

August 11, 1948

**Letter from Charles F. Knox, Jr., Counselor of
Mission at Tel-Aviv, to US Secretary of State,
'Arrival of Minister and Staff of USSR Legation'**

Citation:

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Summary:

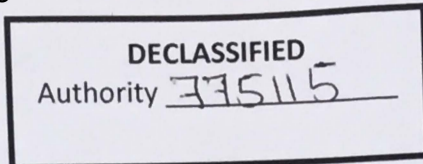
Knox reports that the Soviet diplomatic legation at Tel-Aviv is staying in the same hotel as the US legation due to a lack of lodging available to house them.

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

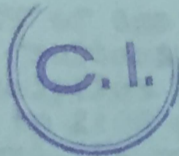


YERSHOV, PAVEL IVANOVICH

16 AUG 1948

No. 29

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Mission of the United States,
Tel-Aviv, Israel,
August 11, 1948

Subject: Arrival of Minister and Staff of USSR Legation.

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.



Sir:

I have the honor to report that on the evening of August 8, 1948, at 11:00 p.m. the Minister of the USSR to Israel, Pavel Ivanovich YERSHOV and staff, arrived at the Gat-Rimmon Hotel in Tel-Aviv, by car from Haifa. The staff is reported to consist of the Minister and nine principle officers, nine subordinate clerical employees, several guards, and wives -- approximately 25 persons in all. The names of the staff will be transmitted to the Department as soon as obtainable.

Notwithstanding the late hour of arrival a public crowd estimated at several hundred persons in front of the hotel awaited the Minister's arrival and he was applauded as he alighted from his car. Two officials from the Foreign Office extended official greetings. The Minister declined to give an interview to the press.

Three days prior to the arrival at Haifa of the ship bringing the Minister and his staff from Odessa, Dr. Walter EYTAN, Director-General of the Foreign Office, visited me at the Gat-Rimmon and told me, with obvious embarrassment, that the Government was at its wits end to find lodging for the Soviet Mission and inquired whether I would object to their presence in the hotel. Inasmuch as, to my personal knowledge, every hotel in Tel-Aviv is occupied to the last room, I stated that I had no objection but that I assumed that the hotel management would separate the Missions so that each was on a separate floor. Dr. Eytan expressed his appreciation and stated that my request would be fulfilled.

The following day a tactless letter from the Foreign Office was received by nine civilian guests resident in the hotel, including the Chief Justice and the Attorney General, requesting them to vacate their rooms immediately. The Attorney General was so enraged that he informed me privately that the subordinate Foreign Office functionary who wrote the letter would be discharged, not because of the action per se but because the tone of the letter was not respectful.

The Soviet Mission did not endear itself to the

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exhausted staff of the hotel (all employees of the hotel not only work fourteen hours per day but also, under the Civilian Conscription Law must do Army duty from 11:00 p.m. at night to 2:00 a.m. in the morning) when, on the night of arrival, it requested dinner. A full five course dinner was served the Russians from 3:00 a.m. to 4:00 a.m., and at the breakfast hour the waiters, all of whom are very friendly with the Americans, expressed privately their resentment at the Russians' lack of consideration.

Minister Yershov has not yet appeared for meals in the hotel dining room, apparently preferring to be served in his room.

The flags of the United States and the USSR are flying from staffs placed on the front corners of the hotel building and their simultaneous appearance gives rise to comment by passers-by who view them with curiosity.

Respectfully yours,

Charles F. Knox, Jr.
Counselor of Mission

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CFKnox:bf
Original and four copies to the Department
(No Ozalid or Hectograph available)

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