

22 October 1973

Dear Mr. President,

In the difficult days that we have lived since October 6 your understanding, sympathy and assistance have won our sincere and heartfelt gratitude. We shall never forget the friendship that the United States, under your direction expressed in so many ways. In our frequent contacts with Secretary Kissinger ~~since~~<sup>since</sup> the dark morning of October 6 we have encountered a spirit of frank and fruitful cooperation.

My colleagues and I have given careful consideration to the cease-fire proposal which you communicated to me. As you know, we have instructed our representative at the United Nations to make a positive response. The clarifications made in your letter to me were decisive in enabling us to reach this decision.

The issues at stake are so important for our security that I feel compelled to address you on some of them in detail. The Security Council Resolution presented by the USA and the USSR speaks of the implementation of Resolution 242 in all its parts. We expect that in the days ahead the Arabs, with Soviet assistance will insist on their interpretation which the U.S. and Israel have never accepted. There is complete national unity in Israel in support of the aim of reaching peace agreements with Egypt, Syria and Jordan which allow for the boundary changes necessary to give Israel security from attack. The sudden assault of October 6 and its initial result have strengthened the conviction that defensible boundaries are an essential condition for a peace settlement. ~~It~~ *It is our position that Resolution 242 must be interpreted in manner allowing for that would make possible border changes within the framework of that resolution.*

One important aspect of any cease-fire is a military standstill. In the case of the cease-fire between Israel on the one hand and Egypt and Syria on the other when we face the most sophisticated missile system, we consider it vital that a military standstill should form part of the agreement. The experience of August 1970 when, immediately after the cease-fire came into effect the Egyptians moved their missiles forward in violation of the cease-fire/standstill agreement, has taught us to insist that before entering a standstill agreement there should be an agreed description of the precise locations of the military sites and installations covered by the standstill.

I note that you have agreed to join with the Soviets in strongly urging an immediate exchange of POW. I must in all frankness tell you that this human problem is for us an indispensable part of the cease-fire agreement. I know Mr. President, what you yourself underwent when you lived for so long with the problems of the American POW in North Vietnam. We must arrive at an early solution of this problem' Israel holds about one thousand prisoners and Egypt and Syria over.... We feel that the cease-fire agreement should provide for an immediate exchange of POWs There must be clarity and on this issue.

The maintenance of a military balance in our region will be no less important after the cease-fire than it is now. Indeed, prospect of the cease-fire to endure would be prejudiced by an imbalance. The recent war proves that we must secure our estimate of what Israel needs in order that the balance be preserved. The overwhelming superiority of our neighbours in the quantity of their weapons cannot be upset by purely qualitative attributes.

We obviously worked on too slender a margin. I consider it vital therefore, that the supplies and appropriations which you have decided upon and on which you have addressed a message to the Congress go forward in full scope and at an urgent rate.

During this crisis your vigorous and unequivocal stand against any possibility of armed Soviet involvement played an important part in containing the war and paving the way for the cease-fire. Despite the association of the USSR with your cease-fire proposal, we are confident that you are as realistic and vigilant as ever about the Soviet aim to dominate the Middle East. We may find ourselves subjected to intimidation from the Soviet Union and your determination to counteract those pressures is of crucial importance to peace in this region.

I am glad to note that in your letter to me you mention that the Security Council Resolution calls for direct negotiations "without prior conditions". We have noticed to our disquiet that the language of the Resolution is not specific on this point. We hope to have the United States support when negotiating procedures are discussed.

In outlining my concerns at this important juncture I express the hope that you may be able to give me such assurance on these points as would enable us to face our risks and dangers with some confidence.