

From the Office of
Senator Hubert H. Humphrey
140 Senate Office Building
Washington 25, D. C.
Capitol 4-3121, Ext. 2424

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SENATOR HUMPHREY SENDS ANNIVERSARY GREETINGS TO BEN-GURION

A tribute to Israel's achievement and progress has been expressed by Senator Hubert H. Humphrey (D-Minn.) in a Tenth Anniversary greeting message to Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion.

Text of Senator Humphrey's letter follows:

His Excellency
David Ben-Gurion
Prime Minister of Israel
Tel Aviv
Israel

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

On the occasion of the Tenth Anniversary of the State of Israel, I wanted to send you my personal congratulations and warmest good wishes. This is an occasion for rejoicing among friends of Israel all over the world. Probably no nation in history has accomplished so much in so short a time.

This splendid record of achievement and progress is a tribute to the dedication, the sacrifice, and the faith of the people of Israel. Your great leadership during these trying days of Israel's freedom and independence has been a source of inspiration, not only to your own people, but to free men everywhere.

I will long remember our visit about a year ago. I shall be ever grateful to you and your countrymen for the hospitality and friendly welcome that was extended to me and my associates during our visit to Israel. I am sure you know that we were very favorably impressed with the many accomplishments that were so evident everywhere.

Before many months go by, I hope that we may meet again and this time in the United States.

I have deemed it an honor and a privilege to participate in some of the programs and efforts which have been undertaken here in the United States, designed to be of assistance to the people of Israel. Permit me to join my fellow Americans in saluting you and the State of Israel on the occasion of the Tenth Anniversary. We wish you and your country the blessings of freedom, peace, and continued progress. All of these you richly deserve.

With admiration and best wishes, I remain

Respectfully yours,

Hubert H. Humphrey

Friends:

Tonight we are gathered to commemorate the Tenth Anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel.

The skeptics said there would never be a State of Israel, and they were wrong. They said that Israel, surrounded by a sea of hostile forces, with arid land, depleted resources, and a divergent and impoverished people could not survive, and they were wrong.

Even now there are a few who say that Israel, for the same reasons, can not survive, and they too are wrong! For Israel has confounded the fears of the skeptics and confirmed the faith of her friends.

Last year at this time I was in Israel. I know firsthand the determination, the faith, and the courage that have made possible the historic achievements of the last ten years. Israel has had more than her share of handicaps and heartaches in these first years of independence. Yes, not one, but a hundred challenges have had to be met and mastered -- and all of them at the same time.

Israel has had to establish a modern free government, create a strong defensive force, build an independent economy, and revive and renew a whole culture.

She has succeeded in doing so not by the brutal efficiency of a totalitarian machine, but through a democratic process which has respected, and promoted the rights of the individual.

HUMAN RIGHTS

For instance today in Israel every Arab child, like every Jewish child, is entitled to a free education and medical care. Arabs are represented in Israel's parliament, both as members of Jewish parties, and as the representatives of Arab parties. It has always seemed wonderfully symbolic to me that the rights of the Arab minority in Israel have been safeguarded even while the state itself has been under siege from hostile neighbors.

DEFENSE

Yes, on the very day of Israel's birth as a nation, her land frontiers were under attack and her ports were blockaded.

The new state's baptism of fire was costly, but it established her right to live and she lives vigorously. The people of Israel have learned to live dangerously. They have learned to brace themselves for the difficult task of rebuilding their hard-won country, and making it a haven for refugees fleeing from other lands. Today Israel stands as the most powerful nation in the Middle East, exclusive of Turkey.

REFUGEES

In the past ten years, Israel has performed the monumental task of receiving, rehabilitating, and resettling more than 900,000 immigrants -- from displaced persons camps in Germany, Austria, Italy, from countries in North Africa and the Middle East, as well as from other parts of the world. Compared with the 600,000 Jews of Palestine under the British Mandate, today the Jewish population numbers 1,800,000. Month after month, Israel continues to receive the homeless and persecuted in truly staggering numbers.

It is to Israel's everlasting credit that every one of the hundreds of thousands who landed penniless was provided with enough to get started on the road to self-sufficiency.

The new immigrants are not only provided with a basic necessity of life upon their arrival, but are integrated into the community. Many are retrained for jobs in industry. An even larger number are moved to agricultural settlements. But all are given work -- gainful work -- designed to provide not only an income, but to enrich and develop the State of Israel. Israel has proved to the world that immigration is an asset, both in wealth and power.

This magnificent achievement has always seemed to me an eloquent answer and object lesson for those in this country who set themselves so rigidly against liberalization of our own unfair and outmoded immigration laws.

FOOD

Because of the primary problem of feeding people, agriculture has held top priority in Israel's development program since the first year of statehood. At the beginning, a strict rationing program had to be established in order to assure everyone a basic minimal diet. Much of the food had to be imported. Today, rationing has been abolished and Israel can raise all of the food she needs to feed her people except wheat, edible oils, and meat. She has begun to export vegetables, citrus fruits and other foodstuffs to Europe. Our food surpluses can be used to fill the gap - to balance the food requirements.

Yes, American food can be a positive force in our foreign policy. It can be the life-saving ingredient of a diplomatic and economic policy designed to assist newborn nations. The shortage of food is a common denominator throughout many areas of the world. Our abundance of food is an asset that no other nation possesses. This asset, wisely used, can create new friendships and contribute to the building of peace and freedom. No American should ever say that our surplus of food is a problem. It is, indeed, rather a privilege and one to be shared generously and constructively.

Some of the latest, most advanced farming techniques are now being used by Israel's farmers. Agricultural and mining settlements have sprung up in wastes that had been desolate and uninhabited for centuries. About 500 new agricultural settlements have been established. Cultivated areas have been increased from 195,000 acres to 950,000 acres while at the same time, the number of irrigated acres has been increased.

The next great planned development for Israel is the conquering of the Negev, the great desert in the southern areas of Israel. The Negev possesses a tremendous challenge to the determination, imagination and technical competence of the Israelis. The Government of Israel and its people are determined that the Negev shall be made fruitful. The land is rich and fertile if the blessing of nourishing water can be brought to it. Water can be made available - the land is there to be tilled and planted. Thousands of people await the opportunity to build new homes in freedom and security in this great expanse of Israeli territory. To develop the Negev, however, will call for great investments of capital, labor, engineering, and planning.

Prime Minister Ben Gurion told me that the Negev will be developed. This was not just an idle promise; it was a declaration of purpose. It will be developed because Israel needs it. It is, in truth, Israel's underdeveloped area that awaits the magic touch of modern science and technology, inspired by the strength and determination of a people who refuse to incorporate in their vocabulary the word "impossible".

INDUSTRY

We know that the country's industrial progress has also been phenomenal. A look at the production and export figures tells the story. In 1949, the first full year of statehood, Israel's exports amounted to \$28 million. Last year, exports totalled \$135 million. Invisible exports, such as tourist and shipping revenues, which were practically non-existent in 1949, brought the total to almost \$200 million.

Her industry represents an investment of more than \$700 million. Old, established plants have been expanded and reequipped and new ones have been built. Through self sacrifice, careful planning, loans and reparations, Israel has greatly enlarged her productive capacity. The most modern kind of machinery capable of producing high quality products, is now being used.

New roads have been built, railways have been extended and modernized, and new power stations and telephone installations are in use.

FRONTIER

All this creativity, all this activity, and all this faith are reminiscent of our country in the early days. All Israel is a frontier, still highly vulnerable to attack. Just as our own ancestors did not have time to be afraid, Israel finds this frontier life a source of strength. The hard, austere life of the people makes them alert, ready for emergencies, but meanwhile carrying on the normal, everyday business of living. Frontier Americans once had to improvise in the face of seemingly insurmountable problems. Like them, the Israelis today are inventive, resourceful, and never take no for an answer.

Here again Prime Minister Ben Gurion has declared the policy and philosophy of the State of Israel when he said.

"First, define your objective; declare your need, say what you want. Then, and only then consider the obstacles. But even then the obstacles must be subordinated to the objective. Never must the objective be renounced in favor of the obstacles."

In other words, the people of Israel just refuse to be licked -- they will not take "no" for an answer.

WORLD ROLE

Not only has Israel made fantastic strides in developing her own resources in ten short years, but she has also steadily solidified her position among the family of nations. She has formulated 17 trade agreements and has established diplomatic relations with 50 countries, 11 of them in Africa and Asia. In fact, Israel has her own Point Four program for Burma and Ghana.

Israel is a living example to all underdeveloped countries of what determination and energy can accomplish. Israel's very existence is a major stumbling block to the Communist penetration of the Middle East and Africa. Hard-pressed herself, Israel is offering a helping and sympathetic hand to others - and all the time providing a living example that democracy is worth a sober try. It works in practice!

To these other new states Israel's youth, Israel's stability, and Israel's achievements are inspiring newly freed African states to develop greater confidence in their ability to improve their own economies and societies. We must not underestimate Israel's importance in this new role.

HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

The real measure of the spirit and purpose of Israel and her people is to be found in the emphasis placed upon health, education, and welfare. This is within the great Jewish tradition of the highest respect for individual dignity and the belief in the brotherhood of man. Modern Israel is setting an example in these important areas of human endeavor that serve to challenge new nation states throughout the world.

The people and government of Israel do not merely pay lip service to human dignity and welfare. They act to protect and insure it. With thousands of immigrants uneducated and untrained, sick and weary, the State of Israel has launched a program of education, health and welfare that encompasses every citizen and every area. Israel today is known for its great technical schools, its research laboratories, and the great Hebrew University. In the field of health, the new Hadassah hospital and clinic is one of the finest medical institutions in the world.

Yes, Israel places a high priority upon health and healing for the people. Every citizen is entitled by right of law to complete health and hospital protection and care. Every child is given the opportunity of education. Every family can look forward to occupancy of modern housing.

These great accomplishments in the field of health, education, and welfare serve not only to strengthen Israel, but by precept and example, inspire others in the Middle East and in Asia and Africa to do likewise. This emphasis upon people, progress, and freedom serves to enhance the possibilities of peace. A people engaged in developing a country, in expanding opportunities for humanity are always making a distinct contribution to peace and justice.

CULTURE

Finally, even while being preoccupied with the problems of survival, Israel has created a rich mosaic of culture. Even more remarkable is the penetration of that culture to every stratum of the population.

Out of a longing for peace has come a thirst for music, art, and literature. After one decade, Israel possesses the places to house her cultural activities: museums, concert halls, theatres, cinemas, libraries and universities. These are the mere physical repositories; the roots of Jewish culture are ancient and deep.

One of the world's great military men, Moshe Dayan, formerly Chief of the Army, not long ago relinquished his command to continue his study of humanities at Hebrew University. The most revered people in Jewish society have

traditionally been scholars and teachers. So it is no wonder that the country's educational standards are very high. The number of pupils in elementary schools has increased from 180,844 in 1949, to over 404,900 today. There has also been considerable expansion in secondary, vocational, and agricultural education. Scholars from all over the world go to study at Hebrew University.

THE FUTURE

Rarely, if ever, before has so much been accomplished in so short a time. But Israel has not yet reached the goals she seeks and wants. As Israel faces her second decade, the determination of her people was recently expressed by Premier Ben Gurion, that sturdy twentieth century pioneer of pioneers:

"Israel is determined to strengthen her military preparedness and persevere in her work of rebuilding and redemption; to bring in Jews from the lands of oppression and misery; to conquer the desert and make it flourish by the power of science and pioneering spirit; and to transform the country into a bastion of democracy, liberty, and universal cultural values based on the teaching of Israel's prophets and the achievements of modern science".

We in America can be proud of the role our country and our people have played in Israel's first ten years. But there is more that we must do. We must continue to provide aid and assistance to help Israel develop her economy and extend her trade. We must resist diplomatic maneuvers to undermine Israel's hard won stability. We should make our aims in the Middle East so clear that everyone will understand that an Arab-Israel peace is a primary objective of United States policy.

What is needed, above all, is an unqualified statement from the friendly powers of determination to resist any attack on the sovereignty and independence of Israel and her neighbors.

In these and countless other ways, we can give notice to the world that we, as freedom-loving people, believe in democracy and freedom and progress. The freedom and security of Israel is one more positive way of promoting peace in the Middle East.

The Middle East needs a period of tranquility - it needs stability of borders and an opportunity too for the more constructive forces within the area to gain the ascendancy. The Middle East needs economic development. It needs the guiding hand of the United Nations -- a hand that insists upon peaceful pursuits and curbs violence and aggression. The Middle East needs Israel with her modern science and technology, with her genius at government and social organization.

Again and again the statesmen of the world need to remind the peoples of the Middle East that war and violence in that area, as elsewhere, settles nothing, but could well destroy everything. What is needed is patience and a period of stability and tranquility. The people of the world need it. The future hope of the Middle East requires it.

In the crowded years since 1948, the sacrifices and achievements of Israel have been etched deeply and unforgettably in the story of civilization.

We commemorate these achievements today. We know that Israel's success is highest testimony of all to the dedication and energy of her people. More than anything else, it is proof that the will to live and create can survive all the handicaps of history and can triumph through tears!



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