

Response to U.S. Appeal for a Ceasefire

Introduction

When, a week later, the Knesset convened once more, the fortunes of war had undergone a fundamental change. In the north Israeli troops had advanced beyond the pre-war ceasefire lines to within forty kilometers (approximately 30 miles) of Damascus. In the south three divisions were engaged west of the Canal in a wide-sweeping, out-flanking movement designed to cut off—and ultimately destroy—the Egyptian Third Army, deployed east of the Canal from Ismailia in the north to Suez in the south. The Soviet Union, concerned at the prospect of its proteges' total collapse, invited the U.S. Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, to Moscow for urgent talks. There, without consulting Israel, Kissinger agreed with the U.S.S.R. on the text of Resolution 338, to be submitted to the Security Council by the mutual agreement of the Powers.

Sitting 462 of the Seventh Knesset

23 October 1973 (27 Tishrei 5734)

The Prime Minister, G. Meir: Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, first of all I apologize for the delay. On my way to Jerusalem I received an urgent call and had to make a detour.

On October 22 the Government of Israel decided unanimously to respond to the appeal issued by the U.S. Government and President Nixon, and declared its readiness to agree to a ceasefire in accordance with the U.N. resolution arising from the joint American-Soviet proposal, namely...that the military forces will remain where they are when the ceasefire comes into effect. The implementation of the ceasefire depends on mutuality. Our decision has been brought before the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee and is now being brought before the Knesset. The Security Council resolution...reads as follows:

"1. The Security Council calls on all the sides involved in the battles currently being fought to cease their fire and end all military activities forthwith and not later than 12 hours after the adoption of this resolution, in the positions which they are holding now;

2. The Security Council calls on the combatants to begin implementing Security Council Resolution 242 in its entirety immediately after the ceasefire.

3. The Security Council resolves that immediately and simultaneously with the ceasefire, negotiations will begin between the parties in-

involved, under the appropriate auspices, with the object of establishing a just and lasting peace in the Middle East."

With regard to Section 2 of the proposal, the Government has decided to instruct Israel's representative at the U.N. to include in his speech at the Security Council a passage making it clear that our agreement to that Section is given in accordance with Israel's interpretation of it when it decided to respond to the U.S. Government's initiative regarding the ceasefire in August 1970. A statement to this effect was submitted to the U.N. on 4 August 1970....Israel's agreement to a ceasefire with Egypt is dependent upon Egypt's agreement but not on Syria's, and vice versa....

The Government also decided to clarify to the U.S. Government a series of topics which are closely connected with the Security Council resolution and its ensuing processes. It is our intention to clarify and ensure, for example, that the ceasefire will apply to all the regular forces within the territory of the country which accepts it, including the forces of another country, such as those of Iraq and Jordan in Syria, as well as the forces of other Arab countries which have participated or are participating in the war. The ceasefire will also apply to the activities of irregular forces operating against Israel from the territory of the countries which have accepted the ceasefire. The ceasefire will ensure that there is no interference with the freedom of navigation of ships, including oil tankers, on their way to Eilat and passing through the Bab-el-Mandab Straits. It is also our intention to ensure that the negotiations between the sides are defined as direct. We must also ensure that there is agreement on the procedures, mapping and subjects to be supervised within the framework of the ceasefire.

A significant subject, one which is close to our hearts, is the freeing of the prisoners of war. The Government of Israel has decided to demand an immediate exchange of prisoners. We have discussed this with the U.S. Government, which participated in initiating the ceasefire. I spoke about it with Secretary Kissinger yesterday, and we will insist on an immediate exchange of prisoners...regarding it as one of the principal tests of the ceasefire....

I will now say a few words about our military position on the Syrian and Egyptian fronts prior to the ceasefire. On the Syrian front we are in a better position today than we were on October 6....Not only have we repossessed the area we controlled before, but...we now have positions on the Hermon Ridge as well as on the border to the east, improving the former ceasefire line....On the Egyptian front, although the Egyptians gained a military advantage by crossing the Canal, the IDF's brave counter-attack enabled our forces to regain part of the eastern side of the Canal and a large portion of the western side, providing us with both defensive and offensive possibilities, should these be needed. This situation deprives the Egyptian Army of the possibility of launching an at-

tack on Israel and the Sinai and of threatening essential installations or territory of ours. The IDF forces to the west of the Canal constitute a new military basis for initiating operational activities, should these be required.

In connection with the ceasefire, the U.S. Secretary of State, Dr. Kissinger, and his aides visited us on their way from Moscow to Washington. The visit provided an opportunity for clarifying questions arising in connection with the ceasefire as well as for exchanging views in a friendly fashion about what is to happen and the implications of Israel's response to the U.S. Government's appeal for a ceasefire. During this visit we continued and intensified the contacts which preceded the Security Council resolution.

All our contacts with the U.S. have taught me that not only has the U.S. no plan as regards the borders and the other components of peace, but it is also of the opinion that bodies with "good offices" should bring the parties involved, and them alone, to make proposals and draw up plans for the future. I should stress that according to reliable information which has reached us, nothing was agreed at the Moscow talks beyond what is contained in the Security Council resolution.

To date, the Syrian Government has not yet responded to the ceasefire resolution. Fighting continues on that front and the IDF will act in accordance with its plans. Our forces on the Egyptian front are still being fired upon and the IDF has had to act accordingly....At this stage all I can say is that we are monitoring the Egyptians' behavior and maintaining military and political alertness. If Egypt continues to fight we will regard ourselves as being free to take whatever action is required....We were not the ones who asked for the ceasefire, our situation on the fronts giving us no cause to do so. We did not initiate the Security Council resolution. Our forces were not in an inferior position on the fronts. We responded to the appeal made by the U.S. and its President because: A. By its nature, the State of Israel does not want war or the loss of human life. All Israel's governments have been convinced that wars would not bring peace. B. The ceasefire proposal came when our situation on both fronts was stable and we had made substantial gains...despite the enemy's achievement to the east of the Canal. C. We responded to the appeal of the U.S. and its President because of our esteem and gratitude for their positive policy in the Middle East at this time.

Our response has great significance for Israel's continued reinforcement, and especially for the continuation of military and political aid in the war which has been forced on us....The Arab rulers have been put to the test by the Security Council resolution. The world is watching while they decide whether to choose peace or the continuation of the war. The attitude of the Egyptian rulers to war and the loss of human life is different from ours. We remember what the Egyptian President said

about being ready to sacrifice millions of his people. On October 16, after the IDF had managed to establish a bridgehead on the west side of the Canal, the Egyptian President made a public speech mocking the ceasefire and demanding Israel's withdrawal to the borders prior to 5 June 1967....Not many days later Egypt agreed to the ceasefire. None of the conditions Sadat demanded in his speech were included in the Security Council resolution....

According to the official American interpretation of Section 3 of the Security Council resolution...the negotiations between Israel and its neighbors for a just and lasting peace should be direct. No such passage was included in Security Council Resolution 242. The present resolution even determines when these negotiations should begin, i.e., immediately and simultaneously with the ceasefire. It goes without saying that we attach great importance to that Section.

The start of direct negotiations between Israel and Egypt, which has agreed to a ceasefire, should also be regarded as conforming with Section 2 of the recent Security Council resolution regarding the ceasefire. It has always been the view of Israel's Government...that Resolution 242 will be implemented after there have been negotiations and agreement between the parties....Sections 2 and 3 of the Security Council resolution cannot be separated from one another...as has been recognized by the U.S....Israel attaches the greatest importance to the recent Security Council resolution. The ceasefire between Israel and the countries which have accepted it...and the start of direct peace negotiations could constitute an historic turning-point in the development of the Middle East, a turning-point from war to peace....

Thus, we agreed to the ceasefire from a position of strength, not weakness. In agreeing to the Security Council resolution we felt it was our duty to help introduce the change the region needs so urgently and which Israel has wanted for many years. This change is possible and necessary, and all it requires is a genuine willingness on the part of our neighbors. Unfortunately, however, I cannot tell you that there are signs that the Egyptian Government is ready to fulfill the obligations it accepted in agreeing to the ceasefire. Consequently, the Government of Israel will act as the situation requires....The Arab rulers supposedly advocate the implementation of Resolution 242, but foil any attempt to advance towards attaining its principal aim, peace, by their stubborn refusal to negotiate with us without any preconditions, and by their distorted interpretation of its original content and meaning. The Government of Israel has stated its position regarding Security Council Resolution 242 on various occasions....

In 1970 I said...that by virtue of Israel's right to secure and defensible borders it would never return to the borders of 4 June 1967, which exposed the country to...aggression and accorded decisive advantages to the aggressor. Our position was then and is now that without peace we

will maintain the situation which existed when the ceasefire was declared. The ceasefire lines can be exchanged only for secure and recognized borders which will be determined in a peace treaty....We also made it clear that we stand firm on the issue of united Jerusalem as the capital of Israel....The terrible war that has been forced on us now strengthens our resolve regarding the need for defensible borders, for which we will fight unremittingly.

It should be noted that since the start of the war extensive terrorist activities have also been resumed from the Lebanese border....The residents of the border areas may rest assured that the IDF is aware of the situation. Despite our defensive deployment on this front, it has once again been proved that defensive actions alone are insufficient for ending terrorism.

The war in which we are engaged began with an attack on two fronts. The aggressive initiative brought our enemies initial achievements, but thanks to the strength and spirit of the IDF, which rests on the entire nation, the attack was smashed. The aggressors were pushed back, large portions of their forces were destroyed and the IDF penetrated beyond the ceasefire lines. From holding actions our forces went over to the attack, gaining brilliant victories. On both fronts our forces are now beyond the ceasefire lines, in firm positions and with unbroken spirit. The nation is united around its Army.

Israel wants a ceasefire...which it will honor on the basis of mutuality, but only on that basis. With all its heart, Israel wants negotiations leading to peace to begin together with the ceasefire. Israel can find in itself the strength required to advance to a peace embodying respect for defensible borders. We would be glad if this readiness were also to be displayed by the people and Government of Egypt. But if the Egyptian rulers want to renew the war they will find Israel armed, ready and resolute.

On my way from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem I learned that Egypt has asked for a meeting of the Security Council. It apparently seeks to charge Israel with the crime which Egypt has committed. This indicates that the ceasefire was violated deliberately. Egypt is reminding us that we are at war. Not only peace, but also the preservation of the ceasefire, depends on the willingness of both sides. We still hope that Egypt will fulfill the undertaking it accepted only yesterday, but if it continues fighting, Israel will not remain quiet.

E. Rimalt (Gahal): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, the Government's surprising and hasty decision to respond to the American-Russian proposal in the Security Council arouses serious concern and anxiety for the future of our nation in the hearts of many people, many Jews, of every camp, every group, every view.

For over a week, from the day the vast Arab armies fell on Israel from the north and the south, armed with fantastic quantities of modern,

lethal weapons, the U.S.S.R. did not evince any anxiety, impatience or particular interest in using diplomacy to attain a ceasefire. Only when the IDF repelled the enemy, checked him, broke his lines and penetrated into Egypt in the south and onto the approach roads to Damascus in the north, did the U.S.S.R. suddenly see an urgent need to deal with the ceasefire. Because beforehand it had expected its arms and allies to defeat Israel. But after seeing the way the battle was going it began to exert increasing pressure on the U.S. to achieve a ceasefire immediately as well as to impose a political framework which would benefit its Arab allies. The IDF was prevented from gaining complete victory, which would also mean a political victory.

Who does not wish to applaud the ceasefire, the end to killing and bloodshed? After all, the whole country is mobilized, and who does not have a son, husband or brother among the soldiers? But proposing a ceasefire which is linked with Security Council Resolution 242...means a temporary interruption in the fighting, not the end of bloodshed....We cannot stand this periodic letting of blood whenever the Arabs, our enemies, think that they are ready to try and destroy the Jewish state again....That is why we must strive for nothing less than a stable peace, and that is why we must have borders which give us security and the ability to defend and preserve our rights.

I do not wish to criticize and argue today, because we are discussing a ceasefire which has not yet come into effect. It is a strange situation. Twenty-four hours after the ceasefire was to have come into effect our enemies violate it, continuing to rain bullets and shells on our soldiers. Our debate tonight has something of a Kafkaesque quality. But what did we achieve by the Security Council resolution and why did we agree to it? We have undertaken to begin implementing a resolution which says that Israel must withdraw. The Knesset is familiar with the semantic argument about "territories" and "all the territories," but about withdrawal there is no debate....The most liberal interpretation of Resolution 242, that of the Rogers Plan...refers to withdrawal from all the territories with some slight border changes....With all my respect for the Government—and even as a member of the Opposition my first allegiance is always to my Government—when there are differences of opinion in the interpretation of the U.N. resolution between Israel and the two Powers, ours is irrelevant....

As for the connection between Sections 2 and 3...what guarantee do we have that the Arabs and the U.S.S.R. will regard this in the same light as we do, even though the Americans have told us that they do?...There have been instances in the past when assurances given to us by the Americans on behalf of the Russians were not fulfilled...as in 1970, when we were told that the missiles would not be moved. Those missiles cost us many precious lives in this war....We should not have agreed to Section 2, and I do not accept the view...that had we not done so

we would have found ourselves at odds with our American friends.... Altogether, our agreement was given too hastily...especially in view of the fact that this war has brought home to us the crucial importance of territory and defensive depth....I am not trying to convince you to accept our view regarding the Land of Israel and our right to it in its entirety. I am speaking in the simple language of security. What would Israel's fate have been had the masses of the Egyptian and Syrian armies launched their assaults on us from points nearer to concentrations of population, and we were taken by surprise, as we were...? It is both wicked and naive to claim that the events of the war indicate that even natural barriers do not constitute defensible borders, because we were taken by surprise, we were not ready....I personally do not repudiate the Government's decision not to fire the first shot...but I deplore the fact that we were not deployed and ready in time....

One cannot lightly dismiss our renewed commitment to Resolution 242...and we will not be able to break up talks held under the auspices of the two Powers if a plan similar to the Rogers Plan is proposed....In addition, I believe that in accordance with international and every other kind of law, if one of the sides to an agreement attacks the other side, the injured party is released from all obligations arising from that agreement....I think that we were forced to accept the U.S. proposal...as was indicated by the alacrity with which this was done....This is merely a sign of what is to come, namely, an imposed settlement...and that is why we oppose the Government's position. The IDF was victorious, but the State of Israel did not gain a political victory.

No human language...can adequately express the splendid heroism of our soldiers, some of them mere striplings, during the first two days in particular. With their young bodies they checked the torrents of steel and the infernos of firepower, overcoming the terror and dread of being few against many and so ill-equipped....Their heroism surpasses any other in our entire history. Our sons who fell vanquished death before it defeated them. Perhaps that is some consolation to the bereaved families and parents.

The IDF gained a brilliant victory, but was prevented from completing the battle and gaining a decisive conquest. In political terms we have achieved a draw. This may serve to encourage...the Arabs' basic approach in the dispute between us....What they want is to attack the Jewish state every few years in an attempt to destroy it...for even defeat or partial success is turned into a political achievement by them, with the help of the U.N., their friends and the Powers....I regard the Government's hasty acceptance of the U.S. dictate...as a prize for aggression....

We all know that our neighbors' deep-seated hostility towards the sovereign Jewish nation constitutes a tragic human aspect of the dispute. But it exists, and a long period of adaptation, of acceptance of a

strong Israel by our enemies and despair of ever being able to destroy it, is needed. The dispute cannot be resolved immediately, by a dictate.... True peace, genuine coexistence, which we all want, cannot be attained overnight. It is a process which takes years, and may have to be done in stages....I think that our living with the inhabitants and citizens of the Land of Israel is one of the approaches to mutual adaptation, to getting to know and live with one another. But in order to attain this in the future we must maintain our strength and our defensive depth...not rely on guarantees from the U.N., European "friends" or any U.N. force. I know that the majority within the Government...does not regard Resolution 242 as the Magna Carta of peace and security for Israel. But there are also those who maintain that it holds the solution to all our problems....We cannot depend on ingenious interpretations of Resolution 242 to protect our interests.

Our nation is a great and wonderful one, particularly in times of danger and distress. Would that we could preserve some of that exaltation for grayer times when danger is less apparent. I think, however, that I am not exaggerating when I say that there is an ever-growing gap and a deepening lack of understanding between this nation and its political leaders.

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Z. Hammer (Mafdal): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, as we gather here on the eighteenth day of the war, it is our duty to express something of what we feel for the bereaved families, the wounded and those who are still fighting. Many of our sons and brothers fell in this war, and it is to them...that the Jewish people in Israel owes its life. Their sacred and precious memory will always be with us. May God remember their souls....We share the pain of the widows, orphans and bereaved parents....May they be consoled by the knowledge that their sacrifice was not in vain....We pray that God will give the wounded a full and speedy recovery....

The battle is not yet over. We give praise to our soldiers and officers and our deepest gratitude to the IDF, to those who withstood the onslaught of the enemy, few against many, holding and repelling him, striking at those who sought to destroy us and taking the war into the enemy's territory...thereby giving us a military advantage. The God of Israel was with us, and neither the soldiers nor the officers doubt this. The Bibles, prayer books and books of psalms with which every soldier is equipped, the prayers prior to the battle, the scrolls of the law in the units and the role of Israel's Chief Rabbi, Rabbi Goren, in the battle all prove this. But our wonderful boys, those doing their regular military service as well as the reservists, senior and junior officers, in every force, all did their work with dedication. They deserve everything from our nation, and the nation will never forget this. May God protect and strengthen them.

While we debate the ceasefire the fighting continues, and with great intensity. I hope my friends the politicians and representatives of the people here, whose deep concern, patriotism and good intentions are not disputed, whether they are in the Government or the Opposition, will not be angry with me if I say what is in my heart and also as the representative of citizens whose dear ones have been involved in heavy fighting for a long time. We have been told that the time has not yet come for entering into a discussion about the past, not because there is nothing to discuss, there is, and we will doubtless all have our say, but what is needed at present is the complete unity of the nation, and a discussion of this kind could cause harm.

I think our soldiers would find it difficult to understand it if we were to start examining what happened before the war while they were still being shelled and fired at, were summoning up the last vestiges of their physical and emotional strength to strike the enemy, and their blood was still being shed. The time has not yet come for the wars of the Jews. It is still too early for that. I genuinely am not referring to any side, neither Coalition nor Opposition. I ask this of myself, of us all. There are questions, difficult questions, and they will be raised...but please, let us postpone them until after victory is secured, after all is quiet on the fronts. Believe me, the entire nation is withholding its questions while the enemy continues to shed our blood....It is the Israeli nation, not the Government, the Opposition or the parties, which is conducting the war....

The day will come when we will have to examine the nature of our society, its objectives and vision, criticize its faults and put an end to those negative aspects which may have affected us here and there. We will all have something to say about beliefs and views, about way of life and behavior, about preferences and priorities, etc. I hope and believe that then we will take a fresh look at many aspects of our lives....But now we need our finest, most sublime, most exalted hour....We need national unity in order to smash the enemy, because there is still a crucial battle ahead of us. We must discuss the appropriate political action to be taken, but we must not debate the recent past in relation to the actual war.

Today's debate has focused on the ceasefire....We did not initiate this war...and even today we have no desire to conquer and annex Cairo and Damascus. Our basic aspiration was and is to live in our land in peace and security. The Arabs started the war against the Jews, demanding the return of territory and seeking to destroy us, cause us heavy losses and annihilate our state. With God's help—and I know that even the Minister of Defense feels the same—and the IDF we prevented the enemy from attaining his aim...and struck back at him....Today we are in a military position which permits us to accept a ceasefire. It is true that if the fighting were to continue for another two or

three days we would be in a still better position, but...on both fronts we have a clear military advantage. That is undoubtedly why the Arabs and the Russians want the ceasefire.

The enlightened world in Europe, Asia and Africa does not appear to have been unduly perturbed by the Arabs' intention of destroying Israel....That may be a subject for debate after the war....Many Asian and African countries severed their ties with us during the war or acted against us, each one in their own way. A superpower before which virtually the whole world trembles was in almost direct confrontation with us. Another superpower, America, was the only country to support us openly....It is true that we do not like pressure and dictates in matters which concern our very existence...but the relations between the U.S. and Israel are of a special nature....We must admit that our relations with the U.S. during this war are of the utmost security importance to us. But they are by no means one-sided or devoid of freedom....There are issues on which we may find ourselves completely alone against the world. We must do our utmost to ensure that this does not happen. The spirit of Massada is not to be assumed lightly. But there are issues which concern our very essence, our rights and our security, which must be decided by us and by us alone.

But we agreed to a ceasefire without any conditions which we are not prepared to meet because our military position enabled us to accept the advice and initiative of friends and give peace a chance, because a ceasefire could be a first step in that direction, and also in order to stop the killing. There is no need to stress here how concerned we all are, unlike the enemy, to preserve human life. Every soldier, every family, every officer—of this I am sure—is prepared to make every effort which will reduce the number of our casualties, and a ceasefire might achieve that. The nation wants direct peace negotiations. The Americans assure us that this is what is involved. We all want the immediate release of our prisoners of war...and we are told that this will indeed happen.

It is my belief that the Government neither could nor should have rejected a ceasefire, despite the problems and dangers it arouses. That is why the members of my party group approved it, not in order to waste it and enter a fool's paradise, but in order to utilize it in every respect and to strengthen and improve our position for whatever the future may bring....In our view, however, the ceasefire is in no way connected with an Israeli withdrawal. We are not enamored of Resolution 242, and have our own interpretation of it....Its implementation is connected with peace negotiations, not with the ceasefire. But the main subject is the borders, particularly in the situation created by this massive and aggressive war....

I am familiar with the attitudes of some of our national leaders, the decisions of our movement and my own views on the subject....These have been strengthened, not weakened by the war....I know that politi-

cans have not changed their minds, but I know what the nation, the soldiers and the officers are saying....Those who thought once that territory had no military value now hold the opposite view. They know very well what would have happened to us had that territory not stood between us and that tremendous force...and if King Hussein had joined the fray....A small regular army like ours, based on reserves and needing time to deploy itself against an army as huge as that of the Arabs, needs that depth. On no account can we agree to Israel's returning our Land of Israel to the King of Jordan. It is not his country. It is an operative and unequivocal matter of principle for our movement not to support a decision of that kind.

Our movement has not yet spoken clearly on the issue of the Sinai. But it is clear to me now, as it is to the entire nation, I think, that we must study the subject very closely and reassess it. Even in a peace treaty with Egypt, and certainly until there are genuine peace relations, we can on no account accept the fact that the aggressor who is constantly threatening us with renewed war should be close to us. In order to protect ourselves from his attacks and also to repel him it is our moral duty to our nation as well as essential for our security that we remain well within secure and defensible borders.

Our only understanding of Resolution 242 is in accordance with our interpretation of it, namely, that it does not commit us to withdrawal, as the Arabs and their supporters imagine, and when the time comes for the political struggle about it that, I believe, will be Israel's position, even if we remain alone against the rest of the world as a result. These are fateful days for our nation and our country...and we must do everything to prepare for them and endure them. We must all be worthy of our nation at the front and the rear, we must prepare ourselves for the period ahead, and...may He who maketh peace above, give us and all Israel peace.

J. Hazan (Ma'arach): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, never in my life have I felt the burden of responsibility weighing upon me as heavily as it does now, as I ascend this podium....I know that I am addressing our nation whose nerves are stretched beyond endurance. I am addressing our nation which has made a terrible sacrifice in this war and is silently weeping for its dear ones. I am addressing the soldiers at the front, who had victory in their hands and stand proudly and sadly on every front...exhausted yet ready to continue to make an effort.... The living hold fast to their weapons and weep angrily but silently for their fallen comrades. They know that they saved the nation from the gravest danger.

This nation fought as it did because it wanted this war to be its last, because it yearned for peace. And now we have the ceasefire. It came in the thick of the decisive battles, and the nation wants to know if this ceasefire was necessary, if it brought us nearer to the goal we seek, and whether, if the fighting is resumed, we will be in a better position than

before....I am a party man, a member of Mapam and the Ma'arach, and believe in my party's vision. But I speak today as a Jew who, if his conscience had clashed with his party's position, would not have ascended this podium today....

If I had been a member of the Government I would have voted for the ceasefire, not because of obligation or discipline but because of moral responsibility. I would have voted for it with an anxious heart...knowing that the decision was fateful and crucial for the future of the battle in which we are engaged and whose ultimate objective is peace, and knowing that this step was at least as crucial as the Government's decision on the eve of the Day of Atonement not to launch a preemptive strike even though the war was almost certain then. We accepted that terrible danger in order to assure ourselves of the necessary aid in this fateful battle. It has been proved that that decision was the correct one, and I am convinced that for the same reason this decision is also the correct one....

Only irresponsible people can attack the Government's decision today. Despite the vicious attack by Egypt and Syria on the Day of Atonement, we were on the verge of a crushing victory, first of all because of the almost superhuman fighting spirit of the soldiers of the IDF...and because of the firm resolve of the entire nation which, though anxious, trusted in its sons as they fought on every front. We were on the verge of victory also because of the aid, the weapons, we received during the fighting in the form of the American airlift which was organized when it became clear to the U.S. that the U.S.S.R. was conducting an enormous airlift of weapons and ammunition to the Arab countries, which let the U.S.S.R. down once again....

The U.S.S.R. did not only prepare the war by equipping the Arab countries with unparalleled quantities of arms...it also continued to do so during the fighting. It was responsible for the outbreak of war as well as for the continuation of the killing. The help of the U.S.—albeit somewhat belated—confronted the U.S.S.R. with a new situation...its proteges being on the point of collapse....Our Government's decision, which was a bold and terrible one...was proved to be the correct one. I hope the same will apply to its decision regarding the ceasefire. The U.S.S.R. faced yet another failure, constituting a threat to its position as a world Power and to the reliability of its weapons...which had been bestowed liberally on those whose sole aim was the destruction of Israel.

I remember that when Prime Minister Golda Meir was Foreign Minister I asked for her permission to meet the Soviet Ambassador and speak to him—not solely in my personal capacity—about the U.S.S.R.'s one-sided policy in supplying arms to the Middle East, one which would inevitably lead to war in the region and the increased hostility of the Jews for the U.S.S.R. She agreed, and I asked him why they adhered to this policy....He replied: Why do you need arms? What good will it do

you? There are two million of you and a hundred million Arabs. You are doomed. You have no hope of winning. What good will our arms do you? I asked him what he advised us to do. He replied: Pray to God. Anyone who knows Russian knows that that is the advice given to condemned men on the battlefield. I answered: I accept your advice, but remember, when we start praying the echoes will reach the walls of the Kremlin. And so they did, for the third time, and this time more than ever.

At the beginning of the fighting the U.S.S.R. rejected any compromise initiated by the U.S. with the intention of ending hostilities...but now it is ready for an unconditional ceasefire, and was the one to propose it. What has happened here...is that we have ceased to be an "aggressor" who must withdraw before the other side agrees to negotiate with us....For the first time the U.S.S.R. is not demanding that we undertake to withdraw to the 1967 boundaries as a precondition for peace. For the first time it has agreed that the way to peace is by direct negotiations between the sides. The U.S. could not entertain rejecting those Soviet proposals....I must say quite frankly that I am not altogether convinced that this is the path to peace, but one thing is clear, in the circumstances, we had no alternative but to accept the U.S.'s advice. We had to take all the risks involved in an attempt to attain peace without further bloodshed. We had to do it in order to assure continued aid from the U.S.

We must remember in what kind of a world we are living. Only today we heard that the Lion of Judah, the king of Ethiopia, has severed his ties with us. Is that what we get for our friendship and help? He did it because he is afraid of the Arab world. Fear and selfish interests rule the world....Worse still, Pontius Pilate has been resurrected, under new names...one of them being Sir Alec Douglas-Home, and is once more washing his hands....We must look the truth in the face and be ready for everything. The U.S.S.R. is continuing to send a stream of arms to the Arab countries. Our response to the U.S. proposal is justified...on condition it continues giving us aid and does not revert to its vacillating policy...which sought to maintain the "delicate balance" in the region. I hope it learned a lesson from the military and political developments of the last few weeks...and that the flow of arms to us will not only not be reduced, but will be increased. We are grateful to the U.S. for its aid...but we wish it would rely less on the qualitative superiority of Israel's soldiers and offset the mighty flow of arms reaching the Arab countries from the U.S.S.R. That alone would lead the U.S.S.R. to realize that it will not be able to attain its objectives in the region at the expense of Israel's existence.

This ceasefire affords Egypt the opportunity of entering negotiations with us not as a defeated country. Sadat doubtless knows today...that Egypt was on the verge of an overwhelming defeat, but today it can still claim to have fought and, while not having achieved its aim, not to have

been beaten....If Sadat does not take this opportunity, another war will be inevitable, with obvious results. But we do not want military victories. We want peace. This ceasefire could lead to the beginnings of peace negotiations...which will be a long and difficult process....But the entire nation would never forgive itself if we did not try to take this opportunity, with all its attendant dangers....Only the Government's courageous and responsible decision guarantees that if the fighting is resumed the U.S. will fulfill its obligation to itself as a Power in this region as well as to us....

We must be ready for everything, and we are. We know that there will not be peace without painful compromises by both sides. The Government will have to be as brave here as in the military campaign. There will be no peace which is not based on exploiting all the possibilities so that it is fair to both sides and both nations residing in the Greater Land of Israel on both sides of the Jordan. Nor will there be peace unless we are assured secure and defensible borders. If someone failed to realize that before this war, perhaps they realize it now....We were saved by the heroism of our brothers and sons, and even our grandsons. But we were also saved by virtue of the borders, which made it easier for us to check the enemy, and by virtue of the distances, which enabled us to deploy our forces effectively....

The new borders must be determined through direct negotiations with our neighbors. We do not need to occupy territory, but without secure borders we will not have a stable and enduring peace. As I said last week, this war has destroyed many beliefs and illusions...forcing us to rethink our views about secure borders....Because this war must be the last in our time. All our strength must be devoted to attaining that objective—peace.

...

G. Hausner (Independent Liberals): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, yesterday the Government of Israel took a highly responsible decision involving a calculated risk for an important result. The risk is in the military sphere. The ceasefire line is a convoluted one which crosses the Suez Canal. We have not managed to dislodge the Egyptians from the eastern side of the Canal. The Egyptians can make use of the absence of a clearcut ceasefire line to undermine the basis of the ceasefire. They could also build military installations facing our troops, making the entire ceasefire a temporary truce. This is a very real threat, as they tricked us in August 1970, when they moved their missiles forward...thereby causing us heavy losses in this war.

The Government must give its full attention to the grave risk and make the situation clear to the U.S. Government....We accepted the ceasefire at America's urging, and the U.S. should do everything necessary to ensure that this is not to our detriment. We are entitled to expect an American statement to the effect that Israel will be strengthened

in the future, not merely in order to replace weapons that were destroyed in the war but also to enable us to deter the enemy from turning the ceasefire into a trap. We should also be able to expect increased political support from the U.S. now that we have put our trust in it...thereby converting the risk into a chance of progress towards peace.

We have been told that the U.S. will insist on linking the implementation of the two Security Council resolutions with direct negotiations between the two sides....Direct talks, however long and arduous, would constitute a significant step towards a settlement. But once the ice is broken there is also a chance that feelings of hostility will melt....In the hope of attaining that result the Government of Israel accepted responsibility for the ceasefire. We will retain our new military positions until a political settlement is reached, and will have to discuss and decide on the borders among ourselves. Once the talks begin there will be a penetrating internal debate. Naturally, we need borders within which we may dwell in safety. We must not agree to borders which will make it easier for the aggressor and tempt him to attack. This war has proved to us the necessity of having territory which can absorb the enemy's attack and within which the Army can deploy itself....But it has also proved that the actual retention of territory does not prevent the outbreak of war....

Far-reaching and imaginative political thinking will be needed now to raise new possibilities of attaining peace and security. Over and above all, this should be through negotiations. Gahal claims that what occurred was because we were not ready on the borders. Can we be certain that we will always be aware of possible attacks in the future...? In this painful war we had only one powerful ally, the U.S., which has helped us reach this point....This unwritten alliance was strengthened three years ago, when we responded to the American peace initiative. The three years in which the IDF received American arms and equipment were of the utmost importance. In 1970 we acted against Gahal's advice that we reject the initiative....We need America's support today more than ever. We must not delude ourselves that Israel can fight without the aid of weapons, our only source of which is America. The Arab armies which attacked us were equipped with vast amounts of the most sophisticated Soviet arms. Given these conditions, the Government could not have jeopardized our relations with the U.S. We did not ask for the ceasefire, but when we were asked by the Americans to accept it, and we were already in a superior position on the fronts, the Government could not refuse.

The old argument about the Government's acceptance of Security Council Resolution 242 has been raised here. The Knesset approved this in the wake of the U.S. initiative three years ago. Yesterday's Security Council resolution is infinitely preferable to Resolution 242, because it refers to direct negotiations, this being the immediate and most impor-

tant benefit accruing from the IDF's magnificent military achievement. Israel must believe that there will one day be a turning-point in Israel-Arab relations, and that is why it responds to every possibility of a shift. The Jewish people exists by virtue of its faith and its historic optimism....That is the spirit which guides us in accepting the ceasefire. We must not ignore the risks it embodies, but we must reinforce our hope that it will eventually lead to peace.

Some people have made grave accusations in public about security lapses....It is true that the public has some weighty questions about the beginning of the war and our unpreparedness. The time will come to raise them. But now, today, they must be deferred....There is still fighting at the fronts, soldiers are still being killed and wounded, bereaved families are still mourning their sons. This is a time for closing ranks. I hope that all the parties in this House will realize that this is what is needed now. One of the Government's cardinal considerations in reaching its decision yesterday was to prevent further bloodshed....Would anyone like to accept responsibility for the unnecessary loss of more lives...? The entire nation is united in honoring its heroic sons, who fought in the splendid tradition of Israel's heroes....For their sakes we must spare no effort to prevent the shedding of another drop of their blood superfluously. Consequently, it was necessary to accept the ceasefire.

Y. Hurwitz (National List): Madam Speaker, Knesset Members, today and in the days to come we will mourn our losses on the battlefield. We will be proud of the heroism of our soldiers....What I have to say now I say with a very heavy heart, but with a great sense of responsibility. Sometimes it seems that this is not the right time for this, the casualty lists have not yet been published...the IDF is still fighting on the fronts...yet the rapid succession of political and military events obliges us to undertake a careful and thorough assessment now rather than later....

Who among us does not want a ceasefire...? But we must learn the lessons of the ceasefire of the end of the War of Attrition...when the Egyptians and the Russians advanced sophisticated anti-aircraft missile batteries to the Canal zone and for three years prepared the highly-advanced dispositions which enabled them to invade the Sinai Peninsula....We have paid a heavy price in blood, the blood of pilots, the blood of soldiers, for that violation of the ceasefire....This ceasefire, which we all want, will be of value only if it leads to a settlement....The Prime Minister and the Minister of Defense have said that this war will end only with the attainment of peace. The ceasefire must lead to a peace settlement and permanent borders which provide Israel with security. The entire nation must be clear-sighted today, weighing up the situation carefully in order not to be tempted by empty assurances....Although American interests forced a draw on the battlefield upon the Govern-

ment, and although the IDF was at the peak of its momentum and the Egyptian army on the verge of collapse...we must not permit the ceasefire to enable Egypt to rehabilitate its army prior to a renewed attack. Israel must definitely not accept a ceasefire today, thereby enabling the aggressor to recover and reestablish his military positions in order to attack us once more at the earliest opportunity.

I had hoped that this war would lead us all to reassess the situation, but in Israel people do not want to learn from history, as is proved by their stubborn adherence to their former positions. There is still the hope that the war will shake the nation's calm, exaggerated self-confidence, lack of alertness, tendency to accept false remedies...and national masochism.

What happened to us in October 1973? A month ago we were engaged in an election campaign, in the pursuit of prosperity, in addition to false political remedies. We all told ourselves that in the three years since the ceasefire Israel had become stronger. All at once, almost, the situation was reversed, and on the Day of Atonement and the days which followed we were in a situation where official spokesmen spoke of miracles, critical dangers and the need for a supreme effort in order to repel the dreadful dangers. Our Army did indeed display tremendous self-sacrifice, fighting ability and emotional readiness which words cannot describe. But the splendor of the IDF cannot and must not cover up the Government's blunders.

Those people who are always telling us that they are the only ones who know how to do things say that the nation is divided into two: those who know how to do things, how to build things, and those who know how to carp and criticize, who are always wise after the event....I am aware of the gravity of what I am saying. I would not say it, or would defer saying it, if I believed that this Government has and will have the courage to realize that there is cause for anxiety, cause for criticism of mistakes, to realize that we need to reappraise things, that our former assessments were wrong, perhaps not only in the past but in the present too.

Questions have been asked, indicating the clear-sightedness of the nation even now....While it fought bravely, with clenched teeth, it constantly asked bothersome questions about both the past and the future. At first we refrained from asking those questions, but we started to receive answers before the questions had been asked, which leaves us no choice but to clarify our questions....I am referring primarily to the soldiers who asked everyone they met why events took this turn, why we moved in the twinkling of an eye from a sense of self-satisfaction to one of depression and powerlessness. How strange it is to hear the Ma'arach representatives speaking even today about satisfaction, without any hint at the need to draw conclusions, to express regret, to rethink matters, to feel less confident....This is not the place for clarifying such key questions as how did it happen that we were surprised on several levels and were

deprived of our ability to react swiftly? That will doubtless be discussed, but I would suggest that we all, especially those responsible, refrain from looking for excuses and scapegoats. For I do not believe that the nation will accept them easily after this terrible and bitter war....

It was a surprise to hear and read criticism of the secure borders and strategic depth which the Six Day War gave us. Some people think that this war proved that the borders of June 1967 were worthless and therefore we could have relinquished them over the last six years. There were people who said that borders and territory are of no value in modern warfare, but this war revealed how stubborn and bloody a war waged over only a few square miles can be. This war proved how essential strategic depth is by enabling the IDF to refrain from making a preemptive strike, and I accept that it was logical that we were not the ones to strike first. Today we are told that this was not done for political reasons...but I say that this depth protects our centers of population and enables us to refrain from making the first move....

We are told that the IDF, not the borders, gave us security. That is true, of course. The IDF is Israel's security border. But it has become patently clear that the borders along which the IDF is deployed are of crucial importance....The borders of June 1967 gave the IDF the essential and irreplaceable benefits of time and space....That is the most important lesson of this war. Another is that no borders permit complacency and exaggerated self-confidence. A canal provides defense only if the defending force is ready to defend it in a timely and efficient way.

...

M. Wilner (Rakah): Madam Speaker, Knesset Members, the Security Council resolution, as proposed by the U.S.S.R. and the U.S., concerning a ceasefire and the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, was received with relief and satisfaction by the vast majority in Israel. It is good that the dreadful bloodshed should at last come to an end, that the way to peace should be found, that was the general feeling....This was the bloodiest war in Israel's history. Thousands of Jewish and Arab youngsters were killed or wounded. The nation wants not only a ceasefire but an enduring peace, so that the threat of war may at long last be removed from it....The Security Council resolution may constitute the start of an historic turning-point. But there are people who have mixed feelings, even anger, about Security Council Resolution 338...and who wish to continue the war...in order to smash the Arab armies to smithereens and conquer Cairo and Damascus, as they put it. Even official circles do not deny that yesterday's Security Council resolution did not suit their plans...and that they needed a few more days of fighting....

We are very concerned about what we have heard regarding the continued fighting at the fronts. Even after the Security Council decided on a ceasefire it was regarded as necessary to sacrifice the lives of Jews

and Arabs in a battle of prestige to conquer another strip of land, the position on Mount Hermon, which we will anyway have to return to Syria. Does that not contradict the declaration about concern for human life?

The Deputy Prime Minister, Y. Allon: The positions on Mount Hermon were taken before the Security Council decided on a ceasefire and for defense reasons. Syria has not yet accepted the Security Council resolution. And take care in speaking of feelings connected with blood....Do not compare the Arab aggressor and the Israeli defender in allocating responsibility for the war. Watch your tongue.

M. Wilner (Rakah): Someone who occupies the territory of other countries should not speak as you do.

H. Landau (Gahal): You are a foreign agent, and speak as one.

M. Wilner (Rakah): I have already said in the previous debate that this war could have been avoided...but you insisted on annexations, you foiled every peace initiative. Consequently, at least keep quiet on that score. You did not prevent a war which could have been avoided, thereby saving the lives of our dear boys....The public is asking a great many questions. The public is not what it was before the war. Not only the Communists, but the public at large, rejects your policy....People want to know what will happen in the future, and whether future wars will be avoided....

M. Yedid (Gahal): You are an anti-Semite.

M. Wilner (Rakah): You did not prevent this war, this anti-Israel war, against the Israeli nation.

Y. Hurwitz (National List): Your weapons killed our boys. You had better keep quiet, you bastard. The U.S.S.R. caused this slaughter.

M. Wilner (Rakah): If you had listened to me, to everything I have constantly been saying in the Knesset, boys would not have been killed. You want annexation instead of peace. That is what caused the renewal of the war.

Avner Shaki: Liar! Were there annexations before 1967?

M. Wilner (Rakah): Instead of peace you wanted annexations. Is the Galili Plan a peace plan?

The Deputy Prime Minister, Y. Allon: Do you justify the Soviet-supported Arab aggression?

M. Wilner (Rakah): I oppose your policy. Leave the territories outside Israel and then Israel will dwell in peace. Who says that we have to control Nablus, Hebron and the Sinai? I am prepared to devote every-

thing to protecting Israel's security, but I am not prepared to rule other people.

H. Landau (Gahal): You are a foreign agent here. You speak and act like a foreign agent.

M. Wilner (Rakah): You want to rule other people.

H. Landau (Gahal): You don't belong here.

M. Wilner (Rakah): You are a warmonger. Because of you boys are killed. What did you tell our youngsters? You members of Herut, of Gahal, are the reason why our boys' blood was shed. I want to protect Israeli youngsters from these warmongers....

M. Begin (Gahal): Madam Speaker...such hooligan-like statements cannot be permitted....

H. Landau (Gahal): There is no place for foreign agents here. They shall not speak here. You will not speak here, you foreign agent!

E. Razi'el-Na'or (Gahal): He must step down! Such things cannot be said here!

(MKs Keshet and Drobles ascend the podium and attempt to remove MK Wilner from it.)

The Speaker, T. Sanhedrai: Knesset Members, let us maintain the dignity of the Knesset. I declare a five-minute recess.

(Other MKs approach the podium.)

M. Begin (Gahal): He shall not say that we are guilty of bloodshed!

H. Landau (Gahal): Those agents shall not ascend the podium! He may speak in Moscow, not in Israel. Go to Moscow....

...

Saif Aldin Alzuabi (Progress and Development): Madam Speaker, what I am about to say this evening comes from the depths of my heart. I hope it will not be misinterpreted. The Six Day War ended with a minimum of casualties. Large quantities of enemy weapons fell into Israel's hands as booty after Arab land was conquered. That could have been the last war, but if we want to draw up an account of losses and gains as regards territory—and especially life—today, the conclusion is that the losses outweigh the gains by far. Life is immeasurably more precious than land, even land which is saturated with oil and gold and every precious metal. The truth is, however, that that land is saturated only with evil and hatred. We have suffered greatly through the cruelty of war, as have the Arab peoples.

On more than one occasion I have expressed my sense of oppression as regards this situation, being a loyal citizen of Israel who wishes to see Arabs and Jews living together in peace and cooperation, and being

a son of the Arab nation, which I hope will prosper....That is why my heart grieves when I look at the situation, at the blood which has been shed and the casualties which have fallen on both sides. I have often...expressed the view that we must leave the territories in order to avoid problems and dangers which could arise from retaining them. I expressed this view especially when I felt that, despite the economic prosperity enjoyed by the residents of the territories as well as their hatred of the Jordanian regime and their dissatisfaction with the attitude evinced by the regime and the army, they nevertheless preferred that life to that of today, and secretly wished they had a chance of harming Israel in return for the benefit it has brought them.

I was also convinced that the retention of the territories bore within it the seed of evil and destruction. The Arab countries always said that they were ready to come to terms with Israel and sit down at the negotiating table provided their territories were returned to them....Many Israel leaders and citizens were ready to return the territories on certain conditions in order to prevent what might happen in the future in view of the large numbers of inhabitants there and the heavy responsibility which weighs on Israel. Those attempts failed and the chances of returning the territories vanished. The Arab leaders, incited by an external element, decided to regain the territories at all costs and despite the unlikelihood of succeeding in this...thereby proving to their people that they had fulfilled their promises of the last six years.

It is not the outcome of the war which is important to the Arab peoples. They wanted to prove to the world that they could fight, if only for a few days or weeks. For example, Anwar Sadat was regarded as a hero when he crossed the Suez Canal, because no one imagined that an Arab army—or even all the Arab armies together—could achieve that....I do not think that Sadat's position in Egypt is in danger today. The Arab peoples will doubtless admire Sadat's decision for many years to come, even if the entire Egyptian army is destroyed.

I had no doubt that in the final event Israel would be victorious in the war...but I think that the outcome indicates that no one was the true victor. The war broke out despite Israel's firm stand and the glorious acts of bravery of the officers and soldiers of the IDF. Israel fought well, even though taken by surprise. But the Arabs also surprised the world...with their unity and their ability to withstand the IDF....No one believed that the Arabs would use oil as a weapon, it being their prime source of income...but they did, proving that they were prepared to make every sacrifice. The Arabs also embarked on this war in order to regain their honor and their pride....

I have always thought that Anwar Sadat was an intelligent and cautious man, and admired him as such...though his most recent speech in the Egyptian National Council, in which he claimed victory for the Egyptian army and addressed the U.S. while ignoring Israel,

does not bear this out....By doing this Sadat missed an opportunity for starting a dialogue with Israel which could eventually have had beneficial results....

Israel has not implemented Security Council Resolution 242, claiming that it does not guarantee the safe and recognized borders it seeks....King Hussein has stated that...safe borders derive from peace and security rather than from land or rockets, rivers or wadis. But Israel's leaders and citizens were not convinced, perhaps because of their lack of trust in the Arab leaders with their internal disagreements. In Israel's view, a leader who signs an agreement today may be overthrown by a coup tomorrow and the agreement revoked....This claim has no validity when the Arab leaders are in agreement with one another...and when the two Powers back the settlements which are reached....Then talk of secure borders becomes meaningless. I am sure that the two world Powers are prepared to guarantee an agreement of that kind...in addition to the steps which the U.N. will take to that end....And above all, the IDF is the best deterrent against aggression directed against Israel....

The last war...was fought far away from Israel's centers of population and near or on Arab territory. I was convinced from the outset that Israel would win. I have abandoned the view I held previously as to peace being attainable solely by force....It is now my opinion that the greater the use of force, the less attainable peace becomes. The longer the Arab peoples live with a sense of shame and humiliation, the firmer will be their resolve to expunge this by declaring war as soon as they feel strong enough. For the Arabs of today are not those of yesterday. They are rich materially and in terms of manpower. In addition, there is the element which incites and equips them for war....The Arabs will be persuaded to abandon the idea of war and accept the concept of negotiations only if they feel that their honor has been restored....

It is known that the Arabs have changed their thinking and no longer intend to commit atrocities on any part of Israel's territory prior to 1967. They are convinced now that Israel is here to stay, and one day they will recognize it....I am convinced that the Arabs are ready to make peace with Israel...once Israel recognizes the rights of the Palestinian refugees....As a result of this war there will be great sadness among the Jewish and Arab families which lost their dear ones....Those families are concealing their pain, so as not to harm public morale. But they will not respond to another call to war, preferring to live with their sons and daughters and neighbors in security, peace and mutual respect....

The loss of life will be felt more acutely in Israel than in the Arab countries because of the difference between the Israel and Arab armies in quantity and quality. When the fiery furnace consumed both the nations of the region, who are linked by blood and race more than other

nations, two other sides sat far away in Moscow to discuss the dispute and find a solution for it in accordance with their interests in the region...eventually reaching the proposal later approved by the U.N. regarding the ceasefire and the implementation of Resolution 242 which dates from 1967. Cannot the Arabs and the Jews reach an agreement as to the interpretation of the resolution so that there may be peace between them? Haven't they learned a lesson from their bitter experience...? I pray to God to grant understanding to both Arabs and Jews so that they may act for the benefit of their people and their countries in just and absolute peace, may it come speedily, with God's will.

...

S. Tamir (Free Center): Madam Speaker, Knesset Members, the bitter battles are still continuing. Our dead lie before us. Thousands of families fear for their loved ones. There is, therefore, a reluctance to debate and certainly to disagree. But while the war is being waged...fateful political decisions are being taken, and there is consequently no alternative but to engage in clarifications, even if these involve dissent. One's initial reaction to the ceasefire...is a sigh of relief...which is echoed all across the nation....Nonetheless...a heavy cloud of anxiety weighs on the nation since hearing...that the Government has undertaken to implement Security Council Resolution 242, which requires Israel to withdraw from the territories, or territories, occupied in the Six Day War....

Let us just imagine that the two thousand Syrian tanks launch a surprise attack on Israel from the shores of Lake Tiberias rather than the Syrian Heights, that the two thousand Egyptian tanks storm across the border near Ashkelon, not from the other side of the Canal, that the hundreds of tanks in the east are massed in Kalkilya, Tulkarm and Ramallah, rather than on the other side of the Jordan River...and that the missiles which prevent our aircraft flying freely in our airspace and are aimed at our centers of population and industry are situated on those lines too—would the independent State of Israel still exist...? Madam Prime Minister, only a week ago...you yourself said that no borders are safe, but what would happen if we withdrew and were then attacked...? Now, after saying that, you have undertaken to withdraw....

Our deep gratitude and esteem for the U.S. and the military aid it has granted us does not constitute total dependence....It is in America's interest that Israel should exist, constituting the basis of the U.S.'s position in the entire region....We have the ability as well as the right to negotiate with our allies....Israel's tragedy is that its political leadership belittled the importance for our security of the wide expanses of territory and adopted Security Council Resolution 242 as its political line. Now it has to defray the bond....It is disingenuous, Madam Prime Minister...to tell the Knesset and the nation, as you did this evening, that you know for sure that other than what was decided in the Security Council

nothing was agreed between the Russians and the Americans....Only a few days ago the Foreign Minister said that he saw no chance of a ceasefire being imposed....The Foreign Minister was obviously unaware of the feverish talks which were being held as he spoke, and with whose outcome we were confronted the very next day. Whence, then, comes the Prime Minister's confidence as to what political decisions were and were not made by the Russian and American representatives in Moscow, and what awaits us in the coming weeks? After the painful lessons of the last two weeks, which derived from illusion, complacency, self-satisfaction and a negligent and inaccurate assessment of the situation, will you not at least endeavor not to delude this good nation...?

The bitter truth is that a series of governmental blunders, chief among them being the failure to call up the reserves between New Year and the Day of Atonement, deprived the IDF of the ability to check the enemy at the gate and strike him a crushing blow in the first few days, prolonged the war and led to the ceasefire, which wrested victory from us....The truth which cannot now be concealed from the nation is that we are on the threshold of a difficult and dangerous period. It is true that the IDF is still strong and the nation still resolute...but no responsible government will be able to send the reserves home for a very long time, our military situation being what it is....Those are only some of the circumstances attending our entry into difficult and bitter political negotiations on the future of the State of Israel. All I will say at this stage is that after the Government's shocking failure...in both the military and the political spheres...we can and should demand that it show at least a modicum of remorse and self-examination, and evince maximum caution in taking decisions which will determine Israel's fate....

A. Eliav (Ma'arach): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset Members, before I speak about the subject on the agenda, I would like to refer to the incident concerning MK Wilner which I witnessed in part. Since becoming a Member of this Knesset, and even beforehand, when I served in Israel's embassy in Moscow, I have come to the conclusion that the Knesset comprises 117 members who serve the state loyally, each one in his fashion, Jews and Arabs, with a wide variety of views....And there is, unfortunately, a party group of three Knesset Members which serves a foreign country, not the State of Israel...and somehow we have to live with that situation....Perhaps it would have been best to have let that man, Wilner, say what he had to say while we all left the Chamber....

I fully support the Government's decision regarding the ceasefire....Even if it is only a temporary truce...the decision was still correct....In many respects this war resembles the War of Independence, when, too, we fought in between truces, eventually attaining victory....Even if there is no switch in the Arab position, i.e., there is no readiness to engage in direct peace negotiations, we will use the truce to strengthen

ourselves....It may be, however, that the long, dark war between the Arabs and us contains a spark of hope for peace negotiations as a result of this ceasefire....The Government owes it to the nation to try to explore this possibility....

...I have said these things since the Six Day War...and I still believe in them fervently. First of all, we have been guilty of underestimating the enemy....The IDF had to fight a cruel war against a harsh, embittered enemy, who is by no means lacking in courage and resourcefulness. Some of us despise the Arabs....We must fight against this ugly trait with all the educational means at our disposal. We may be proud of ourselves without despising the enemy. Contempt is a dangerous weapon which has a boomerang effect, as has been proved throughout history. What right do we Jews have to despise the Arabs, our enemies today and our neighbors tomorrow? One of the lessons we must learn is that contempt breeds complacency....

As for our relations with the U.S., I am amazed by MK Rimalt's statement that we should not rely on guarantees or the U.N. or friends. What friends do we have...? We have only one friend...and MK Rimalt and his colleagues is as aware of our dependence on it as I am. The tanks and cannon cannot be fuelled by fancy phrases....Israel's survival, aid for its economic, social, military and technological development, are of the utmost importance for any American administration. U.S. Jewry's identification with Israel also plays a leading role in this...though the non-Jewish American public has also displayed support for Israel....America's global and Middle East interests also require the U.S. to keep Israel strong....America will do a great deal—short of becoming actively involved in hostilities—to maintain our position in the Middle East...but we must not expect it to do more than it is prepared to do....

As for our objectives: is there any point talking about peace objectives during wartime? I think there is, and I believe that the nature of peace objectives determines a nation's capacity to fight and endure....The secret of our strength in all the wars imposed on us by our enemies-neighbors has been our moral superiority. Throughout the dispute with the Arabs we have been prepared to accept a solution and a territorial compromise which would enable our two nations to live in peace, but they would not even recognize our right to exist....Our attitude gave us strength and won us the support of most of the world. We must not lose that moral advantage now....I think that even in this cruel war Israel must reiterate its genuine desire for peace, based on a territorial compromise with all our enemies—Egyptians, Jordanians, Palestinians and Syrians....

The Arab leaders have not yet displayed any genuine intention of making peace with Israel. Consequently, for us this war, like the previous ones, is one of life or death....If necessary we may have to go beyond

the ceasefire lines of June 1967...though positions thus gained are negotiable once a peace process gets underway....We must not despair of attaining peace one day, though it seems unlikely to come in our time....This approach to war and peace has molded the character of the fighting nation in modern times....We do not want war, we love life and peace, we do not rejoice in cruelty, but when we have to fight we are damned good at it....That is how we must continue to educate our youngsters...in the hope that peace will come....

...

M. Begin (Gahal): Mr. Speaker, my teachers, leaders and Knesset Members, Israel's soldiers are still fighting....We will stand behind them, with united hearts, great love and a pure prayer....The Secretary General of the Ma'arach, MK Yadlin, has said...that the time has not yet come to clarify certain considerations in public. There are things which are generally known today, however. Dr. Kissinger, the American Secretary of State, said that a week before the war the intelligence services of both Israel and the U.S. assessed that there would be no war....This aroused grave concern in my mind....How did it happen that Israel's intelligence services were so seriously mistaken in their estimation of the situation...? I maintain that the responsibility is the Government's. The intelligence services are a governmental branch....A responsible government examines intelligence assessments critically, and does not simply accept them unquestioningly....That is the duty of a statesman....This was irresponsible....The enemy was massing his forces along the borders...and the Government persuaded not only itself but also the Americans that there was no danger of war....I will refrain from pursuing this argument further at this stage....

With regard to Security Council Resolution 338 and its acceptance by the Government...it must be made clear that what is under review is not a ceasefire....There may be differences of opinion as to the tactical benefit to be obtained from accepting a ceasefire at one stage of the fighting or another....No one here would seek to divide the House into those who wish to prevent further casualties and those who do not, I am sure....The entire nation has someone at the front now, and if not, are not my neighbor's sons my own, and vice versa...? The consideration to be taken into account is whether further casualties can be avoided or not....But what is under review here is not a ceasefire but a political step with implications for the nation's future, security, welfare and country. This ceasefire, in the military and strategic conditions created after 16 days of fighting, involves an undertaking to embark immediately on the implementation of Security Council Resolution 242 of November 1967. Don't you realize that?

We have been told that the Americans are committed to linking this ceasefire with direct peace negotiations....Let us say that this is

so....But you must ask yourselves first whether the enemy accepts this link....The crucial question is...will undertaking to implement Resolution 242, to repartition part of the Land of Israel, to withdraw, bring peace, a peace agreement, or not...? I say that there is no chance that this will happen....The enemy stated yesterday that he did not accept any connection between the sections, demanding first that 242 be implemented....This means that the enemy does not have to do anything...since the implementation begins with Israel's withdrawal....I assume that, despite all our disagreements, the Government will not agree to that today, demanding first that negotiations under some kind of auspices begin. Where is the agreement, then? Where is peace? If the Government agrees, heaven forbid, there will be withdrawal, but there will be no peace, because, as you have said, there will be no withdrawal to the borders of 4 June 1967....

In August 1970 the Government undertook to implement Resolution 242, to withdraw, though the reservations it expressed were rejected by the Americans....Did we get a peace agreement? It is true, there was a ceasefire for three years, thank God, and meanwhile Nasser died. The enemy wanted to be better-equipped, as has now been proved, and then came this bloody war, the hardest Israel has known. This, then, is our experience, and we speak with the logic of experience....How will we get from this undertaking to a peace agreement with the enemy? That is the problem and that is why we are worried. The undertaking is very bitter....Are we to withdraw and repartition the Land of Israel without a chance of peace? Should this not worry us? Everyone in Israel is worried by it....

The situation is that...we have a force on the western side of the Canal, while the Egyptians are on the eastern side. That is not good....A few days ago all the official spokesmen said that our object was to dislodge the enemy, smash his war machine and remove him from all the territory that was under Israel's control. What happened? We all regret it. We have a force inside Egypt. Let's assume that the ceasefire comes into effect tomorrow...and the enemy demands the implementation of the agreement and this is not done. What will happen? Will the enemy sit idly by...? He can surround our force. He is constantly receiving fresh arms and equipment....There is nothing in the latest Security Council resolution, which the Government accepted so hastily, against the movement of troops and weapons....All it involves is a ceasefire within twelve hours, the implementation of Resolution 242 and the start of negotiations under somebody's auspices....

Now I want to say something serious, but it is my duty to do so. We must all beware of a sudden strike by the enemy....We cannot allow ourselves to be lulled—and to lull the Americans—into a sense of false security, with its concomitant irresponsibility, again....That is the analysis, and that is our concern, Madam Prime Minister. At least, do

not try to create the impression that something good has happened to us since yesterday....Our concern is for our nation, and the future and security of its sons....Why did the Government not consult the Knesset? Why did it conceal from us the events leading to the acceptance of Resolution 338...? We are currently engaged in a bloody war. We are making sacrifices, fighting for our existence and our future. We are told that the free world wants our victory, which is in its interest....Should Communism rule the entire region? Nonetheless, we were not consulted about this document....Perhaps we would not have accepted it. Could anything be more serious than that?

You keep saying that there will be no imposed settlement. We all hope so. I must tell the nation that this settlement is imposed....The representatives of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. drew up a resolution for the Security Council...and then told Israel to accept it....This must give us all cause to be worried, Madam Prime Minister. One cannot change anything by saying that we did not propose anything or ask for the ceasefire....The resolution was imposed on us, without us, without our advice, without our comments....

If it is true, as was reported this morning, that Dr. Kissinger said: "Two adults can remain friends even if their children quarrel," I ask the Knesset to record that this statement elicited a protest here....Does he mean to say that we are children, that we are engaging in infantile quarrels...? This is a battlefield, with all the grave consequences this has for people, for families....That expression is a very unfortunate one indeed....More than anyone else, he should know that this nation has displayed unparalleled maturity....He undoubtedly also said on a certain night in his parents' house: "That not one alone rose up to destroy us, but that in every generation they rise up against us to destroy us, and the Holy One, blessed be He, redeems us from their hand."

We, the surviving remnant, are fighting for our existence, because once again they have risen up against us to destroy us. And they still will. And they still want to. They continue to want to. And anyone who deludes himself—as certain Knesset Members have done tonight, I cannot even wish them the best of luck, God forbid—should remember in the light of experience that it is an illusion. The U.S.S.R. consulted Egypt about the Security Council resolution....Nothing was said to us before this dictate was formulated. We must protest at this, and if the Government has not done so, the Opposition will fulfill its national duty and speak in the name of the people....

An attempt has been made by the Ma'arach to divert attention from the main point by citing speeches made by the members of my party, myself included, in 1970....Is there anyone in this chamber who has not been mistaken in something he has said from this podium...? But in August 1970 I warned the Knesset that we were headed for war...noting that the Egyptians had violated the ceasefire in a way which seriously

threatened our security and future...moving highly sophisticated missiles forward...and adding new missile batteries....I demanded that the Government of Israel refuse to accept this new situation...and warned of the heavy price we would ultimately have to pay....Mr. Speaker, we must learn the lessons of the past and apply them to the ceasefire and all that it implies. We will bear the responsibility and continue to explain to the nation that it is essential to maintain the territorial integrity of the Land of Israel, because one must take what happened into account and know what strategic depth means for the defense of the nation. That is the path to the peace and security which we all desire.

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The Prime Minister, G. Meir: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...in last week's debate several Knesset Members said that it was not yet time to raise questions. A week has passed, and there is progress, questions have been raised. In a few more days questions will be asked and answers given....In last week's debate I said that it would be almost unnatural if an intelligent nation did not think and was not worried. This is not a matter for party groups. No Knesset Member, no citizen in the state, can say that he is not worried....As long as there is no peace...we are all worried. There is nothing exclusive in that.

But something strange happened. A Knesset Member, the head of a large party group, the leader of the Opposition, doubtless goes to elections in order to obtain at least as much as his party group has now. But a good Jew, a patriot, a Zionist, sits on the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, and there is a problem which is by no means simple—is it not natural that that worried person should at least not hold the initial clarification before the media? I think it is. I think that that would have been the natural, simple and correct thing to do. But we are not only in a time of war, in a time of discussing the acceptance of the ceasefire proposal, on which opinions may certainly be divided, and I do not accept MK Tamir's prophetic tone....The fact that we heard tonight from MK Begin that even he can sometimes be wrong is already an achievement....

When the proposal was brought before us, the Gahal representatives in the Government also said yes to the ceasefire and no to its accompanying conditions...rejecting negotiations under Jarring's auspices.... They claimed that we would be forced to submit a map showing territorial concessions we were prepared to make...but we submitted no such map...and eventually the process came to an end....We did not say that we would not withdraw from one inch of the greater Land of Israel, we said that we were not prepared to accept his proposals. The proof is that there are no negotiations under Jarring's auspices.

What happened? One can make a mistake. Anyone can make a mistake...but to speak on the same subject once more and with the same confidence is more than a mistake....MK Begin...stubbornly refuses to

see what will happen if we don't accept it, but does not cease to point out how dangerous it is if we do....The Government accepted the proposal of 1970. For three years we had quiet. Three years were utilized to strengthen the IDF. MK Begin and his colleagues cannot prove that if we had said no then we would still have received the equipment...because they were in the Government for several years and they saw that it is no easy matter to obtain arms....I congratulate them for their restraint on this subject, but they omit to tell the public how difficult—almost impossible—it is. And MK Tamir's view is that the U.S. should come to us and ask for things, is dependent on us. A very nice view....

But we accepted the plan. For three years there was no firing and for three years we received arms. And MK Begin says that we have now been through a bloody war. In factual terms that is correct. But what connection is there between the two? Had we not accepted that proposal, had we not received arms for the IDF, is there any guarantee that we would have had three years of quiet, or that we would have averted war now? Where is the connection, the simple, logical connection, between those two things...?

I would like MK Rimalt to explain what he means by the phrase: the IDF was victorious, the state was not? What was he driving at? What is the source of that new distinction, the like of which we have not heard for twenty-five years? The IDF belongs to us all. There is no IDF without the state. What does that mean, that the IDF was victorious but the state was not? Is the IDF something separate from the state? I would understand it if you were to say that the Government failed. But there's nothing new in your saying that. Now, suddenly, the state too. That's something new. That could lead us to something which I hope you don't want either.

Like everyone else in the country, in the Government, I have had terrible days and nights. In general, maybe it's not nice, but as long as there is firing anywhere—and there is hardly a day without firing somewhere, whether of terrorists or war—there is room for concern. But during this war the Government has made fateful decisions. I'm not talking about approving various things which, though not insignificant, are fairly usual. During those three or four days the Government made at least two decisions which, without exaggeration, are fateful. Of course the IDF implemented them. But did it do them by itself? On its own authority? One of our great qualities, and that is an integral aspect of a democratic regime, is that the IDF, with all its fine characteristics, does not decide as regards its policy. Is the state one thing and the IDF another, then? We are fortunate in that when policy is decided the IDF goes and implements it. But what is this distinction?

I know that the elections are approaching, and none of us is a saint and will praise the rival party at his party meetings. That hasn't happened yet. But one has to know the limits....MK Tamir wants to claim

that accepting the proposal now means withdrawing to the borders of 1967. He can say that if that is what pleases him. There's only one thing wrong with it, it has nothing to do with the truth....

I don't think it comes as a surprise to anyone here that countries which could supply us with what we need are not standing in line to do so. I am not in the least sorry that in the relations between the U.S. and Israel there is also the element that the U.S. Government thinks is good for it too. If that is the case I'm glad. I had not heard that altruism dominates international relations today. But it is a long way from that to the view that we don't need to take anything into consideration. In order to be able to say no, as we have in the past, even to the friendly Government of the U.S...one has to have the ability to do so. The condition for that is that you stop and think before you say no....My complaint to the members of the Opposition is that they do not justify their views, do not say what is the benefit or the danger in saying yes, or the benefit and danger in saying no. Perhaps they did this in their internal discussions.

I do not have the slightest doubt that a responsible government had no alternative but to accept those proposals. I don't even know if what the Egyptians accepted will be implemented or not. For the moment it isn't. I am not happy about it....But one thing must be made clear to everyone...we accepted the ceasefire on the explicit condition that it had to be mutual. The ceasefire will not be one-sided. We cannot have a situation in which the Egyptians continue shooting and we run away or sit and watch....The ceasefire will be maintained if it is mutual. If it is not, the same law applies to both sides. We accepted it. We wanted a ceasefire.

Unfortunately, I am not one of those—perhaps it would be better for me if I were—who think that there is an instant way to peace. I wish there were. I have never despaired to the extent of thinking that there will never be peace. When? I don't know. Does the ceasefire lead straight to peace? I'm not prepared to promise this....I would be very happy were direct talks, people talking with people, to begin in the wake of these decisions....

I don't know why MK Begin had to issue such dire warnings. I don't know of any Knesset Member who can be suspected of not caring....If there is a ceasefire and the shooting really stops we will all be glad. There are things of which one must beware. There are things which we must guard. We are experienced, we know what can happen. We must try—insofar as this depends on us—to reach negotiations somehow. I say that the three sections of the proposal are interconnected, not separate entities, though I could live very well without Section 2....I don't see why we have to try so hard, use so much emotion and pathos, to convince the U.S. and the U.N. of our way of seeing things....Why does MK Rimalt have to say that the argument about Resolution 242 regarding "territories" or "the territories" is a semantic one? What is semantic here? There is a fundamental, essential difference between those who

read "all the territories" and those who read "territories." I know you don't like that, that's alright, but that's a completely different argument.

As I said, there are still more arguments ahead. With all the questions which exist, and questions exist, I do not imagine that we will not sit down and draw conclusions. I wish we could do so and in a businesslike way. Whatever happens, no argument is terrible. I hope that we get to the end of the war, even not on the basis of this proposal, but on the basis of the Jewish people's extraordinary right. And we of this generation are privileged to see a younger generation such as this, boys such as these, and I might add, fathers and mothers such as these. We see these families, and that is our basic wealth, our asset. If we are victorious in war it is because of them; if we advance it is because of them; and if we attain peace it is because of them...and I wish it would be soon.

I am convinced, the entire Government is convinced, that this proposal, even if it does not automatically bring peace, contains an element—just as the 1970 proposal did, and perhaps more, because three years have passed and needs have grown—which could make it easier for us to strengthen ourselves. Of that there is no doubt.

M. Baram (Ma'arach): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, on behalf of the Ma'arach, Mafdal, Independent Liberal, Progress and Development, and Cooperation and Amity party groups I propose the following concluding resolution:

The Knesset notes the Government's statement as made by the Prime Minister today, 23 October 1973, 27 Tishrei 5734, as well as her reply to the participants in the debate.

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(MK Baram's concluding resolution is adopted.)