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(as put together by D.H.)

29 July 56

Ben-Gurion, David (Prime Minister of Israel)

- 1 letter to D.H.

ראש הממשלה
THE PRIME MINISTER

Jerusalem, 29 July 1956

Dear Mr. Hammarskjold,

I am most grateful to you for your kind message of 21 July. It is a fitting conclusion to the frank, friendly and - I believe - fruitful talks we held during the two days of your stay here. But I shall not conceal from you that your next message, dated 24 July, came to me as a sad disappointment. You passed in silence over the main problem we discussed relating to Egypt: the blockade against Israel shipping which you promised to discuss with the Egyptian authorities and let me know their stand.

But what you say about Egypt in that message is even more astonishing. You say that your talks in Cairo strongly confirmed your view that Egypt sincerely wishes to see the disturbances come to an end.

I am terribly sorry that I cannot accept your view. I remember meeting Austen Chamberlain during the Italo-Ethiopian conflict at the house of a common friend and was horrified when he complacently announced that Mussolini was a gentleman and could not tell a lie.

Two days after you sent me your reassuring message about the sincere wish of Egypt to stop disturbances, the Egyptian Mussolini was telling his people in Alexandria that he would fight Israel until she was wiped off the map.

I shall add nothing to the observations made by Mrs. Meir in her talk with General Burns on 26 July which I assume was duly reported to you. I identify myself completely with the view expressed by our Foreign Minister. Like her, I resent the impartiality towards

Mr. Dag Hammarskjold
Secretary General
United Nations
New York

attackers and attacked. You know very well that you have our full cooperation in assuring compliance with the Armistice Agreements and - if possible - in further steps to establish permanent peace, but there cannot be one-sided compliance, nor can one side be allowed to commit murder and sabotage and continually threaten war while the other is denied the right of self-defence. As we discussed all these things at length during your visit I shall not elaborate again these self-evident truths.

In the meanwhile the whole situation in our area has become more critical, but our policy remains the same: we shall do everything in our power to preserve even the precarious existing peace, while making all necessary preparation for the worst.

I shall await patiently your promised views on the wider problems we discussed, and I repeat my thanks for your message of 21 July.

Yours sincerely,

D. Ben-Gurion