

meeting with Rabbinical Assembly
May 31, 1967 D.P.

I wish today to reiterate the President's firm

commitment of the United States "to the support of the
political independence and territorial integrity of all
nations of the area."

Tri Partite Agreement

↳ In the week since the President made that
statement, we have been in frequent touch with all
governments concerned. At the end of last week, Israeli
Foreign Minister Eban held detailed discussions here
with Secretaries Rusk and McNamara and their staffs
and called on the President before returning to Israel to
report to his government.

↳ We are now concentrating our efforts in the
United Nations Security Council.

Ambassador Goldberg has clearly declared there
that we stand for free and innocent navigation through the
Straits of Tiran in accordance with international law.

We expect that the Security Council -- and the nations which sit there representing the aspirations for peace of all the world -- will see their responsibility and act accordingly.

↳ The United Nations is facing one of the most serious challenges of its history.

Through the last two decades the United Nations has played a crucial role for peace in that area, and we must bend every effort to preserve its effectiveness.

We are also active on other diplomatic fronts. Although it is too early to say more, I can assure you that we are making every effort -- exploring every honorable avenue -- to preserve peace in the Middle East and to persuade all nations involved to uphold the principles of international law on which the world community relies to maintain that peace.

#

September 13, 1967

Dear ~~K~~eo:

We have looked over the transcript in question quite closely. Because of the sensitive content -- and because the meeting was not a public one -- I'm afraid we're going to have to keep it private and withhold publication, as much as we regret it.

With all best wishes and thanks.

Sincerely,

Ted Van Dyk
Assistant to the
Vice President

Mr. Leo Kramer
Leo Kramer, Inc.
1250 Connecticut Avenue, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20036

May 31, 1967

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DIALOGUE WITH THE VICE PRESIDENT
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

92

THE MEMORANDUM REPORT BY HUMPHREY

our congregations Friday evening, our congregations, our temples are going to be crowded with people waiting for, really, for a word from you and we will be the channel or the conduit for those words.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Vice President of the United States.

(Applause.)

MR. HUMPHREY: Thank you very much.

Rabbi, first permit me just to sort out these papers. It's a long ways from a Boy Scout Camp to this, the 67th Annual Convention of the Rabbinical Assembly, and I sort of have to get myself in shape here. Shifting from outdoor camp life to just the whole subject of life itself, and I hope to be able to do so.

My dear friends, at the time that we ^{ORIGINALLY} discussed this ^A dialogue between this wonderful audience and the Vice President none of us ~~even would have~~ believed that we would be facing the dire conditions that we face today. It had been my hope that when that arrangement for our discussion and conversation was agreed upon that I might primarily concentrate my attention upon the matters of social concern in our own country here in the United States, what we ^{ARE} trying to do in the field of education, the war on poverty, health, the program to lift the life of the American people and indeed programs that are under way to improve the lot of mankind throughout the world.

1 Since that time, however, circumstances have develop-
2 ed, or situations have been created, which surely have changed
3 the picture that confronts us. I know very much that topic is
4 uppermost in your minds and indeed in mine. It is the whole
5 subject of the Middle East, what is ^Ntr^Aspiring there, what may
6 happen and what we hope can be done to prevent any violence,
7 war or the fruits, or the destruction of aggression.

8 Now, may I say most respectfully to this audience
9 that this is a very delicate situation. ~~It is extremely sen-~~
10 ~~sitive for me. I want to talk to you completely off the record~~
11 ~~and I know that there are reporters in this room and I'm going to~~
12 ~~to ask them to abide by the rules of fair play and a general~~
13 ~~understanding that we have in the -- between the public, those~~
14 ~~of us in public life and those in the press.~~

15 I recognize, having been in Washington for almost
16 twenty years, that very little stays off the record no matter
17 how much you wish it would and this is one of the real difficult
18 problems that we have in discussing any sensitive matter, any
19 matter of diplomacy, any matter of national security, any matter
20 of life or death. And, quite frankly, many times efforts which
21 a government seeks to make or is making are torpedoes prema-
22 turely or just torpedoed by some premature notice of what is
23 underway.

24 I couldn't help but note the last couple of days, in
25 reading many of the columns, that ~~there were~~ suggestions and

1 proposals that were attributed to your government which are not
2 government policy and if they were to become government policy
3 would have lost their effectiveness at this stage by being
4 publicized.

5 It poses ^Athe great problem for a free society, of,
6 how do you conduct the most sensitive and delicate relation-
7 ships in a very troubled, and at times, emotional world and
8 ~~be able to~~ obtain your objectives through peaceful pursuit?
9 I don't know whether we are able to do that, but, I hope that
10 we can.

11 So I want to say that while I feel very much a member
12 of this family, and I think you know that, we've been together
13 for years, and what I've said in the past I believe in the
14 present, every word of it.

15 ~~(Applause.)~~

16 I have a special obligation today, as a member of
17 the President's Cabinet, as a member of the National Security
18 Council, to weigh my words most carefully and not to do one-
19 things, or say one thing that will exacerbate this situation,
20 aggravate it or that will in any way impede the efforts of our
21 government to fulfill every commitment that it has made over
22 the years, through four Presidents, from President Truman to
23 President Eisenhower to President Kennedy to President Johnson.

24 ~~(Applause.)~~

25 I was noticing, with great interest, the memorandum

that I received prepared by Rabbi Hirsch, which is, I'm sure, in your hands, each of you have, of the record of statements of our great national leaders. Starting back ^{ON} with February 20, 1957 with President Eisenhower's address to the American people and the Aden Memoir handed to Israel's Ambassador Abba Eban by Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles on 11 February 1957. The reply by the Secretary of States, Mr. Dulles at a news conference on the 26th of March 1957.

Now we know what this period means. This was after the Sinai Campaign. I was serving in the United Nations at that time and I remember coming back to the Senate and making my views ^{QUITE} right, clear, in fact, I have said to our government that as we examine the record of this period and the understanding of this ^Rperiod and the obligations entered into by all countries, and including, and particularly our own in this period; we must examine not only what was said by Presidents and Secretaries of State, but, what was said in Committee Hearings, what was said on the floor of the House, what was said on the floor of the Senate and what was said in public utterances by responsible public officials during that time.

I note here the statement of Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge on March 1st, 1957. This was at the time, we all recall, when Israel was asked to remove her forces from certain areas that those forces had staked out a claim, so to speak, or were present and did so under the understanding that ~~there would be~~

1 ~~UNEP~~ Forces, United Nations Emergency Forces, ^{Would be} placed in the
2 Sinai area and that there would be access to the Gulf of Aqaba
3 through the Straits of Tiran without interruption, free and
4 innocent passage.

5 And of course, that is the central issue and it was
6 to this issue that the Presidents that I have mentioned,
7 Secretary of State, Dulles and later on President John Kennedy
8 and later on President Lyndon Johnson, addressed themselves to.

9 I don't need to go over this paper, I want to say
10 that it's an excellent job of research. Your government is
11 fully aware of everyone of these dates and your government looks
12 upon this record as the predicate upon which we will base and
13 are basing our actions. ~~---(Applause.)---~~ We're not seeking to
14 change that record.

15 ~~(Applause.)~~

16 I want to make ^{it} clear we're not seeking to change
17 that record, because it is a part of a continuity of American
18 public policy since the day that Harry Truman, President of
19 the United States, recognized the independence of the State
20 of Israel.

21 ~~(Applause.)~~

22 Now your government seeks to preserve a friendly
23 relationship, or at least a proper relationship, with as many
24 countries as is humanly possible. We do not seek to irritate
25 or agitate, we seek to placate if possible, but your government

has taken a stand throughout the years against the use of force, against aggression, and that stand has not been modified in any part of the world.

It was the same stand that was taken in the instance of Greece, of Berlin, of Korea, it was taken indeed in Lebanon by President Eisenhower when certain forces were sent there. It's been taken in Southeast Asia and that stand as to the of opposition to aggression and force, coercion as a means of settling international disputes, is unmistakable.

Now, we seek to resist that aggression wherever it takes place through multilateral action, through the United Nations first. This is the area, this is the form we believe should be brought to play.

But our stand and our policy should not be misunderstood by anybody. This country has given enough lives since World War II and has sacrificed enough of its men and its treasures since World War II in defense of territorial integrity, in defense of free people, ^{and} in defense of independent nations so that no one anywhere in the world ought misunderstand for a single minute the integrity of the American commitment, and the reliability of the American commitment. — (Applause.) —
~~you just have to understand that.~~

I have a statement here that I want to read to you. I want you to understand every word that I say. I do not think it does any good for anybody to sell short or to undermine what

1 the possibilities could be, should be and may be through collect-
 2 ive action in the United Nations. I'm fully aware of the
 3 disappointments that we've had on occasion but I am also aware
 4 of the fact that if you start out believing that it won't
 5 work then you are not fulfilling your treaty obligations under
 6 the United Nations.

7 Now, let me therefore just put this in proper context.
 8 We have an extremely able ambassador there, you know him better,
 9 ~~as well as I do and maybe some of you better. I don't think that,~~
 10 ~~I know him pretty well.~~ I know of his deep concern over this
 11 matter and I know that if he thought our government was not
 12 acting in the manner in which ^{AS} it should on a matter of such
 13 importance, that he would be the first to say so. Even at
 14 the expense of his personal position. I think you must
 15 remember that.

16 ~~(Applause.)~~

17 ~~I'm sure you're aware of, because I noticed that you~~
 18 ~~had~~ most fortuitously and properly printed the text of Presi-
 19 dent Johnson's statement on ^{of} May 23rd, and I want to, in light
 20 of that statement, ^{I want} to make this comment.

21 I want to reiterate the President's firm commitment
 22 ~~and I use the word commitment,~~ of the United States, "To the
 23 support of the political independence and territorial integrity
 24 of all of the nations of the area," ^{This} refers to the area of the
 25 Middle East. Now this is predicated upon every commitment made

1 from the time of Mr. Truman up to the Presidency of Mr. Johnson.
2 It is predicated on the tripartite Agreement of 1950, which is
3 a basic agreement and ^{which} ~~one that~~ has never been repudiated and
4 one that has been a central ~~pivotal point~~, pivotal point of
5 American Foreign Policy since that date.

6 In the weeks since the President made that statement,
7 and the copy of which you have in its total ^{CONTEXT} ~~test~~, we have been,
8 your government has been in frequent touch with all of the
9 governments concerned, ~~all government concerned~~ in the area
10 and indeed ^{with} the great powers as well.

11 At the end of last week, as you so well know, Israel's
12 Foreign Minister, the distinguished Abba Eban, who is well
13 known to all of us, held detailed discussions here with ^{THE} Secret-
14 ary of State, Mr. Rusk and ^{THE} Secretary of Defense, Mr. McNamara
15 and their staffs and then called on the President, where these
16 two men, the President of the United States and the Foreign
17 Minister of Israel held a general discussion of the situation
18 and after that discussion Mr. Eban returned to Israel to report
19 to his government. ^{and} his government, the government of the
20 State of Israel, is fully aware of the detailed conversations
21 that have taken place and because of that awareness has con-
22 ducted itself with great self-discipline, with high regard for
23 peace and international responsibility.

24 ~~(Applause.)~~

25 I think it should be said that the government of

1 Israel has been most restrained in its comments. It has not
2 acted in a bellicose and belligerent manner, nor has it indulged
3 ~~itself~~ in histrionics and warlike propaganda. It has been
4 primarily concerned over its national survival, and its national
5 security and national defense, and I for one, as Vice President
6 of the United States, want to pay an appropriate expression of
7 gratitude and appreciation to the responsible officers of the
8 people and the government of Israel for their conduct and their
9 self-restraint, their sense of self-discipline and their will-
10 ingness to permit the ⁸processes of diplomacy and peaceful pursuit
11 to operate. We are ever indebted to them.

12 ~~(Applause.)~~

13 Now ladies and gentlemen, we are now concentrating
14 on our efforts in the United Nations Security Council. We are
15 fully aware of the difficulties, but the United Nations has a
16 special responsibility in this area. Since 1956 and 1957, and
17 as an active full-fledged participating loyal member of the
18 United Nations, the government of the United States ^{HAS BEEN} ~~is~~ doing
19 ~~its level best~~, its very best, to have the appropriate instru-
20 mentality of the United Nations, namely the Security Council,
21 not only to take cognizance of the critical situation in the
22 Middle East but to act in a manner that will maintain the
23 peace, prevent any resort to force and maintain the passageway,
24 ~~the international passageway~~ of the Straits of Tiran and the
25 Gulf of Aqaba.

1 Ambassador Goldberg has clearly declared that we
2 stand for free and innocent navigation through the Straits of
3 Tiran in accordance with international law. ~~That we not only~~
4 ^{we} stand for it now ^{as} we have in the past. Freedom of the seas has
5 been as much a doctrine of American life as free speech, and the
6 Ambassador to the United Nations from the United States has
7 made that manifestly clear and will do so again tomorrow.

8 Now we expect ^{that} the Security Council and the nations
9 which sit there, representing the aspirations for peace of all
10 the world, will see their responsibility and act accordingly.
11 For us to expect less or to want less would be unworthy of us.

12 The United Nations is truly facing one of the most
13 serious challenges in its history. Through the last two decades
14 the United Nations has played a crucial role for peace in that
15 area and we must bend every effort to preserve its effectiveness,
16 and this is why your government is emphasizing measures of
17 collective security through the United Nations rather than through
18 unilateral action.

19 We want to exhaust every possibility for international
20 responsibility through the established instrumentality of the
21 of the United Nations, That is the least we can do.

22 We are also active on other diplomatic fronts. I
23 don't think you would want me to spell that out, but, take my
24 word for it, I've never lied to you in the past and I have no
25 intention to do so now.

(Applause.)

Although it is too early and I think ^{it} would be very inappropriate for me to say more on this point, I can assure you that we are making every effort and ~~I want to you to under-~~
~~score the word every.~~ Every effort exploring every honorable avenue, every possibility that we can think of to preserve peace in the Middle East and, I might add, not at the expense of Israel's sovereignty or life or her lifeline.

(Applause.)

And to persuade all nations involved to uphold the principles of international law on which the world community relies to maintain that peace.

Now ladies and gentlemen, if I were to be more explicit, more detailed and to say more I wouldn't serve you well, serve my country well or serve the cause of peace at all.

I'm a most unhappy man when there's war anyplace. I think you know that and yet you and I know that international law and order and respect for the territorial integrity and the independence of nations, states, is the minimum requirement for a world of peace. You don't have peace without that and you serve peace not merely by saying you ^{ARE} for it, but, you serve it by the standards that are set for its preservation.

I do believe that it is important for you, my dear friends, my fellow American^s, and those of you who have worked so closely with us for these many years. I think it is impor-

1 tant for you to know that ~~this government~~, this administration,
2 is no less committed to peace in the Middle East, to the territorial
3 integrity of the nations states of the Middle East, to
4 the life and the existence and the political sovereignty of
5 a free Israel in the Middle East than any other administration.

6 There isn't any politics in this. It isn't whether
7 you are a Democrat or a Republican. It isn't whether you're
8 from the east or the west.

9 There are certain basic fundamentals of American
10 policy which endure. For example, the Monroe Doctrine in
11 the Cuban Crisis. The Tripartite Agreement in the Middle
12 East Crisis.

13 ~~(Applause.)~~

14 The principles of ^Ithe Charter of the United Nations,
15 and I want you to study that Charter, there are three basic
16 commitments and responsibilities of the members of the United
17 Nations. Now they all don't live up to it. If everybody lived
18 up to every commitment we'd taken, we wouldn't need any Rabbis
19 ^{or}any ministers or any priests. But they're around to remind us
20 once in a while of our commitments.

21 One of those commitments is to resist aggression, ^{it's}
22 there written as plain as any word could be written. The
23 second is to promote determination and the third is to aid in
24 nation building, economic and social progress. ~~They're there.~~

25 Now we signed a treaty for that. If anybody ever

1 asks you were there any treaties we have that apply to this
2 situation or to other situations, the answer is yes. The
3 treaty that we signed calls upon the United States and every
4 other signatory to that treaty to resist aggression, to promote
5 self-determination, to aid and encourage nation building through
6 economic and social progress.

7 Those are really sacred commitments, the highest,
8 the supreme law of this land. Now how that is done is a matter
9 for statesmen, political leader^s, diplomats, representatives of
10 the interested and involved nations to decide and design. But
11 the fact that the commitment is there is undeniable and I ask
12 you to put your faith in your government.

13 ~~(Applause.)~~

14 I think you have every reason to do so, I know that
15 there isn't a person in this room that want^s a war in the
16 Middle East, not one, not one.

17 ~~(Applause.)~~

18 And while it makes good headlines to read how Israel's
19 forces could defeat the combined coalition against her, may
20 I say that, my dear friends, what would happen in that struggle
21 to all the peoples and to all that you have dreamed for and
22 worked and many of you given for, would be a tragedy, just a
23 ~~tragedy.~~

24 ~~(Applause.)~~

25 So, while it would be the easiest thing in the world

1 for the Vice President to get up here and give a sabre rattling
2 speech, and it might appeal momentarily to your emotions, I can
3 assure you that it would not save a single life in Israel, nor
4 would it save a single life in other nations on the border of
5 Israel.

6 The cost of such a struggle if it breaks out would
7 be unbelievable, because of the limited area and furthermore,
8 may I say, because of the high⁽¹⁾ sophisticated weaponry that is
9 in that area and because of the possibility of confrontation
10 of other powers in the area, so that I don't believe that I
11 ^{WOMAN} prove myself a friend of Israel or a friend of yours by stand-
12 ing up here and shaking my fist and saying let me tell you,
13 if anybody does anything they'll hear from us.

14 What we ought to be saying is that we will use every
15 means at our command to insure the peace, to prevent the strug-
16 gle, to make sure that unbelievable destruction of men and
17 material does not happen and at the same time, when we repeat,
18 the words as was repeated, to support, and the President of the
19 United States said this, to the support of the political in-
20 dependence and territorial integrity of all of the nations of
21 the area.

22 We're talking about the life of nations, not just
23 that they are a spot on the map but that they could live, that
24 their lifelines are not choked off and we're talking about
25 fundamental international law. When Ambassador Goldberg has

1 declared that we stand for free and innocent navigation through
2 the Straits of Tiran, in accordance with international law,
3 and we mean it, that is the central issue.

4 ~~(Applause.)~~

5 Well, ordinarily when I speak to you I'm more of
6 what you might call a free-wheeler, aren't I? I mean, I cover
7 a multitude of areas because your interests are so wide. I've
8 never talked to a group of people in my life that had ^{more of} a basic
9 interest in human dignity and human welfare, than the group
10 I'm looking at now. But, I am also fully aware of your deep
11 concern.

12 We, you know, I was one of the first that was present
13 when Mr. Truman declared and gave recognition to the State of
14 Israel and when you're there when the baby is born you kind of
15 like to stick with the member^s of the family all the way.

16 ~~(Applause.)~~

17 RABBI BOHNEN: Ladies and gentlemen, the Vice Presi-
18 dent has agreed to answer a few questions and, during the course
19 of his address, there have been several here that have indicated
20 a desire to ask such questions.

21 I do want to remind you, however, that only one
22 address was scheduled for this afternoon. (Laughter.) If you
23 have a question that evokes or requires an answer from the
24 Vice President, we will consider it. There will be no speeches
25 offered here.

~~Rabbi (Cassir) our distinguished colleague will be~~
~~our first questioner.~~

ISRAEL KARISI

RABBI ~~(CASSIR)~~ Mr. Vice President, we were deeply
 heartened by your warm and encouraging words.

I think what is of the deepest concern to us here
 today is time. I think maybe ^{MR. ESHKOL} ~~(Eshkol)~~ and Abba Eban and the
 leaders of the people of Israel have shown remarkable constraint,
 as you indicated. My concern is how long can they wait, in
 terms of the pressures that build up.

~~Therefore,~~ we remember all too sadly, Mr. Vice Presi-
 dent, what happened a generation ago when another dictator was
 allowed to pursue his ^{FOLLY,} ~~following~~. We do not want to see this
 happen again in our day.

MR. HUMPHREY: We're fully aware of that history, and
 may I say that the lessons of that history are not the exclu-
 sive property of anyone. They're the property of all of us.

We are at this stage doing what I think is ^{WHAT} ~~one~~ of the
 spokesmen of the State of Israel said: ~~I just looked at my~~
~~notes~~ gaining breathing space. But, what is to happen during
 that breathing space is what's important and it's to that
 question that we are directing our intensive efforts, because
 we are aware of the time factor.

We're also aware of the fact that the government of
 Israel is an elected government, ^{AWARE} of the emotions of the people
 in that country, and sometimes governments are driven by their

own people beyond even what their leaders would want ~~them to~~
do, would want to do.

And may I add at this point, ^{THAT} I think it's very im-
portant, therefore, that your words and my words be ~~such that~~
~~they are~~ words of reassurance to the people of Israel, as to
the faithfulness of the friend, the United States, number one,
and number two, as to the supreme tragedy of military confron-
tation or military action that would be initiated or could be
initiated by the State of Israel.

In other words, let's have no word come from us,
either from government or private, ^{SIMPLY} that would precipitate a
first strike, so to speak, by the State of Israel, because to
do so I think would seriously jeopardize all of the diplomatic
efforts that your government now pursues, even though I under-
stand that temptation. I understand what Israel has had to
face with ~~undeclared~~, I mean with declared war around her
borders for years with the claim of the UAR, her belligerent
status, ~~I understand that~~.

We're asking the State of Israel to exemplify quali-
ties of character that very few of us have. I understand that
too. But, may I say most respectfully, there wouldn't have
been a State of Israel if they hadn't had that character in
the first place.

~~(Applause.)~~

~~RABBI BOHNEN: I'm going to ask the Vice President~~

1 of the Rabbinical Assembly to ask a question of the Vice Presi-
2 dent of the United States.

3 ~~(Laughter.)~~

4 MR. HUMPHREY: We Vice Presidents sick together,
5 I hope.

6 ^{Rabbi} RABBI SIMON: Mr. Vice President, I wish to re-echo
7 the words of my distinguished colleague in telling you how
8 heartened we are by the firm, clear and unequivocal statements
9 of commitment you express.

10 ~~(Applause.)~~

11 We also wish to re-echo the sense of concern that
12 we have and I know you have, about a democracy that is a true
13 democracy and our response to the will of the people.

14 I have received information from Israel about the
15 unrest of the populace and the difficulties that Mr. ^{Eshkol} ~~(Eshkol)~~
16 may have in interpreting to his people the need for ^{dearly} ~~dearly~~.
17 ~~What has happened is that~~ men have been called from the farms,
18 from the fields, from the factories. Teachers have been called
19 from the schools, everything has ground to a halt. The shops
20 are closed. People are going to face the problem of food, of
21 support, of taking care of their children.

22 I have been thinking that one of the things that we
23 could do, and when I say we I mean we Americans, perhaps our
24 government, would be to say to the people of Israel, we need
25 time and what we would like to do is to help you bid^e the time

1 with your people.

2 Wouldn't it be a dramatic gesture if food, supplies
3 and help and a fleet of ships carrying food and support and
4 clothing and whatever that country needs now in this crisis,
5 so that it does not face bankruptcy and does not face the need
6 for some precipitous action that would be regreted.

7 I hope that there can be conveyed to the President
8 and to the ^{CABINET} ~~Board~~ the need for some striking dramatic action
9 that would come from the heart of America to the heart of the
10 people of Israel, that would say to them we are with you in
11 a moral way until we solve this political problem in which we
12 fully understand and the commitments that we fully intend to
13 keep.

14 ~~(Applause.)~~

→ 15 MR. HUMPHREY: Might I make a practical suggestion,
16 that is strictly out of order since I as yet have not been
17 made a member of the Rabbinical Assembly, ^{though I have} but I come close
18 on a couple of occasions.

19 ~~(Laughter.)~~

20 I would think that such a proposal worded very much
21 along the lines that you have, would be [^]very helpful, construct-
22 ive suggestion in the form of a resolution, and if you would
23 like, ~~I can remember what you said fairly well, but if you~~
24 ~~would like to make it a little more detailed and formal and~~
25 ~~you would like to present such a resolution to me, I will see~~

that it gets to the President of the United States.

~~(Applause.)~~

RABBI SIMON: If I may have the floor to propose this resolution, I will word ~~it~~ and submit it to an editorial committee for proper etiquette, ~~that is~~ ^{IN CONVENTION} the members of the Rabbinical Assembly, ~~convention~~, assembled and in the presence of the Vice President of the United States, hereby respectfully petition^s the government of the United States, which is actively seeking a solution to the problem of the aggression that has occurred in the Middle East, that our government in this interim extend its hand of assistance and support to the government of the State of Israel and to its people who are suffering economic distress through the dislocation of industry and all commercial activity, ^{AND} that it do this by the immediate dispatch of food supplies and all other supplies that will sustain the normal life and the activity of the beleaguered people in the State of Israel.

~~(Applause.)~~

RABBI BOHNEN: Ladies and gentlemen, this is a formal resolution. Do I hear it seconded?

VOICES: Seconded.

RABBI BOHNEN: It has been moved and seconded.

All those in favor --

VOICES: Aye.

All those opposed?

(No response.)

RABBI BOHNNEN: It id passed that we will convey that to the Vice President to give to the President.

~~(Applause.)~~

~~I recognize the Chairman of our Israel Committee,~~
~~Rabbi Myron Fenster.~~

^{Myron}
RABBI FENSTER: Mr. Vice President, we as you have heard, have all been very encouraged by your support of the commitments of the government of the United States, but, there is some difficulty in clarifying these last days precisely what that commitment is and there are apparently a number of interpretations that have been given ^{AS} to the nature of that commitment.

Could you inform us and enlarge on what you consider to be the nature of the commitment?

MR. HUMPHREY: I don't believe there's any doubt as to the meaning of internationalization of the waters of the Straits of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba. That, I believe, was decided in the, ~~what is it~~, the Convention of the Seas in 1957, relating to the laws of the seas.

It is a fact, of course, that the United Arab Republic did not ^{Access} exceed to that convention, but I believe, unless my memory is mistaken, that the United States and the Soviet Union and many other nations, most of the maritime powers, did ^{Access} exceed to that convention.

There is one question that has been raised. It is in reference to one of the statements of the former Secretary of State, Mr. Dulles, as to what the United States would do under certain circumstances, and might I say that it might be just as well for this meeting if that question remain, if that issue remain^s as ambiguous as it is.

~~There may be some merit in its ambiguity, I happen to think so.~~

~~(Applause.)~~

This is not to try to avoid or evade your question, sir, but this is a matter that has been discussed, not as a matter of weakening our position but as a matter of, should, ~~I put it,~~ of hopefully insuring the effectiveness of our ciplomacy.

~~(Applause.)~~

~~RABBI BOHNEN: Rabbi () Nadich.~~

^{Swam i}
RABBIⁱ NADACH: Mr. Vice President, may I express my own personal appreciation for your graciousness in keeping your long standing commitment to appear here today despite the crisis that has come upon our country and upon the world as a whole.

May I then ask you, sir, is it not your opinion that the free world's failure to insist in these past years upon free passage of all shipping, including Israel's, through the Suez Canal and free access of Jews to the holy places in the Jordanian Sector of Jerusalem, both offered by the United Nations

1 action, have contributed to the present crisis?

2 MR. HUMPHREY: I guess I have addressed myself to
3 that subject about fifteen times over the last six years and
4 I'll let the record of my previous statements speak for Hubert
5 Humphrey, and as Vice President of the United States I feel
6 that much more could have been done that would have been very,
7 very helpful in these matters. I've said so before, I see
8 no reason not to say so again.

9 It's always been my view that one of the understand-
10 ings that was arrived at, at the time of the settlement in
11 1957, was the free access of all ships to the use of the Suez
12 Canal and surely the United Nations has made itself manifestly
13 clear on the access to the holy places in Jerusalem.

14 ~~I see that, had that been done~~ frankly, had we been
15 able to succeed in that, this situation might be much less
16 volatile than it is. I can't say for ~~ysre~~, however, that it
17 would be.

18 There are forces at work in the Middle East that
19 have been at work for a long period of time, that still would
20 plague us. How I wish I could be more explicit with you, sir.

21 (Applause.)

22 RABBI BOHNEN: Ladies and gentlemen, we are very
23 grateful to the Vice President for being here.

24 (Applause.)

25 Mr. Vice President, I think I can speak on behalf of

1 my constituents when I say that we appreciate very much your
2 coming here and that we will be able to take back to our
3 congregations now, more than a word of hope, we'll be able to
4 tell them that the Vice President of the United States, speak-
5 ing for the government of the United States has made us feel
6 that every word of the commitment of this country will be
7 carried out and that the people of Israel, to use or paraphrase
8 the words that were addressed to them way back in 1957, will
9 never have reason to regret that they put their trust and
10 faith in the United States of America.

11 Thank you very much.

12 ~~(Applause.)~~

13 ~~(The afternoon session was closed.)~~



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