobilised by the Treasury or under its direction does not come directly out of normal State revenue. One way of raising these security funds ~~is~~ is the National Loan that was launched immediately after the declaration of the State. £3.5 million of the £5 million has already been subscribed and it is confidently expected that the rest of the loan will be covered soon.

The Department of Economic Planning prepares and executes what may be called the economic budget as distinct from the financial budget. Its action includes: the control of foreign exchange, import and export policy; banking, insurance and investments; national income; manpower.

Foreign exchange control - a primary necessity if the foreign currency at the disposal of the State is to be used to good purpose - is in full action, and funds have been earmarked for vital supplies such as food and fuel. At a stroke, this control removes one of the main stumbling-blocks that the Mandatory Government placed in the way of the rational development of the country's economy - the squandering of assets on non-essential imports. The same department deals, in cooperation with the Ministry of Commerce, with import and export policy and watches over the balance of payments. It thus has the congenial task of reversing the policy of its predecessors, which was to prevent or hamper the import of raw materials and encourage that of finished products, to impose heavy customs duties on essential commodities and squander the country's currency assets.

New financial and ~~new~~ economic policy, ordinary and extraordinary budgeting, are all hampered by the blockade of Palestine's ~~existing~~ sterling balances. A complete "freeze" without any conditions stated or any negotia-



tions in sight is unprecedented in the history of British financial dealings and constitutes a simple and shameless default. Policy and progress are hampered but not hamstrung, thanks to Israel's dollar earnings, past and present, and the continued functioning of the country's economic life in spite of destruction, blockade and war.





C O P Y

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EN

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

224/

21st June, 1948

Colonel T. Bonde,  
Chief of Staff of the  
United Nations Observers  
for the United Nations Mediator

Sir,

With reference to our conversation this morning, I have to inform you of the following conclusions reached by the Provisional Government of Israel on the two points under discussion.

1) We agree to evacuate our fifteen wounded from Kfar Darom with a view to their being transferred first to a hospital in Tel Aviv and then after their recovery to some other suitable place under the surveillance of the United Nations observers. We also propose to take our unit of forty-odd men out of Kfar Darom and post it elsewhere in that area.

Our acceptance of the conditions set by you for the evacuation of the wounded is due solely to humanitarian reasons. On the merits of the case and from a purely military point of view we cannot agree that the conditions are warranted. We deny that Kfar Darom is completely encircled and besieged and we do not accept the position that the treatment of those who were wounded in its defence can properly be assimilated to that of prisoners of war.

Consequent on the removal of our unit which entered Kfar Darom after the truce, we believe that there will be no justification for the invading Egyptian forces remaining in the position which they occupied to the east of Kfar Darom by way of reaction to the entry of that unit. We should therefore, be grateful if you would take steps to prevail upon the Egyptian forces to withdraw from that position.

2) With regard to the supply and replacement convoys to our settlements and defence posts in the Negev area, south of the point of intersection of the roads Majdal-Falluja and Julis-Bureir, we note that you agree that it is perfectly legitimate for us, within the terms of the truce, to arrange for the above convoys to travel south and return north through that point of intersection and that an attempt of the Egyptian unit now in occupation of that point to interfere with the normal movement of our convoys would be tantamount to a breach of the truce. I was gratified to hear that on this vital point you had made your attitude clear to the Egyptian authorities concerned. Given the clear circumstances in this instance, the fact that the Egyptian reply has not yet been received is no reason why we should defer action indefinitely.



It is eleven days since the truce has been in operation and no convoys have passed. The provisioning of the Israeli Negev, including the Israeli forces stationed there, cannot be left at the mercy of the unilateral interpretation of the truce terms by the invading army.

I therefore beg to inform you that we propose, at a time which would appear to us appropriate, to take a convoy of supplies and replacements across that point of intersection even if no satisfactory reply has by then been received from the Egyptian side. We are extremely anxious to avoid any clash with the Egyptian or any other forces during the truce period, but we must make it clear that if our convoy finds itself attacked, its guards will return the fire and we shall then accuse the enemy of having broken the truce. Moreover, we shall consider ourselves free to retaliate against an Egyptian ~~attack~~ attack on our convoy by taking similar action against any Egyptian convoy which might pass along any route where our forces hold a commanding position such as is held by the above Egyptian unit on the roads in question.

I repeat that we are most anxious to see this conflict in the Negev peacefully resolved and would therefore urge you to make a further effort to prevail upon the Egyptian authorities not to oppose a procedure which you have agreed is right and proper.

I have the honour to be,  
Sir,  
Your obedient servant,

M. Shertok  
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS



C O P Y

C O N F I D E N T I A L

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

AHS  
EN

223/

21st June, 1948

Colonel T. Bonde,  
Chief of Staff of the  
United Nations Observers  
for the United Nations Mediator.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that it came to the knowledge of the Provisional Government of Israel today that a boat carrying a load of arms has early this morning anchored off Kfar Vitkin in Israel, the transport having been organised by the dissident military Jewish organisation calling itself the Irgun Zvai Leumi. Orders were immediately issued to the military forces of Israel in the vicinity to rush to the spot in order to prevent the landing of the cargo. On having arrived on the scene, our forces found a considerable body of members of the Irgun Zvai Leumi armed and prepared to resist. Orders were then issued to overpower them by force, and reports to hand indicate that our commander proceeded to act in accordance with the orders received. Two Israeli naval units have been summoned from Tel Aviv to stand by and take such action as may be necessary.

I understand that our liaison reported to you on the appearance of the boat earlier in the day.

It should be clear that what is happening in this instance is an open armed defiance of state authority. The Provisional Government is firm in its determination to use every possible means in its power to



enforce the law and prevent a breach of the truce. According to our information at the moment, the arms have not yet been offloaded. We defer our proposals as to the disposal of the arms till after the situation on the foreshore of Kfar Vitkin has been brought under control.

It would be appreciated if, pending the ~~completion~~ completion of today's operation and a further clarification of the position, no information were given about the incident to the press.

I have the honour to be,  
Sir,  
Your obedient servant,

M. Shertok  
Minister of Foreign Affairs.



C O P Y

AHS  
EN

Translation of a Cable received from Paris.

Count Bernadotte has circulated a request to all countries, including those not members of the United Nations, for assistance in observing the truce conditions. Among other things, he stressed that the exit to Palestine of members of military organisations and men of military age should be prevented. For purposes of observation the Count claimed the right to appoint observers on his behalf at points of embarkation. His motivation was the necessity of implementing the Security Council resolution. The authorities here are interpreting the Count's request as meaning that all immigration to Israel is to be stopped. No ship is now prepared to take immigrants, and a virtual blockade has thereby resulted on the part of shipping companies which are guided by their governments. At the same time ships are leaving for Beirut with provisions and medical supplies. We intend to draw the attention of the press to the fact that this situation is destructive of any equality of treatment, since it means that Israel is blockaded in regard to cargoes and transports which have nothing to do with the military situation, whereas all Arab countries are completely open and any ship may leave for any of them. We believe that exception must be taken to the discrimination resulting from the Count's ruling and the construction put on it.

Tel Aviv

21.6.48



COPY

LC ZIONIST ORGANIZATION DR. SILVER 16 E 66 ST NYC

JUNE 28, 1948

SITUATION YESHIVOT TERRIBLE STOP HOOFIENS MESSAGE UNFRUITFUL MUST APPEAL

ALLOCATE SUBSTANTIAL SUM FOR YESHIVOT STOP EYES YESHIVOT TURN TO YOU STOP

PLEASE ENDEAVOUR UTMOST INFLUENCING ASSISTANCE

RABBI FISHMAN



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Y

ESTADOS UNIDOS DE VENEZUELA  
Delegacion a Las Naciones Unidas

No. 511/V.-

New York, June 30, 1948

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver  
Chairman  
American Zionist Emergency Council  
342 Madison Avenue, Room 1426  
New York 17, N. Y.

Dear doctor Silver,

This is to acknowledge receipt of your telegram of June 28, 1948, expressing your appreciation on behalf of all the Zionist groups in the United States united in an American Zionist Emergency Council, for the recognition extended by the Government of Venezuela to the State of Israel, and to inform you that according to your wishes I have transmitted to the Venezuelan Government the full text of your telegram.

Very sincerely yours,

(signed)

CARLOS EDUARDO STOLK  
Chairman, Permanent Delegation of Venezuela  
to the United Nations

CRJ/.



HOOFDEN ANGLORANK TELAVIV

JUNE 30 1948

SILVER RECEIVED CABLE RABBI FISHMAN RENEWING APPEAL YISHIVOT STOP PLEASE CABLE  
REPORT YOUR INVESTIGATION

COMAY





[June? 1948]

COPY OF TELEGRAM

N97 PD-MQ WASHINGTON DC 7 1049A-

ABBA HILLEL SILVER CHAIRMAN,  
AMERICAN ZIONIST EMERGENCY COUNCIL  
342 MADISON AVENUE

ABSENCE FROM THIS CITY PREVENTED ME TO ANSWER YOUR  
COURTEOUS TELEGRAM OF JUNE 28th STOP I HAVE TRANSMITTED  
TO MY GOVERNMENT APPRECIATION AMERICAN ZIONIST EMERGENCY  
COUNCIL FOR PANAMANIAN RECOGNITION STATE OF ISRAEL STOP  
I WISH TO SEND TO YOU AND ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL  
HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST WISHES IN YOUR PATRIOTIC  
ENDEAVOURS

OCTAVIO A VALLARINO  
AMBASSADOR OF PANAMA



[n.d.]

*Dr. Silver*

**TRANSLATION FROM HEBREW**

**CABLE FROM PARIS received on June 8, 1948**

**DR. GOLDSTEIN ZIONISTS NETWORK**

**APPOINTMENTS OF OFFICERS BY ISRAEL GOVERNMENT ARE  
DOMINATED BY PARTISAN SPIRIT. BREAKING GENERAL ZIONIST  
MOVEMENT IN EUROPE. IMMEDIATE INTERVENTION IS REQUIRED**

**SECAL**





UNTIL HER TRIUMPH GO FORTH AS BRIGHTNESS

Abba Hillel Silver

The nation that for so long had been outcast has now been welcomed back into the world community of nations, self-redeemed, proudly vindicated, and justified in its faith.

It is an historic moment of incomparable grandeur!

The nation that first kindled for mankind the vision of universal peace and of a society of free peoples made one in law and dedicated to righteousness has now taken its honored place in the association of the United Nations, the heir of that ancient vision of Israel and the guardian of that inextinguishable hope.

It is drama of profound spiritual depth and majesty!

The nation that was so often consigned to death has risen again from its immemorial crucifixion and has returned to sovereign national life. The world has now opened its gates that this nation which kept faithfulness through the weary centuries might enter in.

It is elixir of hope for our world's despair. It is comfort for all who must wait through the desolate night of watching for the coming of dawn.

The nation whose voice was silent for centuries in the council chambers of the world's rulers and statesmen even though its spiritual accents never failed to reverberate in the conscience of mankind, will now be free to speak as one having authority, and it will speak as of old of peace and justice, of compassion and brotherhood.

It is deep present satisfaction! It is an ineluctable challenge for the future!

Surely this is a day of flashing hopes. It is also a day of radiant memories. This is your day, you valorous men of Israel, who did not weary nor grew faint throughout the long years of the great tribulation. Gather



round as the Flag of Israel is unfurled to join the proud company of the flags of all the free nations of the earth.

It is your day, you martyrs of Maidanek and Treblinka; you heroes<sup>e</sup> of Galil and the Negeb, you pioneers of the unsundered dream who cleared the way for our people's redemption, you exiles who walked the broken roads of the inhospitable centuries, Gather round! And you men of Masada and the lion-hearted of Bar Kochba and Judah the Maccabee. And you poets and seers who spoke the enkindling word and the burden of prophecy to the tired hearts and the doubting minds. Gather round with us of this generation and let us together salute this wondrous day. And prayerfully, let us repeat the winged and everlasting words:

"The glory of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former, and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of Hosts."...





## THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

When the British Mandate for Palestine was terminated on May 14, 1948, the establishment of the State of Israel was proclaimed at a meeting of the newly formed National Conference of State in Tel Aviv. On that same day Dr. Abba Hillel Silver announced the fact to the political committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations, then in session at Lake Success. He stated:

"At ten o'clock this morning the Jewish State was proclaimed in Palestine. The hour was advanced out of respect for the sanctity of the Jewish Sabbath. The statement--and I read only one sentence of that statement--is as follows:

'We, the members of the National Council representing the Jewish people in Palestine and the Zionist movement of the world, meeting together in solemn assembly by virtue of the natural and historic right of the Jewish people and of the resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations, hereby proclaim the establishment of the Jewish State in Palestine, to be called 'Israel'.'

"Thus, what was envisaged in the resolution of the General Assembly, which was overwhelmingly adopted by the United Nations last November, has been, as far as the Jewish State is concerned, implemented. Thus, too, there has been consummated the age-old dream of Israel to be re-established as a free and independent people in its ancient homeland.

"The Jewish State is grateful to the United Nations for having placed the stamp of its approval, and the stamp of the approval of the world community, upon the historic claims of Israel, and for the efforts which it made in face of opposition to achieve that which the Jewish people have accomplished.



The Jewish State, in setting out upon its career, is conscious of the many grave problems foreseen or unanticipated, which confront it. It prayerfully appeals, therefore, to all freedom-loving peoples and, especially, to those who gave their fullest endorsement to the establishment of the Jewish State a few months ago, to give a full measure of their support and of their strengthening to this newest republic established by this, the most ancient of people. The Jewish State will strive to be worthy of the confidence which has been placed in it by the nations of the world, and will endeavour to realize, as far as it is humanly possible, those prophetic ideas of justice, brotherhood, peace and democracy which were first proclaimed by the people of Israel in that very land.

"The new Jewish State is being threatened--threatened by neighboring states, threatened with invasion. Invasion will mean war. The Jewish State will be compelled to defend itself. And the world community may be faced with a widening and dangerous area of conflict, which everyone deplores.

"It is not yet too late to avert such an eventuality. The Jewish State of Palestine seeks peace with all peoples, and will dedicate itself, under Providence, to the ways of peace and to the friendliest co-operation with all peace-loving peoples."



To Mr. Alfred Kest  
236 Cayton Bldg.  
Cleveland

The President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

We are profoundly grateful to you for the recognition which you extended to the State of Israel. We are happy that our beloved country was the first to hail the new State.

Israel is now under attack from neighboring Arab states who are being supplied with arms by Great Britain. The Arab League, which at the moment is desecrating the Holy City of Jerusalem, is commanded and financed by the British. The Jewish State, whom you have recognized, is unable to obtain arms for self-defense because of our Embargo.

Please, Mr. President, lift the Embargo for the State of Israel and enable its gallant fighters to defend its freedom and independence.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

