

(FOREIGN MINISTER ABBA EBAN APPEALS TO PALESTINIANS TO COOPERATE FOR PEACE OVER ARABIC TELEVISION AND RADIO PROGRAMMES ON ISRAEL'S INDEPENDENCE DAY)

Twenty-two years have passed since the establishment of the independent and sovereign State of Israel. Almost three years have gone by since the conclusion of the battles initiated by President Abdul Nasser with his famous challenge, "Ahalan V'Sahalan" (welcome). Peace has not come.

Surely the lack of peace oppresses all the peoples of the region: each week, bloodshed and the number of widows, orphans and those suffering the distress of homelessness increases. But the principal victim of the lack of peace has been and always will be the Arab population of the Holy Land, because despite successful efforts to further the economic development and to create several foci of co-existence, your political and administrative identity remains undefined. Israel and the Arab states are each asserting their sovereignty and realizing their special mission. Only above you hovers a fundamental question mark concerning your future.

It seems to me that two opposite paths are open to you. One of these was outlined recently, in the name of the official Arab leadership, in President Nasser's speech of May 1. He proposed the continuation of the war, refusal to conduct negotiations, renewal of the explosive situation which led to the 1967 war, subjugation of great portions of the Arab world to the Soviet imperialism which has already practically eliminated the independence and sovereignty of the largest Arab state. Instead of the hundreds of Englishmen and Frenchmen who governed the states in the

region a generation ago; there are thousands of Soviet personnel based in Egypt, who are making a fraud of the precious independence of the Arab world. The path that Nasser has proposed means the continuation of your suffering and his increased strengthening; the rejection of any prospect of a stable peace and of any possibility whatsoever of gaining your rights, and without any possibility of Nasser's dream materializing.

Israel will not budge from the cease-fire lines without peace. She will not return to the armistice lines and will only transfer her forces to secure and recognized permanent borders to be fixed in the context to peace. I am convinced that for the sake of peace, Israel will be prepared to make important concessions, but she will insist on a new framework of relations and on borders of security which will correspond to the national interest and honour of all states in the region. Israel is not weakened by what is called the war of attrition. The number of Jewish immigrants has increased; the national product has grown; more and more countries in the world are seeking a strengthening of relations with Israel, especially in the developing world; and you may be certain that Israel is receiving substantial armaments to strengthen her ability to defend herself, in addition to her increasing capability to produce weapons of her own.

If three more years like these last three should pass, we should hear yet another three speeches of Abdul Nasser; still more victims would fall, but in the end, Israel will be stronger than she is now, and you, the Arabs of Palestine, will be further removed from honour, freedom and peace. You have before you an alternative road, and I submit this second road to your serious contemplation. It is the alternative of making your voice heard on behalf of Israel-Arab negotiations which would promote peace and would solve once and for all the dispute that has brought upon all of us, but especially upon you, torment, and frustration, grief and untold suffering.

In a time of peace, the border between Israel and her eastern neighbors will be open to trade and travel. The original area of the land of Israel will be divided into two sovereign states, but will be one in its flow of life, its common existence. This is what I referred to when I said, more than once, that there would be community relations between us, such as are existing between a number of states in Western Europe, who, after many generations of strife, have and the will-power and the moral courage to arrive at a state of permanent peace, co-existence and growing regional

cooperation. The question is whether the Arabs of the land of Israel are willing to take their fate into their own hands, to abandon the road of terror and hate that brought upon the name of Palestine defeat in the region, and failure in the eyes of the world; and to change this road for one leading to peace. If so, the next year of our independence may open a road to peace, prosperity and national honour for all peoples of this region. If this should not come about, Israel will continue to gather strength within and even because of the siege.

It is the irony of history that the Arab governments, and El Fatah are strengthening the spirit of Israel, closing her ranks, assuring her of added support, and increasing her security, without furthering the prosperity and the honour of the Arabs of Palestine. Israel's consolidation and development as an independent Jewish state is assured under all circumstances. But in peace, as stated by the Prime Minister and other ministers, Israel would not be willing to rule a million Arabs. The choice is yours; the condition of peace will bring you, as well as us, the blessing of freedom, prosperity and honour. In closing, may I express the wish that, this time next year, we shall be able to celebrate together the advent of peace.

NEW YORK—Mordecai M. Bar-On, the head of the Youth & Hechalutz Department of the World Zionist Organization in Jerusalem, arrived here for a series of talks with American Jewish youth and community leaders, Jewish educators and the Board of Trustees of the American Zionist Youth Foundation.

NEW YORK—Rabbi Pinchas N. Gross, for the last 15 years spiritual leader of the Parkway Jewish Center in Pittsburgh and vice chairman of the Rabbinical Board of Greater Pittsburgh, has assumed the position of National Director of the Organization Department of the Religious Zionists of America, Mizrahi-Hapoel Hamizrachi.



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