

CONFIDENTIAL FIUNG.

Prime Minister meeting with a delegation of Unamo, 28 April 1988

PRIME MINISTER

January 1988

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
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28.4.88							
5.5.88							
7.6.88							
PREM 19/2400							



File

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

7 June 1988

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your letter of 23 May and for sending her a copy of the notes resulting from the lunch hosted by Sir Sigmund Sternberg. She was most interested to receive this.

C. D. Powell

Rabbi Dr. Sidney Brichto

File



Union of Liberal & Progressive Synagogues

The Montagu Centre, 109 Whitfield Street, London W1P 5RP. Telephone: 01-580 1663

Our Reference:
Your Reference:

MTCS

23rd May, 1988.

Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SW1

Dear *Prmie Muvth*
at flat

Following the letter dated 28th January from Dr Al-Ghandi, Director General of the London Central Mosque, to Religious and political leaders, Sir Sigmund Sternberg hosted a lunch at which Dr Al Ghandi, Sheikh Solaimain, the Rt Rev Gerald Mahon, Catholic Bishop in West London and I were his guests.

After a most friendly and constructive meeting, it was agreed that I should circulate my reactions to those who were present.

Since then it has been suggested that I send it to all the recipients of the initial letter from Dr Ghandi which I now have pleasure in doing.

I would be grateful for your views should you wish to share them with me.

Yours sincerely,

Rabbi Dr Sidney Brichto
Executive Vice-President and Director

President
~~Malcolm Goma~~

Vice-Presidents
Geoffrey Davis
Douglas Gluckstein
Rabbi Bernard Hooker
Greta Hyman
Edgar Nathan
Cecil Reese
Clive Winston

Executive Vice-
President & Director
Rabbi Dr Sidney Brichto

Chairman
David Lipman
Vice-Chairmen
Harold Sanderson
Rose Segal

Hon. Treasurers
Ivor Miskin
Terry Benson

Administrative Director
Rosita Rosenberg
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Dr. Claude Montefiore
1902 - 1938

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1939 - 1962

Rabbi Dr. Leslie Edgar
1962 - 1966

Lord Cohen of Walmer
1965 - 1972

Eva, Marchioness of
Reading
1972 - 1973



Union of Liberal & Progressive Synagogues

The Montagu Centre, 109 Whitfield Street, London W1P 5RP. Telephone: 01-580 1663

Our Reference:
Your Reference:

29th February, 1988

President
~~Melvin Stone~~

Vice-Presidents
Geoffrey Davis
Douglas Gluckstein
Rabbi Bernard Hooker
Greta Hymen
Edgar Nathan
Cecil Reese
Clive Winston

*Executive Vice-
President & Director*
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Lord Cohen of Walmer
1965 - 1972

Eva Marchioness of
Reading
1972 - 1973

Dear

As promised, I am writing to summarise my own feelings which resulted from the luncheon meeting at the Royal Society of Medicine hosted by Sir Sigmund on February 8.

We all seemed to agree that the difficulty besetting men and women of good will of all religious faiths in endeavouring to find a solution to the Arab Israel conflict, was the unfortunate stereotypes and pre-judgements on both sides. It was not to be wondered at that Jews would identify with the Jewish State, nor that Moslems would identify with the misfortune of the Palestinians.

Religious Fundamentalists could make a solution impossible were their numerical strength and influence to become paramount. Fundamentalist Jews who are not prepared to give up an inch of the Promised Land and Fundamentalist Moslems who will never accept Jewish Sovereignty in the Middle East will hinder any process designed to protect Israel's security or to give the Palestinians the right to national self-expression.

Moderates too may suffer from misperceptions due to their historical and national perspectives. Jews must realise, that whatever the reason, be it the Arab refusal to accept the UN Partitian Plan or Arab unwillingness to allow the Palestinians to adjust to the new reality of Israel, the fact is that there has emerged a Palestinian entity which has been frustrated by the failure of the Arab nation-states, the PLO, Israel and the West to address their hopes and aspirations.

Moderate Jews, in and out of Israel must seek to enable the Palestinians to rule themselves in dignity and with self respect.

Moderate Moslems must realise that the vast majority of Jews take no pleasure in occupying Arab Territory or imposing their rule on defenceless people. Jews have been uncomfortable with the occupation because inbred in them is the Biblical teaching to be compassionate as they too "were slaves in Egypt"!

Nor do Jews believe that it was the Holocaust which gave them the right to Israel or the right to be in-sensitive to the plight of the Palestinians. While the United Nations may have agreed to the establishment of a Jewish State partially out of sympathy for the survivors of Nazi Concentration camps, the Jews had to fight for their State. [It should also be remembered that the U.N. Partition Plan gave the Jews only a small fraction of the land pledged to them by the Balfour Declaration.] Any increase in territory resulted from this war of Independence and the war of 1967.

Also, it had to be recognised that while Israel did not satisfy the political aspirations of the Palestinians in the occupied territories, it did invest more than any Arab nation [most notably Jordan and Egypt who had responsibility for the West Bank and Gaza] to improve their standards of health, education and economic prosperity. Moslems equally must seek the theological acceptance of a Jewish Sovereign State in the Middle East, and not to declare this to be superfluous in the light of Israel's dominant military power. Jews will find it easier to make territorial sacrifices if they have the assurance at least from the moderates, that there will be no attempt to deligitimise their rights to Jewish sovereignty.

The acceptance of the Palestinians not as pawns in a power struggle but as individuals with rights and justifiable national aspirations and the acknowledgement that Jews have the right to pursue their own national fulfillment in the State of Israel has to be the cornerstones of the attempts of all religious leaders in their pursuit of a peaceful solution to the Arab/Israel, or, perhaps more accurately, the Moslem/Jewish conflict.

To find the way for Jews, Moslems and Christians to use their influence for good is a daunting challenge, but one which has to be accepted. Among suggestions made to achieve this was that each religious body should address the sources of political influence available to them in order express their concerns and their desire for peace. A joining together of men and women of all faiths in praying for peace and the avoidance of violence under the auspices of the "Interfaith Network" was also suggested.

It was agreed that personal contacts should continue, and that we should not lose our faith in the creative power of God to inspire not only us but all humanity in rooting out the evil which leads to the death and desecration of the human spirit.

Yours sincerely,

Rabbi Dr Sidney Brichto

PRIME MINISTER: meeting with Imam

Jan 88

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



THE LONDON CENTRAL MOSQUE TRUST LIMITED
THE ISLAMIC CULTURAL CENTRE

146, PARK ROAD, LONDON NW8 7RG TEL: (01) 724 3363-7

*cc Home
✓ FCO.*

Our ref: AAMG/CT

5th May 1988

Rose Austin

29/5 *COO*
9/5

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher M.P.,
Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
LONDON, SW1A 2AA

mt

Dear Prime Minister,

On behalf of the members of the delegation who met with you on Thursday 28th April 1988 at 5.00 p.m. I would like to express our deepest gratitude & most sincere appreciation to you for granting us a meeting and for spending so much time with us.

We were also happy and grateful for the understanding that you showed, and for the sympathetic consideration that you expressed for the needs of the Muslims in this country.

The visit has left a good and positive impression on our community at large and we are grateful that you have initially accepted the idea of visiting our Centre, at a time and date yet to be decided.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. A.A. Mughram Al-Ghamdi
DIRECTOR GENERAL



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

R6.
CCPC,
211
28 April 1988

From the Private Secretary

Dear Philip,

**PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH LEADERS OF THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY
IN THE UNITED KINGDOM**

The Prime Minister met leaders of the Muslim community in the United Kingdom this evening. The delegation was led by Dr. Mughran Al-Ghamdi and all those listed in the note which you kindly provided attended. Rather against expectations, they wanted to devote by far the greater part of the discussion to the Palestinian problem.

Introduction

Dr. Al-Ghamdi, who acted as the main spokesman, thanked the Prime Minister for receiving the delegation. Their request for a meeting stemmed mainly from their concern at the situation in the Occupied Territories. They had been reassured about the British government's attitude by their exchange of correspondence with the Prime Minister. Nonetheless, they wanted to express directly to her the strength of their feelings. More generally, they felt it was useful for the Prime Minister to meet with leaders of the Muslim community. It was growing rapidly in size and might now number as much as one and a half million. While originally it had been predominantly an immigrant community, it was increasingly British as more and more of its members were born here.

Sheikh Mohamed-Aly added that the Muslim community was law-abiding and peaceful. They shared many of the Government's ideals, particularly its wish to see a blend of individual responsibility and community care, as well as its strong support for the family. Yet they felt that they were not always accepted as part of the tapestry of life in Britain and did not feel fully integrated. They saw the meeting with the Prime Minister as representing the opening of a dialogue at the highest level.

Middle East

Dr. M. Naseen then spoke at some length about developments in the Occupied Territories and the increasing violence practiced by Israelis against the Palestinians. Because of its historical links with the area and its current influence, the United Kingdom had an important role to play in

containing the situation. The delegation very much appreciated the position taken by the Government, but would like to see the United Kingdom even more active in the search for a solution. Similar comments were made by Mr. Tarek Rafiq and by Mr. Abdul Raschid Skinner. The latter added that Israel's behaviour did not seem to attract the same degree of opprobrium in this country as that of the South African government.

The Prime Minister said that Britain could not alone solve the problem. But we were very active in trying to get negotiations under way. She frequently pointed out to Israelis that if you demanded self-determination for your own people, you could not deny it to others. The fact was that, unless genuine grievances were remedied by negotiation, violence was bound to result. This was why we supported an international conference as a framework for negotiations. But real progress would come only through direct talks between the parties themselves. You could not impose a solution from outside. In her view, Israel could not maintain the status quo on the West Bank and Gaza indefinitely. Equally, we could not make the Israelis negotiate. Much would depend on the outcome of the forthcoming American and Israeli elections.

Sheikh Mohamed-Aly summed up this part of the discussion by saying that the situation in the Occupied Territories was a matter of legitimate concern to the Muslim community. Their comments had not been motivated by a desire to put pressure on the Government. Indeed, they were grateful for the stand which the Government had adopted. They hoped it would continue to take every opportunity to help resolve the situation.

Education

Dr. Al-Ghamdi moved on to the subject of education. In general the Muslim community appreciated the Government's policies. But they had a number of concerns which they hoped could be satisfied. They feared that greater parental choice might be exercised in ways which led to an increase in discrimination and segregation. For instance, it might lead people to move home and congregate in certain areas so as to affect the racial balance of particular schools. They also attached importance to the rights granted in the 1944 Education Act concerning religious education and hoped that these would not be infringed in the course of the Government's reforms. They disliked the trend towards secularism and were happy to see greater emphasis given to teaching religion in schools. But they also wanted to be sure that the safeguards in the old Education Act would be preserved.

The Prime Minister said that she took note of these concerns. She commented that, where positive discrimination had been practised in schools, the results had been disastrous as the recent case in Manchester showed. She deplored the tendency to make comparative religion the main focus of religious education. Religious education was bound to be based predominantly on the Christian scriptures. To an extent, understanding the history of our country depended on

understanding the message of the Bible. But the right of individuals to opt out of religious education had always been there and would continue.

Conclusion

Dr. Al-Ghamdi handed over a memorandum (copy enclosed) summarising the points which the delegation had wanted to make. In doing so he drew particular attention to their wish to participate fully in the work of changing society, particularly in the inner cities. They would like to put forward specific proposals on this and to discuss them with the Minister concerned. The community hoped very much that the Prime Minister would accept an invitation to visit the London Central Mosque. The Prime Minister said that she would do so with pleasure.

The Prime Minister would like departments concerned to consider the memorandum and follow up any points where necessary. In due course we shall have to consider the timing of a visit to the Mosque.

I am copying this letter to Robert Culshaw (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and Tom Jeffery (Department of Education and Science).

Yours sincerely,
C. D. Powell

C. D. POWELL

Philip Mawer, Esq.,
Home Office

THE LONDON CENTRAL MOSQUE TRUST LIMITED
THE ISLAMIC CULTURAL CENTRE

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Memorandum to the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
from the Muslim Community of the United Kingdom.

1. The Muslim Community of Great Britain expresses its profound appreciation for the grant of a meeting with the Prime Minister and her advisers.
2. We have had a long and favourable association with the Government of the United Kingdom. Indeed, when we recall the early history of the Islamic Cultural Centre and London Central Mosque we are reminded of the central role played by Lord Lloyd and several other distinguished members of the British Government, who, during the darkest days of the Second World War, mindful of the contribution of His Majesty's Muslim Subjects to the war effort, encouraged and actively supported our Community's efforts, culminating in the gift by the Government of the day of the present site, upon which our institution is built.

Our Community was further honoured by the presence of His Majesty King George VI at the opening reception on Tuesday 21st November 1944.
3. However, we consider that the present time is particularly appropriate for us to attempt to explain the experiences and aspirations of our community to H.M. Government.
4. We think that, on the basis of available evidence, the Muslim population of the United Kingdom is approaching 2 million persons. Many settled here from the New Commonwealth and other parts of the world, but an increasing proportion consisting of people who were born in this country.
5. Our community is racially and socially diverse and derives much of its character and strength from this diversity. We feel, though, that many in the wider community, at both the official and private levels, have failed to appreciate this diversity and still harbour the illusion that ours is a mono-cultural, ethnically based fraternity.
6. We adhere firmly to precepts which, we believe, establish us as good citizens of the realm. Muslims are industrious, thrifty, loyal and concerned citizens. Our community is founded upon the sanctity of family life, abstention from destructive activities, and the performance of socially and economically rewarding effort. We abide by the laws of the land and we are involved in all facets of national life.

Continued/2

7. However, our community has had much cause for concern at the response to our presence by society at both official and private levels. In some instances, our community has been subjected to indiscriminate and lawless attacks. In other cases, we have encountered the use of popular labels of disrepute. Nevertheless, we have laboured to overcome these difficulties and are satisfied that there are adequate opportunities and mechanisms for such corrective efforts. However, we have good reason to suspect that the society at large has yet to come to terms with our presence and impact.

8. It is on this basis that our community has noted with approval the strong and principled stand which H.M. Government has taken on issues abroad which are of intimate concern to the local Muslim Community. In particular, we have been much heartened by H.M. Government's consistent opposition to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and, more recently your positive criticisms of the treatment of the Palestinian people. Indeed, on the latter issue we wish to re-iterate the unshakeable bond which unites all Muslims with the experiences of the Palestinian people, most of whom are Muslims. More specifically, Muslims, as much as Jews and Christians, pay special regard to the conditions in Palestine since we derive our faith and practice from a common source. Hence, we are deeply concerned over the threats to the sanctity of the cradle of these great world faiths.

9. Our community feels that H.M. Government, more than that of any other country, and because of its historical links with mandate Palestine, owes a very special debt to the Palestinian people and therefore an obligation to adopt effective policies to redress injustices and eliminate the suffering currently being inflicted upon them.

10. Accordingly, we urge H.M. Government to continue and to intensify its efforts to achieve a just, enduring settlement of the long-standing and vexed Palestinian question. We pledge the support of all Muslims, at home and abroad, for the practice of such a far-sighted policy.

11. Equally, our community supports H.M. Government's efforts at home, to revive and rejuvenate the social and economic fortunes of our society. We wish to draw to your attention our desire to play an active part in this process.

Continued/3

12. In the first instance, our community practices a judicious blend of encouragement of private initiative with social concern for the less well endowed in society. Thus, we approve of H.M. Government's efforts to enable local communities to become more self-reliant through developing their innate capabilities. By its very nature our community is highly urbanised, mainly concentrated in the inner city areas to which H.M. Government is directing much of its attention. We are thus well placed to participate in constructive change and in this way we could increase our contribution to the wider society. In the course of time we would be prepared to present specific proposals for our more active participation in H.M. Government's policies on the inner cities.
13. Similarly, we are interested in H.M. Government's proposed reforms in the fields of social welfare and education. Our community would also be keen to demonstrate its readiness to assume a leadership role in both of these areas. We are generously provided with the required human resources and possess the mechanisms to harness those talents. Unfortunately, thus far, particularly in the area of the provision of education, our best endeavours have not yet received the required level of official support.
14. We may also indicate that whereas, on this basis we strongly sympathize with the current proposed educational reforms in so far as they are intended to improve the quality of education in society, nevertheless we are wary lest they erode certain well established values. In particular, we would wish to ensure that freedom of worship is maintained. Likewise, we would hope to be satisfied that the widening of parental choice and control, laudable motives in themselves, does not facilitate the exercise of practices inimical to the interests of a relatively small community such as ours. Our community would be much assured by the provision of safeguards in these areas.
15. In conclusion, therefore, we would like to affirm that our community is in a position to make a positive and responsible contribution to the welfare and prosperity of this country. We ourselves are only one small segment of a vast international fraternity to which we feel inextricably bound and with which we can provide a useful link. At the same time we share the hopes and aspirations of other sectors of the population, and we believe that our presence here, and our full participation in the life of the nation, will serve to foster closer understanding between the United Kingdom and the worldwide Muslim Community for our mutual benefit.

28th April, 1988

THE LONDON CENTRAL MOSQUE TRUST LIMITED
THE ISLAMIC CULTURAL CENTRE

146, PARK ROAD, LONDON NW8 7RG TEL: (01) 724 3363-7



Dr. A. A. Mughram Al-Ghamdi
Director General
London Central Mosque & Islamic Cultural Centre.

Sheikh Zahran Ibrahim Mohamed Aly
Imam
London Central Mosque

Mr. M.T. Shaheen M.B.E.,
President, Islamic Centre, Glasgow
Chairman of the Islamic Council of Scotland
Trustee of the Glasgow Central Mosque

Dr. M. Naseem , G.P.,
Chairman, Birmingham Mosque Trust

Mufti Gul Rahman
Chairman, Tanzeem-ul Quran, The Midlands,
Chairman & Imam, Islamic Centre, Small Heath, Birmingham

Mr. Abdul Rashid Skinner
Principle Clinical Psychologist
Northern Organiser, British Muslim Association
Conservative Candidate, Bradford City Council.

Mufti Mohamed Aslam,
Imam, Rotherham Mosque, Chairman of Sharia' Council, Rotherham

Dr. Mohamed Khalid,
Lecturer in Business Management
Polytechnic of the South Bank,
& Financial Consultant

Mr. M.A. Hamid
Retired Civil Servant
Chairman, Wimbledon Mosque

Mr. Tarek Rafiq,
Barrister-at-Law,
Trustee, East London Mosque

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



HOME OFFICE
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE
LONDON SW1H 9AT

27 April 1988

esp
28/4.

Dear Charles,

DELEGATION OF IMAMS, 28 APRIL

Further to my letter of yesterday I attach a short note on polygamy to add to the briefing.

I am copying this letter to Robert Culshaw (FCO).

Yours sincerely,

P J C MAWER

Charles Powell, Esq

Polygamy

Line to take

- In taking action to prevent the formation of settled polygamous households in this country, the Government is acting on a recommendation made by the all-party Select Committee on Home Affairs.
- Polygamy is socially unacceptable in a monogamous society such as ours, and the potential damage to community relations which can result where some men are seen to be able to bring in more than one wife to live with them here is out of all proportion to the number of such cases arising each year.
- We have never claimed that the formation of polygamous households here is a large problem in terms of numbers.

Background

About 120 or so wives admitted for settlement each year are polygamously married. We estimate that about 25 polygamous households are established in this country each year. In its report Immigration from the Indian Sub-Continent (1985-86 HC 67-II), the Home Affairs Committee recommended that the Immigration Act 1971 be amended to remove the right of entry from second and subsequent wives where a wife had already been admitted to the United Kingdom. The Government accepted this recommendation, which will be put into effect by the passage of the current Immigration Bill and consequential changes to be made to the Immigration Rules.

PRIME MINISTER

MEETING WITH DELEGATION OF IMAMS

You have agreed to a meeting with a delegation of Muslim religious leaders in the United Kingdom. A list of those attending is attached. In fact, five of the nine are businessmen and only three are Imams. Since it is Ramadan, they will be fasting and it will not be appropriate to offer any tea or coffee.

The main purpose of the meeting is to give the Muslim community the feeling that they have occasional access to you, in the same way that the Jewish community does. They apparently want to cover both the domestic concerns of Muslims in the United Kingdom as well as one or two international issues.

The main domestic issues are:

- education
- race relations
- social and religious issues
- immigration

There is comprehensive briefing in the folder provided by the Home Office.

Since there are nine of them, you may prefer to hold the meeting in the Cabinet Room rather than the White Drawing Room.

Agree?

CS?

CHARLES POWELL

27 April 1988

SW2AFM

CAF



HOME OFFICE
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE
LONDON SW1H 9AT

COO
27/4.

26 April 1988

Dear Charles,

attlog at flap

Your letters of 8 March and 8 April 1988 to Robert Culshaw at the FCO (copied to me) confirmed that the Prime Minister is to meet a delegation of Imams at No 10 at 1700 hours on Thursday, 28 April. It was subsequently agreed that the meeting would concentrate on domestic, rather than international, issues and that the Home Office would therefore take the lead in the preparation of briefing, which is now attached.

....

Muslims are required to fast for one month each year - the month of Ramadan - abstaining from eating and drinking between dawn and sunset during that period. Ramadan began this year on 19 April and so will be taking place when the delegation visits.

I am copying this letter to Robert Culshaw (FCO).

Yours sincerely,
P J C NAWER

P J C NAWER

Charles Powell, Esq.,

PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH A DELEGATION OF IMAMS

OBJECTIVES

The Islamic Cultural Centre requested a meeting to discuss the Arab/Israel situation and recent events in Palestine but, in consultation with the FCO, it has been agreed that the meeting provides an ideal opportunity to present the Government's views on the role of the Muslim community in the domestic arena and to draw from the representatives a commitment to greater involvement in the country of their adoption. The meeting will also demonstrate that the views of the Muslim community are taken seriously and will balance (in their eyes) the regular meetings with leaders of the Jewish community.

2. The main objective should therefore be to stimulate discussion on the role of the Muslim community in contributing to mainstream economic life in this country. There has been a tendency both generally and by Muslims themselves to see their community as self-contained and operating within fairly narrowly-defined fields. The Muslim population in this country, which is not organised nationally, numbers well over one million, is largely concentrated in inner city areas, and it is essential that the Muslim community seizes the opportunities created by initiatives such as Action for Cities to participate fully in social and economic regeneration.

3. To that end, influential Muslim leaders should be encouraged to review attitudes and influence their communities so that both the part of the community which is successful in

business terms and the part of the community which is not, can participate in and benefit from this process. Established business people could, for example, participate in local enterprise agencies and Muslim banks might consider supporting financially community projects. Special schemes and initiatives exist to help small businesses such as:

- i) the Loan Guarantee Scheme which provides certain cover on bank loans for small firms;
- ii) the Enterprise Initiative which offers inner city businesses help to improve their performance.

Businesses should be encouraged to make use of these.

4. Muslim leaders are in an ideal position to encourage young Muslims, and in particular women, who are traditionally homebound, to take advantage of the numerous schemes on offer which provide the skills needed to compete for jobs.

5. The community might also be encouraged to involve themselves in supporting voluntary effort in the inner cities which benefits Muslims and others. Many voluntary groups need not only management advice, secondments and training provided by companies but also enthusiastic helpers with local knowledge and expertise.

6. The Muslim community should be encouraged to stimulate enterprise and new business, involve itself in local issues and help regenerate inner cities.

THE DELEGATION

Little is known about the work of the Islamic Cultural Centre, or of the Director-General, Dr. A. A. Mughram Al-Ghandi, and this may be a useful opportunity to obtain details of the Centre, its funding and its aims.

2. Of the people accompanying Dr. Al-Ghandi, I understand that only three are actually Imams (Sheikh Aly, Mufti Rahman and Mufti Aslam): the others are predominantly businessmen - in itself an indication that they too may wish to concentrate more on economic matters.

3. Brief biographical details of the delegation members are as follows:

- Tapestry of life
we have not
integrated*
- 1) Sheikh Mohamed Aly - Egyptian, believed to be attached to the Embassy.
 - 2) Mr. Mohammed Tufail Shaheen MBE - Pakistani, born 23.3.25. Widower. Volunteered for military service 1943, and became Quartermaster for Field Hospitals in British India Army. Discharged 1948. Arrived in Britain (Glasgow) 6 June 1958. Chairman of Islamic Council of Scotland, President of the Islamic Centre in Glasgow and Vice-Chairman of the Council of Mosques, United Kingdom and Ireland. Chairman of numerous trading companies. Closely associated with HRH Prince Muhammed of Faisal at Saud in promoting Islamic economics and banking. Various philanthropic

works in Britain and overseas. Awarded an MBE in January 1986 for his services to the community in the West of Scotland.

Pakistan ✓
3) Dr. M. Naseen GP - Pakistani, closely associated with the Saudis.

✓
4) Mr. Mohammad Abdul Hamid - Pakistani, born 23.12.1909. Married with 7 children. Retired government servant from the Department of Environment and the Government of Pakistan. Founder-member of Merton CRC since its inception, serving as Treasurer 1975-1977. Served on the Merton Area Advisory Committee, Area 4, Social Services Dept. for 3 years (1978-1981). Member of the Metropolitan Police 'V' Division, Police Station Planning Committee since October 1985.

|| 5) Mr. Abdul Raschid Skinner - Member of the ||
Association for British Muslims.

6) Dr. Mohammed Khalid - no knowledge.

7) Mufti Gul Rahman - Pakistani. IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT HE DOES NOT SPEAK ENGLISH.

8) Mufti Mohammed Aslam - Pakistani.

- 9) Mr. Tarek Rafiq - Bengali, born Simla
Itimachalradesh, India 27.9.37. Married 1964, one
son and two daughters.
Education: BA (Hons) Cambridge University, Barrister-
at-Law, Lincolns Inn.
Chairman of the Muslim Lawyers' Association, Trustee
East London Mosque.

ISSUES WHICH MAY BE RAISED BY THE DELEGATION

Appended are background papers on issues which are known to
be of concern to Muslims in this country.

EDUCATION : National Curriculum; Future of Community
Language Teaching; Testing and Assessment; Open Enrolment;
Grant-Maintained Schools; Voluntary Aided schools; Sex
Education; Provision of Facilities for Muslim Children in
State Schools.

RACE RELATIONS

SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS ISSUES : Religious Slaughter of Animals;
Family/religious Courts; Muslim Personal Laws.

IMMIGRATION : Ministers of Religion; Businessmen;
Examination of Pakistani Visa Holders on Arrival in the UK;
General Immigration Issues.

FOREIGN POLICY

EDUCATION AND THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY

The National Curriculum

The National Curriculum aims to rise the standard of education for all children. All children, including those from ethnic minorities, should benefit from the improvements we anticipate.

The absence of explicit reference to multi-cultural education in the Education Reform Bill is not evidence of any lack of commitment by the Government to the need for the National Curriculum to reflect the multi-ethnic nature of our society.

The Government rejected a number of attempts to add specific themes such as this to Clause 1 of the Bill, on the grounds that it was preferable to use a general and timeless expression of overall purpose - which is why the Bill requires the promotion of "the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils....and of society". Such a purpose could not be fulfilled in Britain today without consideration of the multi-cultural nature of our society.

The subject Working Groups on the National Curriculum which have already been established, and the Task Group on Assessment and Testing have all been asked to take account of the ethnic and cultural diversity of the school population and of society in establishing the more detailed arrangements for the implementation of the National Curriculum. And the Bill provides for full and open consultation on the Working Group's recommendations before these are given the force of law.

The widespread consultation which took place on the National Curriculum proposals revealed wide agreement on the core subjects chosen.

FUTURE OF COMMUNITY LANGUAGE TEACHING

The National Curriculum will contain, as one of the foundation subjects, a modern foreign language. The languages which will have the status of foundation subjects will be those of the European Community and other commercially important languages. Community languages (ie mother-tongues) will not qualify as foundation subjects unless they fall within these categories. However, schools will be expected to provide for other topics in the time set aside for non-foundation subjects. There is no reason why individual schools wishing to include community languages in their curriculum should not be able to make provision for these in this time.

TESTING AND ASSESSMENT

The Government is aware that considerable concern is felt about this testing and assessment proposals with regard to ethnic minority pupils.

The Task Group on Assessment and Testing (TGAT), which was set up last year to advise on assessment and testing within the national curriculum, has now issued its report. We have welcomed the broad framework of the report and are considering its detailed recommendations.

The TGAT report recognises that there may be difficulties presented by pupils whose first language is not English. It suggests that headteachers might exempt such children from tests where this problem is so severe as to render the assessment unworkable. To record a low level of performance for this reason would be no reflection on a pupil's general ability but merely an indication that the pupil needed special help in English language skills. TGAT recommends that assessment in other skills and understanding, particularly at age 7, should, wherever practicable and necessary, be conducted in the pupil's first language.

The report also recommends that assessment tasks be reviewed regularly for evidence of bias, particularly in respect of gender and race. Two procedures are suggested: first, that the agencies responsible for the development of assessment instruments should incorporate formal reviews of proposed material for any evident sex or race stereotyping; and second, that assessment devices should be statistically examined for evidence of item or question bias.

OPEN ENROLMENT

The Education Reform Bill includes proposals to extend existing parental rights of choice of school. The policy will offer all parents, regardless of ethnic background, a better chance of having their preferences met. Muslim parents will, of course, wish to exercise that choice.

Concern has been expressed that open admission may lead to racially segregated schools. Existing settlement patterns already mean that there are in excess of 400 schools with 75% or more ethnic minority pupils, and so have 90% plus ethnic minority pupils. It is very difficult to try to plan for a racial balance in schools. Attempts to do so in the past, through "bussing", have failed. Existing safeguards against illegal discrimination will continue to apply. No school will be able to refuse a child admission on racial grounds, and LEAs and governors will not be able to use racially biased criteria for determining which children to admit in the event of over-subscription. However, the Government believes that when parents make a choice of school, it is the educational standards rather than the racial complexion that matters most.

GRANT-MAINTAINED SCHOOLS

The Education Reform Bill includes provisions enabling schools maintained by Local Education Authorities to apply for grant-maintained status, receiving grant directly from the Secretary of State. These schools will receive a recurrent grant equivalent to the amount the LEA would have spent on them. Capital grant will be 100%.

Grant-maintained schools will not be prejudicial to minority interests. It has always been intended that these schools should be responsive to their community. A grant-maintained school in an area where the ethnic minorities are strongly represented will, as elsewhere, have been established at the initiative of the parents; they and other local people will

then be strongly represented on its governing body. It will surely be their primary purpose to meet local needs. The governors will be required to consider any representations on curriculum content from members of the local community and, if parents are dissatisfied with any aspect of the school's curriculum, there will be procedures for complaint. The governors will also be required to present all parents with an annual report and to hold an annual parents' meeting. The needs of ethnic minority pupils will not be forgotten.

Schools, whether county or voluntary, who wish to become grant-maintained can make an application for that status only in their existing character, and they would be expected to maintain that ethos as a grant-maintained school. Any proposed change thereafter would be regarded as a significant change of character which would require the publication of proposals for consideration by the Secretary of State.

Grant-maintained schools will enjoy greater autonomy than maintained schools, but they will be in receipt of public funds and will in consequence be required to act in accordance with the powers and duties which they will be given by the legislation. These will be set out in the school's articles of government, which will be made by the Secretary of State. Grant-maintained schools will be required to fulfil the general demands of the National Curriculum and be open to inspection by HM Inspectors of Schools.

It would be illegal for a grant-maintained school to discriminate racially either in its admissions policy or in the general conduct of its affairs. The Bill has made this quite explicit by extending the relevant sections of the Race Relations Act 1976 to grant-maintained schools. There will be additional safeguards. Grant-maintained schools will be required to publish annually details of their admission arrangements and to establish appeals machinery for parents who believe that these arrangements have not been properly applied. Such arrangements will have to be agreed with the Secretary of State who would expect many such schools to attach considerable importance in deciding their priorities in the event of over-subscription to applications from their immediate neighbourhood.

COMMON MUSLIM CAUSES OF CONCERN IN EDUCATION

Voluntary aided schools

Under the Education Act 1944 it is open to Muslims as to any other persons to propose the establishment of a voluntary aided school. All such proposals require the approval of the Secretary of State and each is considered on its individual merits. Amongst the factors the Secretary of State takes into account in reaching decisions are the need for additional publicly-maintained school places in the locality concerned, the evidence of current demand for education of the type to be offered at the school, and the willingness of the Local Education Authority (LEA) concerned to maintain the school as a voluntary aided school. He must also satisfy himself that the promoters of a proposed new aided school will be able to

meet the expenses that fall to them; that the proposed premises meet the requirements of the Standards of School Premises Regulations; and that the proposed admission arrangements, secular curriculum and qualifications of staff are in accordance with the Education Acts.

Sex Education

The Education (No. 2) Act 1986 places responsibility on governing bodies for determining what sex education should be offered in their schools; section 46 of the Act further requires that sex education should be given in such a manner as to encourage pupils to have due regard to moral considerations and the value of family life. Governing bodies will also have the discretion to accept or reject requests from parents for their children to be withdrawn from any sex education to which they object. Parents have no statutory right to cause their children to be withdrawn but some will have strong objections on religious grounds to their children receiving sex education. Governing bodies should fully appreciate this in exercising their discretion.

Provision of facilities for Muslim children in state schools

a. Islamic religious instruction

The Education Act 1944 requires that the religious instruction given to pupils in county schools shall be in accordance with an agreed syllabus. Under Schedule 5 to the 1944 Act, LEAs are required to establish an advisory council, including representatives of the religious denominations from

the area in question, to draw up the terms of an agreed syllabus. In accordance with these procedures many LEAs have recently revised their agreed syllabuses to reflect more closely the multi-faith nature of their areas.

The Education Act 1944 also enables pupils to be withdrawn at their parents' request in order to receive elsewhere religious instruction of a kind not provided in the school. It also requires LEAs to make facilities available, subject to certain conditions, to enable such instruction to take place on school premises for those parents of children in county secondary schools who desire it, provided that the cost of the instruction does not fall on the LEA.

b. Halal meat and food

Under the Education Act 1980, LEAs are responsible for the school meals service. A number of authorities have introduced halal meat and food as an alternative to more traditional menus, in response to the needs of Muslim children.

c. Prayer facilities

The response to the needs of Muslim pupils for prayer facilities is a matter for individual LEAs and schools. It may be possible for schools to agree arrangements for accommodation to be made available for prayer at appropriate times during the day.

- d. Separate PE and swimming lessons for boys and girls
and exemption of Muslim children from dance and music lessons

Responsibility for responding to the religious and cultural backgrounds of pupils rests primarily with individual LEAs and schools. The arrangements made will vary according to local circumstances. Many schools, reflecting parents concerns, already make separate provision for boys and girls in PE classes and swimming lessons.

Parents have a statutory right to withdraw their children only from religious instruction. With the exception of special provisions for sex education, which has already been mentioned, parents are not allowed to withdraw pupils from elements of the secular curriculum at their own choice.

- e. Information for parents about extra-curricular activities

The Education (School Information) Regulations 1987 already includes among the information LEAs are required to publish on individual schools, details of "the main societies and activities open to, and the facilities available to, pupils at the school

otherwise than as part of the education provided therein."

f. Training and appointment of Muslim teachers and other staff

The appointment of teaching and other staff in schools is generally under the control of the LEA, in consultation with the governing body of the individual school.

The Government is concerned to increase the supply of ethnic minority teachers. Postgraduate Certificate of Education Courses, and shortened BEd courses for students with ethnic minority community language skills are in progress or planned at several institutions. The Government has also reviewed its administrative procedures for recognition of overseas qualifications.

g. Discarding offensive and unauthentic books and references

Responsibility for current book stocks and new book purchases rests with individual LEAs and schools. It is open to parents to raise with headteachers any concerns they may have about the use of particular texts.

h. Continuance of single-sex schools

LEAs are responsible for providing schools in their area. They are under no statutory obligation to provide single-sex schools and it is for them to decide how to respond to parental preferences for such schools. In considering proposals from an LEA to open a new county school or close an existing one, the Secretary of State attaches particular weight to parental preferences, including preferences for single sex schools. Parental choice could not, however, be conclusive if the proposals would not provide efficient education or an efficient use of resources. In considering a proposal for a new single sex school, the Secretary of State would particularly want to be satisfied of the extent of parental demand for it and of how the setting up of the new school was to be offset by proposals for reducing the number of places elsewhere, bearing in mind that rolls are generally falling. The Government have also made it clear that it will approach with particular care any proposals to reduce single-sex provision.

RACE RELATIONS

The main legislative instrument against racial discrimination is the Race Relations Act 1976. It makes direct and indirect discrimination unlawful in the fields of employment, education and the provision of goods, services, facilities and premises. It gives individuals a right of direct access to the civil courts and industrial tribunals for legal remedies for unlawful discrimination. In addition, the law on incitement to racial hatred has been strengthened by new legislation contained in Part III of the Public Order Act 1986 which came into force on 1 April 1987.

LINE TO TAKE

The Government is firmly committed to a fair and just society in which all individuals, whatever their race, colour or creed, have equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities.

The Government can set the framework for such a policy: by specific legislation such as the Race Relations Act; and by ensuring that its general policies and programmes, including the special initiatives it is taking in urban areas, benefit all sections of society. But Government action is not enough. Discrimination needs to be tackled wherever it occurs, not only because of its unfairness, but also because it leads to waste of talent and enterprise.

RELIGIOUS SLAUGHTER OF ANIMALS

Present legislation permits the slaughter without stunning of animals and poultry whose meat is intended for consumption by Muslims or Jews providing the slaughter is carried out without the infliction of increasing suffering, and all other legislative requirements concerning the welfare of livestock both before and during slaughter are met. The independent Farm Animal Welfare Council examined the whole question of religious slaughter in its report on the Welfare of Livestock when Slaughtered by Religious Methods.

The Council made 17 specific recommendations with regard to religious slaughter and the Government accepted all but two. It did not accept the Council's recommendation to require stunning before slaughter by the Jewish and Muslim method.

LINE TO TAKE

This issue involved a judgement between scientific opinion, religious freedom and the welfare of animals, all of which the Government had a duty to consider seriously. We had been told by Muslim and Jewish organisations that their methods were founded on a care for animals and that they wanted the best practice in welfare terms to be paramount, and were aware that it was not open for methods of slaughter determined by religious law to be altered. It was for these reasons that we decided not to accept the Council's recommendation to require stunning before slaughter by the Muslim and Jewish method.

216dPAL

FAMILY/RELIGIOUS COURTS

Some Muslim organisations (notably UMO) want to see the establishment of separate family courts in which cases would be decided in accordance with Muslim Family Law.

LINE TO TAKE

In Britain the civil law applies equally to all people regardless of race, colour or creed. Although religious courts are permitted, their decisions are not legally recognised and the Government has no plans to alter this. To permit separate religious courts could be divisive, and could lead to different standards of justice in the civil and religious courts.

MUSLIM PERSONAL LAWS

Generally, it is possible for Muslim family law to be accommodated within our existing legal framework.

Inheritance

Muslims who wish to dispose of their property after death according to Muslim customs can do so by making a will.

Marriage in the UK

Provided Muslim marriages take place in this country in a registered place, with a registrar present, they are recognised in law. Many Mosques are registered for the performance of marriage services and some Imams are authorised registrars. In cases where a couple are not married by a registered person or in a registered place, couples will also go through a civil ceremony in a registry office, to validate the marriage in English law. The concept of polygamy is not accepted in English law.

Talaq divorce

In England and Wales, proceedings to dissolve a marriage are valid only if they are instituted in an English, or Welsh, court of law. Part II of the Family Law Act 1968, which came into force on 4 April 1988, makes stricter provision with regard to Talaq divorces which take place abroad. In order to be recognised as valid, such divorces must take place wholly overseas and be officially recognised in the country concerned. There are also new provisions as to the residence of the parties. The Government has no plans to introduce

legislation which would lead to wider recognition of Talag divorces.

LINE TO TAKE

The Government takes the view that no unnecessary obstacles should be put in the way of people wishing to observe religious customs. However, people resident in this country are expected to comply with UK law.

MINISTERS OF RELIGION

There is specific provision in the Immigration Rules for the admission of overseas ministers of religion without them having to have work permits. The provision recognises that some religious groups in the United Kingdom may not always be able to find suitable ministers from the resident population.

Under the Rules, overseas ministers of religion must have entry clearance before travelling, in line with other overseas nationals coming here for work and settlement. They have to show that they are coming to full-time posts and that they can support themselves and their dependants without recourse to public funds.

People who are admitted to the United Kingdom as visitors are not allowed to stay here as ministers of religion and applications to do so are refused unless there are exceptional circumstances. For example, the Home Office may be prepared to waive the entry clearance requirement where a priest was admitted as a visitor for a job interview and is subsequently offered employment.

BUSINESSMEN

The Immigration Rules provide for the admission of overseas businessmen who wish to establish themselves in business here. They have to have entry clearance before travelling to the United Kingdom. The most important requirements are a minimum personal investment of at least £150,000 and the creation of new, paid, full-time employment for people already settled here. A prospective businessman also has to show that he will be occupied full-time in the running of the business and that there is a genuine need for his services and investment.

A businessman who has the appropriate entry clearance will normally be admitted to the United Kingdom for an initial period of 12 months. He may be accompanied by his wife and any children under 18. Provided that the requirements of the Immigration Rules continue to be met, a businessman will normally be granted an extension of stay for 3 years and he may apply for settlement when he has been here for 4 years.

These Rules are intended to strike a balance between the need to encourage overseas investment here and the Government's commitment to restrict primary immigration.

EXAMINATION OF PAKISTANI VISA HOLDERS ON ARRIVAL IN THE UK

Background

It is understood that 5 of the 9 Muslims due to meet the Prime Minister are Pakistanis.

In October 1986, a visa requirement was introduced for nationals of Pakistan (and citizens of India and Bangladesh.) This was necessitated by a surge in the number of passengers who required in-depth interview at ports of entry. It was a purely operational decision.

The visa system is working well. 90% of applications for a temporary visa are dealt with in 24 hours. Bona Fide travellers are now much less likely to be inconvenienced at UK ports than they might have been before the visa requirement was introduced.

Pakistanis generally acknowledge that the UK needed to introduce a visa requirement, and do not criticise it as such. They are, however, concerned about what they see as excessive questioning (not necessarily leading to refusal of admission) of Pakistanis who hold visas at the ports.

A visa is only evidence of a person's eligibility for entry into the UK. Immigration officers may need to question a visa holder of any nationality to see if they still qualify for admission to the UK. However, a visa-holder can only be refused admission on certain limited and specific grounds;

for instance , if false representations were made to obtain the visa, or if a change of circumstances since it was issued has removed the basis of the holder's claim to admission. Between January and August 1987, 70,300 Pakistanis were admitted to the UK. In the same period, at Heathrow, Gatwick and Dover, only 74 Pakistani visa-holders were refused leave to enter.

LINE TO TAKE

The possession of a visa does not entitle someone automatically to be admitted to the UK. A visa-holder still requires leave to enter from an immigration officer. However, the Immigration Rules only allow a person in possession of a valid visa to be refused leave to enter on limited and specific grounds. Relatively very few Pakistanis who hold visas are refused admission at our ports.

GENERAL IMMIGRATION ISSUES (FAMILY REUNION)

This Government, like its predecessors, is generous in allowing wives, husbands, children and other dependant relatives to join their families here. The need for families to be united is fully recognised. However, because of the general pressures to emigrate to the United Kingdom, there is a set of Rules under which different persons may apply to join their families here.

These Rules necessarily have different requirements dependent on the category applied for, but they are not impossible to pass. The approach taken is that all applications will be dealt with in a fair but firm way whilst maintaining consistency. The Government is mindful of the need to unite families wherever possible provided that they qualify under the Rules.

For example, husbands or fiances may wish to join their wives in the United Kingdom or to come for marriage. The Rules relating to marriage cases require the husband or fiance to satisfy the Entry Clearance Officer that the marriage did not take place to enable the husband to achieve settlement in the United Kingdom. Inter alia, the Entry Clearance Officer must also be satisfied that the couple intend to live together and have sufficient funds and accommodation available to them. Once a marriage has taken place, a husband will be permitted to remain initially for one year without any employment restrictions. At the end of that time, he will be permitted to remain indefinitely, provided that the circumstances pertaining are acceptable under the Rules.

The Government also believes that most people do not accept the fact that some men are able to live in the United Kingdom with more than one wife. This possibility is therefore to be prevented by way of the new Immigration Bill at present before Parliament.

In addition, the present benefit that allows wives and children of Commonwealth citizens to join their husbands or fathers in the United Kingdom provided they were settled here on 1 January 1973 is to be repealed under the new Immigration Bill. This will mean that these wives and children will be required to qualify under the appropriate category under the Rules.

PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH A DELEGATION
OF IMAMS : 28 APRIL 1988

Our Objective

- Through UK Muslim community to urge restraint and moderation on Arab/Israeli dispute and to demonstrate that UK is genuinely even-handed and takes seriously the Palestinian and boader Muslim aspects in the dispute. To put forward our view of the necessity of a constructive response to this current US peace initiative.

Points to Make

- Situation in Occupied Territories can only be remedied through political solution of underlying conflict.
- Must support all efforts to accelerate process of convening international conference as framework for negotiations.
- Therefore support current US initiative. Shultz plan is nobody's ideal, works on basis of compromise/concession by all parties.

- Main block is Shamir. Arabs and others must respond constructively to ensure focus remains on his intransigence.

Their Objectives

- Urge greater UK role on behalf of Palestinians, reduced support for Israel.
- Call on UK to thicken relations with PLO.

Our Response

- Have made very clear our deep concern at violence in Occupied Territories, deportations, collective punishments, provocative actions of Israeli settlers.
- Urge restraint on all parties. Will keep up pressure on Israel to abide by international law, human rights standards.
- (If necessary): measures against Israel, eg economic sanctions will not help cause of peace - will only strengthen hard-liners in Israel.
- (If necessary): accusations of Israeli involvement in killing of Abu Jihad not proven.
- PLO cannot expect to play full, constructive role in negotiations while they equivocate on three points at core

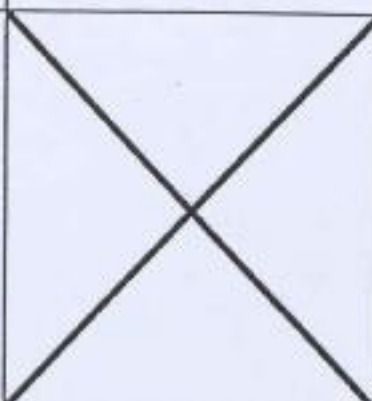
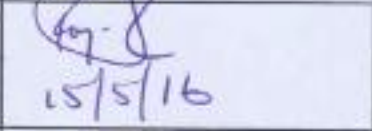
of negotiations: acceptance of UNSCRs 242/338;
renunciation of violence; recognition of Israel.

- (If asked about PLO/HMG contacts): FCO officials maintain contact with PLO members in London and abroad. Mr. Hurd, as FCO Minister of State, met Qaddumi in 1983. Would consider further Ministerial meeting if appropriate and helpful in context of advancing peace process.



PRIME MINISTER: Mr. J. G. ...
with ...
In 58



A The National Archives

DEPARTMENT/SERIES <i>PREM 19</i> PIECE/ITEM <i>2400/1</i> (one piece/item number)	Date and sign
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DEPARTMENT/SERIES <i>PREM 19</i> PIECE/ITEM <i>2400 / 1</i> (one piece/item number)	Date and sign
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THE LONDON CENTRAL MOSQUE TRUST LIMITED
THE ISLAMIC CULTURAL CENTRE

146, PARK ROAD, LONDON NW8 7RG TEL: (01) 724 3383-7

Our ref: AAMG/CT



28/4

7th April 1988

C.D. Powell Esq.,
Private Secretary to the
Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
LONDON, SW1A 2AA

Dear Mr. Powell,

Further to our previous correspondence concerning our visit to the Prime Minister on the 28th April 1988, I am enclosing a list of members of the Muslim Community who will be accompanying me.

I regret the delay in sending this information to you; the recent Bank Holiday caused more disruption than expected of our usual lines of communication.

Yours sincerely,



Dr.A.A. Mughram Al-Ghamdi
DIRECTOR GENERAL

Enc.

THE LONDON CENTRAL MOSQUE TRUST LIMITED
THE ISLAMIC CULTURAL CENTRE

146, PARK ROAD, LONDON NW8 7RG TEL: (01) 724 3383-7



Sheikh Zahran Ibrahim MOhamed Aly
Imam
London Central Mosque

Mr. M. T. Shaheen, MBE.,
President, Islamic Centre, Glasgow
Chairman of the Islamic Council of Scotland
Trustees of the Glasgow Central Mosque

Dr. M. Naseem, G.P.
Chairman, Birmingham Mosque Trust

Mr. M.A. Hamid
Retired Civil Servant
Chairman, Wimbledon Mosque

Mr. Abdul Raschid Skinner
Principle Clinical Psychologist
Northern Organiser, British Muslim Assoc.

Dr. Mohamed Khalid
Lecturer in Business Management
Polytechnic of the South Bank
& Financial Consultant

Mufti Gul Rahman
Chairman, Tanzeem-ul Quran, The Midlands.
Chairman & Imam, Islamic Centre, Small Heath, Birmingham

Mufti Mohamed Aslam
Imam, Rotherham Mosque , Chairman of Sharia' Council, Rotherham

Mr. Tarek Rafiq
Barrister-at -Law,
Trustee, East London Mosque

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Our ref: AAMG/CT

24th March 1988

C.D. Powell Esq.,
Private Secretary to the
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street,
LONDON, SW1A 2AA

R25/3

Await list

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25/3.

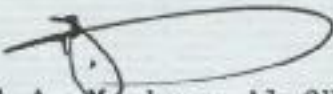
Dear Mr. Powell,

Thank you for your letter of the 16th March 1988.

We appreciate this positive and encouraging response to our letter of the 29th February 1988, and confirm that the time and date are convenient.

We will be forwarding to you a list of those who will make up the delegation next week.

Yours sincerely,


Dr. A.A. Mughram Al-Ghamdi
DIRECTOR GENERAL

Dr. Al-Ghamdi

Al-G

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cc FCO

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

16 March 1988

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your letter of 29 February (which we do not appear to have received until 8 March).

The Prime Minister would be happy to receive a delegation of Muslim religious leaders from various parts of the United Kingdom to discuss recent events in the Occupied Territories and the peace process, as well as other matters. A meeting at 1700 hours on Thursday 28 April would suit her best.

I should be grateful if you could confirm that this is convenient and let me have, as soon as possible, the names of those you propose to include in the delegation.

None
Chaitos
OK ✓ any news?
J/23/3

(C.D. POWELL)

Dr. A. A. Mughram Al-Ghamdi

PRIME MINISTER

DELEGATION OF IMAMS

The Director General of the Islamic Cultural Centre in London has written to ask whether you would receive a small deputation of Muslim religious leaders who wish to express the anxiety of their community regarding events in Palestine. You do of course regularly see leaders of the Jewish community in this country, and I think there would be an advantage with a brief meeting with Islamic leaders. The Home Office and the Foreign Office both would like you to agree.

Agree to a short meeting - say half an hour - in due course?

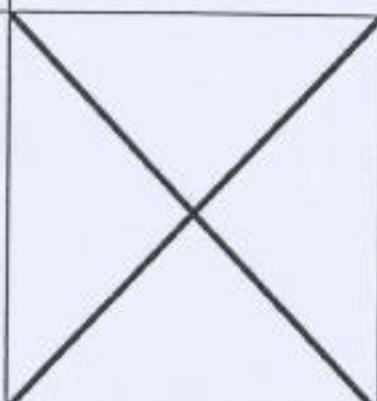
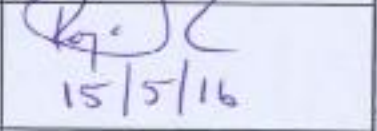
C.D.P.

Yes

C. D. POWELL

14 March 1988

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TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

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PS/No 10

Reference

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Your Reference

BUILDING: ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

TO: ^G
 Dr A A Mughram Al-Rhamdi
 Director-General
 The London Central ~~Margua Mosque~~
 Trust Limited ^(Cultural)
 The Islamic Centre
 146 Park Road
 London NW8 7RG

Copies to:

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..... In Confidence

CAVEAT

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your letter of 29 February (which we do not appear to have received until 8 March).

The Prime Minister ^{would} ~~will~~ be happy to receive a delegation of Muslim religious leaders from various parts of the United Kingdom to discuss recent events in the Occupied Territories and the peace process. I suggest ~~in~~

as well as other matters

A meeting at ^{or on} ~~5 o'clock~~ 28 April would suit her best.

// I should be grateful if you could confirm that this is convenient and let me have, as soon as possible, the names of those you propose to include in the delegation,

Enclosures flag(s)

D. A.A. Al-GHAMDI file
1573

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10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

8 March 1988

I enclose a copy of a letter to the Prime Minister from the Director General of the Islamic Cultural Centre in London. As you will see, he asks to bring a delegation of Imams from various parts of the United Kingdom to call on the Prime Minister.

I should be grateful for advice on this request, on which you will also wish to consult the Home Office. My view is that, since the Prime Minister quite regularly sees representatives from Jewish organisations in this country, there should be no objection to her seeing a group of Muslim religious leaders although we will no doubt want to vet the list of those attending rather carefully.

I should be grateful for an early reply.

I am copying this letter and enclosure to Philip Mawer (Home Office).

(C.D. POWELL)

R.N. Culshaw, Esq., M.V.O.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

ech

THE LONDON CENTRAL MOSQUE TRUST LIMITED
ISLAMIC CULTURAL CENTRE

146, PARK ROAD, LONDON NWS 7RG TEL: (01) 724 3363-7

Our ref: AAMG/CT

29th February 1988



Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher M.P.,
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street,
LONDON, SW1

28/3

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you for your letter of the 17th February 1988 and we have been encouraged by your reasoned reply.

However, I am writing to you now to enquire whether you would be prepared to receive a small deputation of Muslim religious leaders and give them the opportunity to express the anxieties of our community regarding recent events in Palestine.

I have been encouraged to suggest this in view of the sympathetic understanding of the problems demonstrated by H.M. Government under your leadership, and I believe that you might find such a meeting fruitful. You will, I am sure, appreciate that there is a certain sense of frustration in our community due to the difficulties we face in making our views known. A meeting between yourself and reputable Muslim leaders of the United Kingdom would do much to reduce this sense of frustration.

The Muslims in this country are, for the most part, recent arrivals who, my colleagues and I are convinced, would be encouraged to take a more active and responsible role in the country of their adoption through such a meeting.

Our proposal is that some 10 or 12 Imams, i.e. heads of Mosques, from various parts of the United Kingdom, should call upon you at Downing Street for a brief talk. I very much hope that you will find it possible, despite your very busy schedule, to receive this deputation.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. A.A. Mughram Al-Ghamdi
DIRECTOR GENERAL



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

17 February 1988

Dear Mr. Al-Chandi,

Thank you for your letter of 28 January. I have to say straightaway that, while I respect the depth of your feelings particularly concerning the Al Aqsa mosque, I cannot accept some of the comments in your letter.

I very much share your concern at the violence in the Occupied Territories irrespective of who is perpetrating it. I was especially saddened by the scenes at the Al Aqsa Mosque, whose deep significance for the Islamic Faith I fully understand. I would note that we have repeatedly urged the Israeli authorities to administer the Occupied Territories in accordance with international law and human rights standards and supported the recent draft Security Council resolution which also called for this.

The unrest stems from a very genuine grievance and underlines more strongly than ever the need for a settlement to the underlying Arab/Israel dispute. This should be based on acknowledgement of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination together with the right of all states in the region, including Israel, to secure existence. The United States' recent re-engagement in the peace process offers new ground for hope.

GA

But such a solution must be sought by peaceful means. This is why we support an international conference as the framework for negotiations between the parties directly concerned. We shall continue to work with our friends in the Arab countries and Israel to help bring this about in the belief that, in this way, the reasonable aspirations of the Palestinian people can be satisfied and further violence in the Occupied Territories avoided.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

Dr. A. A. Mughram Al-Ghamdi

GR



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

12 February 1988

Dear Charles

Thank you for your letter of 29 January enclosing a letter to the Prime Minister from Dr A A Mughram Al-Ghamdi. I attach a draft reply from the Prime Minister as requested.

Yours ever

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R N Culshaw', written in a cursive style.

(R N Culshaw)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

DSR 11 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despach/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM: PM

Reference

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Your Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO: Dr A A Mughram Al-Ghamdi

Copies to:

Top Secret

Secret

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

Director General

London Central Mosque Trust Limited
Islamic Cultural Centre
146 Park Road, LONDON NN8 7RG

*Slaw
BHD*

SUBJECT: [REDACTED]

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

Thank you for your letter of 28 January.

CAVEAT

I very much
~~We~~ share your concern at the current violence in the Occupied Territories, *irrespective of who is perpetrating it,* I was especially saddened by

~~act was so severely saddened by~~
the scenes at the Al Aqsa Mosque. *whose help significance for the Islamic faith I fully understand.* We deplore the use of violence, whoever the perpetrator. The British government have called consistently on the Israeli authorities to administer the Occupied

Territories in accordance with international law and human rights standards.

reiterating that Security Council Resolution 242 also called for this.
The unrest highlights the need for a negotiated settlement to the underlying Arab/Israel dispute.

Such a settlement should be based on acknowledgement of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination together with the right of all states in the region, including Israel, to secure *existence.*

But such a solution must be sought by peaceful means.
[REDACTED] To this end, we support an international conference as the framework for direct negotiations. We shall continue to work with our friends in the Arab countries and Israel to help

bring this about. *in the belief that, in this way, at the time it took to in this way, at*

I love to say straight away that, while I respect the depth of your feelings perfectly concerning the Al Aqsa mosque, I cannot accept some of the content in your letter, indeed find them extremely distasteful

Reasonable aspirations of
the Palestinian people are
to be satisfied & further
violence in the occupied

territories avoided. All ~~talk~~
United States must re-engage in the peace process,
~~without~~ ~~ambivalence~~ ~~of~~

for a new ground for hope -

Prov. letter
to CDF 4/2 ?



h

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

11 February, 1988.

I am writing in the Prime Minister's absence to thank you for your letter of 5 February which has just arrived. I know that Mrs. Thatcher will be interested to see this.

(P.A. Bearpark)

Dr. A.A. Mughram Al Ghamdi

✓

THE LONDON CENTRAL MOSQUE TRUST LIMITED
THE ISLAMIC CULTURAL CENTRE

146, PARK ROAD, LONDON NWS 7RG TEL: (01) 724 3363-7



5th February 1988

R11/2

Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.,
The Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
LONDON, SW1

Dear Prime Minister,

You may have seen the correspondence between myself and the Chief Rabbi, Sir Immanuel Jakobovits, in yesterday's "Times". I never intended for my original letter to be published, but since it has and because the points taken up by Sir Immanuel Jakobovits need a reply, I feel obliged to send a copy of it to you to keep you informed.

With my best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Dr. A.A. Mughram Al Ghamdi
DIRECTOR GENERAL

Enc.

THE LONDON CENTRAL MOSQUE TRUST LIMITED
THE ISLAMIC CULTURAL CENTRE

146, PARK ROAD, LONDON NW8 7RG TEL: (01) 724 3363-7



5th February 1988

Our ref: AAMG/CT

Sir Immanuel Jakobovits,
Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregation,
Adler House
Tavistock Square,
LONDON, WC1

Dear Sir Immanuel,

I wrote to you concerning the pain and anger felt among us in the certainty that you are a man of honour, and I feel that this has been confirmed by the demonstration of genuine concern for the security of the Holy Places and for the plight of the Palestinians expressed in your reply.

I must, however, say that I was disappointed by the tone of your letter and by the general line of your argument, which seems to me to run along the well-worn tracks of Zionist self-justification, in so far as it ignores the basic issues and attempts to divert attention on to other conflicts and atrocities in order to portray all others as behaving even worse than the Israeli authorities.

The comparison you make with events in Makkah seems to me without validity. For one thing, the Mosque was never in danger from what was basically a political conflict; and I am sure, in any case, that had this incident never taken place - you would have found some other pretext for making comparisons that simply do not hold water. You mention also the siege and massacre of the Palestinians in Lebanon blaming the Lebanese or other Arab groups in order to exonerate Israel, whereas the Israeli invasion of the country (preceded by a number of lawless bombing raids on Lebanese territory) was at the root of the trouble. This seems to me an example of the same "bias" and "one sidedness" with which you reproached me. I could say that it turns reason on its head.

Your resentment of my reference to Israel as a racist society was to be expected. I only wish that I could believe you were right and I was wrong. Unfortunately the events of the forty years since the creation of the Jewish State bear bitter witness to the rightness of my view. How is it possible to justify the bringing of Jews from every corner of the world to the land of Palestine while denying all natural rights to the indigenous inhabitants flushing them out from their homes and then pursuing them wherever they seek refuge. Ignoring the sufferings of the

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- 2

Palestinian people, which go back over more than half a century, you appear to feel that it suffices to express a certain sympathy or pity for them as "refugees". Who, one is bound to ask, made refugees of these people? Meanwhile, you blame the Arabs for not forcing the Palestinians to forget forever their homes, their lands, their villages and their cities. From this point of view I fear that your letter is less helpful than I might have hoped.

Sir Immanuel, you know as well as I do that man's capacity for evil is immense, and human history offers us an appalling catalogue of atrocities. This however does nothing to justify the repetition of such atrocities today or tomorrow. When I wrote to you I was not trying to score points nor was I playing to the gallery (it was not I who sent a copy of the letter to the press). I was simply reflecting, in a moderate and, I believe, gentle manner some of the feelings of the Muslim Community in this country in the hope that a man of your integrity and of your standing in the Jewish Community would not stand by in this situation, which augurs ill for all the present inhabitants of the Near East. Your letter, however, has not made me lose hope, and I trust that this hope is not without foundation.

Yours sincerely,


Dr. A.A. Mughram Al-Ghamdi
DIRECTOR GENERAL



COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
February 3: The Princess Royal, Chancellor of the University of London, opened the new Central Office of the British Postgraduate Medical Federation, Millman Street, London WC1.

Mrs Richard Carew Pole was in attendance.

THATCHED HOUSE LODGE
February 3: Princess Alexandra, accompanied by the Hon Angus Ogilvy, this evening opened new Ontario House at 21 Knightsbridge, London SW1.

Mrs Peter Afia was in attendance.

Today's royal engagements

Prince Michael of Kent, as President of the Institute of the Motor Industry, will visit JQE Engineering, Towcester, at 11.00; and, as Patron of the Anglo-Hellenic League, will attend "Athenian Trireme Reborn" at the Commonwealth Institute at 6.30.

Luncheons

Lord Ezra
Lord Ezra was host at a meeting and luncheon of the House of Lords All-Party Building Industry Group held yesterday at the House of Lords. The other speakers were Mr Derek Gault, Chairman of the Construction Industry Training Board, and Mr Peter Davis, President of the London Region of the Building Employers Confederation.

Canada-United Kingdom Chamber of Commerce
Mr Anthony Abbott, a Vice-President of the Canada-United Kingdom Chamber of Commerce, presided at a luncheon held yesterday at Stationers' Hall. Mr David Peterson, Premier of Ontario, was the guest of honour.

Dinners

British Medical Association
Mr D.E. Bolt, President of the British Medical Association, Dr B.L. Alexander, Dr J.H. Marks and Dr J.A. Riddell were hosts at the president's dinner held last night at BMA House. Among the guests were:

The Presidents of the Royal Colleges of Surgeons, General Practitioners, Ophthalmologists and Geriatricians, Pathologists, Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, Psychiatrists, Radiologists and Surgeons of Edinburgh; the President of the Faculty of Community Medicine, the Vice-President of the Royal College of Physicians, the Deans of the Faculties of Occupational Medicine and Anaesthetics, the Secretary of the BMA and the Editor of the British Medical Journal.

Fletcher's Company

The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, accompanied by the Sheriffs and their ladies, last night attended the ladies dinner of the Fletcher's Company held at Farmers' and Fletcher's Hall. Mr A.N. Taylor, Master, presided and the Lord Mayor, Mr Gareth Daniel, and Mr C.A. Coward, Upper Warden, also spoke.

Agent General for Ontario

The Lord Mayor of Westminster attended a dinner given by the Agent General for Ontario and Mrs Wells at the Royal Automobile Club last night in honour of the Premier of Ontario and Mrs Peterson. Among others present were:

The Acting High Commissioner for Canada and Mrs DeWise, Lord and Lady Ross, Sir William and Lady Heseltine, Sir Alan Clark, MP, Sir Russell Johnston, MP, Vice-Admiral Sir Derek and Lady Jeffrey, Sir Denis and Lady Royle, Sir Alan and Lady Davis, Sir John and Lady Treacher, Sir Derek and Lady Day, Sir David and Lady Nicolson, Sir and Mrs Anthony C. Abbott, Sir and Mrs John Barrow, Mr and Mrs Pearce Bunting, Mr and Mrs Basil Butler, Mr Alderman and Mrs Christopher Cotfield, Mr and Mrs John Hale, Mr and Mrs Andrew Knight, Mr and Mrs Peter Leslie, Mr Stanley W.P. Marrow, Mr and Mrs Douglas M. Ritchie, Mr and Mrs Patrick Sweeney and Dr and Mrs David Tonkin.

Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers
Mr H.P. Johnston, President of the Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers, presided at a dinner held last night at Grosvenor House. Sir Gordon Manzie, Chief Executive of the Property Services

Exchange of letters on Israel crisis

From Dr A. A. Mughram Al Ghamdi

Dear Sir Immanuel,
I am writing to you in my capacity as Director General of the London Central Mosque (Regent's Park), but also on behalf of the principal Muslim organizations in this country, to express our pain, our horror, and our distress over recent events in the occupied sectors of Palestine. I do so in the firm belief that men and women of faith and integrity, particularly the leaders of the Christian and Jewish communities, can hardly fail to understand our distress and may even share it. I write in anger because I have a duty to express the anger of our community, but I write also in the interests of peace in the Middle East and of amity between our respective Faiths. In doing so I would like to make it clear that we are fully aware of the past sufferings of the Jewish people in Europe; but I must add that we cannot see how those sad events could be thought to justify or excuse the atrocities committed by the State of Israel against the Palestinian people who had no part in those persecutions and who are now themselves the object of merciless persecution. Their history demonstrates that they are by nature a peaceful and industrious people, deeply attached to the land of their ancestors. They suffer today for their desire to live at peace in that land.

The "Jewish State" in Palestine (and how can anyone deny that this term has racist undertones?) is intent upon survival, and this is well understood, but it seems now to be seeking its own eventual destruction by forging a legacy

The Chief Rabbi, Sir Immanuel Jakobovits, replied yesterday to a letter from the Director General of the Islamic Centre at the Regent's Park Mosque, Dr Mughram Al Ghamdi, which protested at the recent treatment of Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank. This is the text of their letters.

of hatred and bitterness. Whatever military force may be deployed this year or next, survival must in the long run depend upon an accommodation with the peoples of the area (Muslim and Christian), not least the Palestinians. Every atrocity committed against the Palestinians and, above all, every outrage against the religion of Islam, makes such an accommodation less possible and therefore less likely. Muslims do not believe that Might is Right, and it is not our way to cringe and submit before displays of ruthless military power; our resolve is only strengthened by such actions, as is the deep and enduring anger rooted in the hearts not only of those who suffer the direct impact of aggression and intimidation, but also in the hearts of all faithful Muslims who share membership in the universal brotherhood of Islam. Whatever our political differences, we make up a formidable worldwide community, and the Zionist movement - if it is realistic - must take account of this.

The history of aggression against the Palestinian people goes back almost half a century, but interests sympathetic to the State of Israel have, in the past, had great success in preventing news of these atrocities from reaching the outside world. Truth, however, has a way of eventually penetrating such artificial barriers. Over recent

weeks the whole world has glimpsed the darker side of Israel's policies of survival. In this country we have been encouraged and, to some extent, comforted, by evidence that the traditional British sense of fairness has begun to re-assert itself, and the media have played an honourable part in exposing the outrages committed against unarmed civilians in Gaza, the West Bank and the Holy City of Jerusalem itself. The deliberate and clearly premeditated attack on the Al Aqsa Mosque was not only a devastating blow - and a sacrilege - against the Faith of Islam; it was an act which has, we believe, aroused the conscience of all decent people for whom religion has significance. It will not be forgotten, any more than the attempt of a madman to set fire to the Mosque (while its Israeli "guardians" looked the other way) has been forgotten. As we see it, the offence against our religion goes hand-in-hand with the brutal attacks upon our Palestinian brothers and sisters (and their children), and these in turn represent a readiness to trample upon every principle of human rights.

The objective, as it appears to us, is the total elimination of the Palestinian people from their homeland through a policy of state terrorism. We remember Adolf Hitler's ambition to make Europe "Judenrein." We perceive a parallel between this and

the Zionist ambition to "purify" Greater Israel (whose boundaries seem to be indefinitely extendable) from all non-Jews. We are convinced, however, that many thoughtful and humane Jewish people must be hardly less horrified by this policy than we are, when they consider the facts objectively. Since the peoples of Europe have felt obliged to make up for the wrongs committed against the Jews in Europe, it seems to us that they have a duty to help their Jewish friends to understand that honour and self-interest coincide when the follies and excesses of the Israeli regime are exposed and condemned.

In God's name, let all of us who belong to one or other of the three great branches of monotheism proclaimed by the Prophet and Patriarch Abraham work together for peace and justice! On behalf of the Muslim community in Britain, I do most vehemently appeal to you to take whatever steps you feel appropriate to halt the escalation of Israeli atrocities against the Palestinians and to act according to your conscience regarding the protection of the sacred Mosques of Islam. It is no longer possible for men and women of good will to stand aside. This is not a local problem that can be ignored in the hope that it will go away; it is a human catastrophe for which this country, as the former mandatory power, shares responsibility.

Yours sincerely,
A.A. MUGHRAM AL GHAMDI,
Director General,
The London Central Mosque
Trust Limited,
146 Park Road, NW8.

From the Chief Rabbi

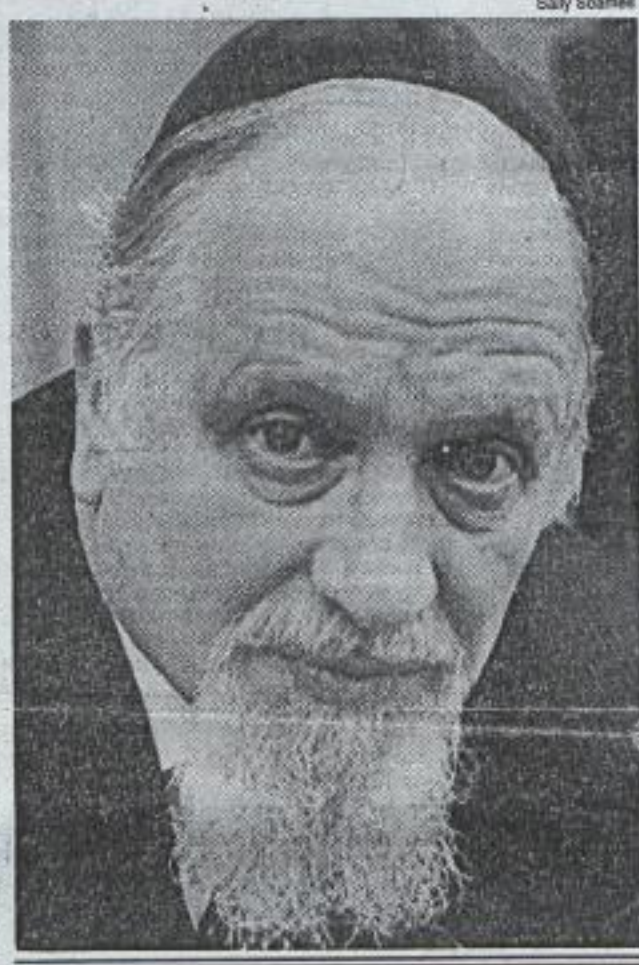
Dear Dr Mughram Al Ghamdi,
I have read your letter of January 26th with much care. I share your deep distress over the current violence in Gaza and the West Bank. I also fully share your declared anxiety to promote better understanding and peace between all the peoples in the Middle East.

Indeed, I have repeatedly over the years taken a singular public stand over the plight of Palestinian refugees in their squalid camps, describing such wretched conditions as an intolerable blot on the human and the Jewish conscience. I have also often declared that in my view Jewish religious teachings should not inhibit Israel's quest for peace even if this may involve some territorial concessions consistent with its security. My personal pronouncements challenging Jews to show moderation and sympathy for the refugees are on public record in my book on Zionism (*If Only My People... Zionism in my Life*, published in this country and in America) as well as in numerous articles and press reports. Regrettably, I have not so far found a record of any Arab religious leaders urging the adoption of similar attitudes among their own people.

While there is therefore much in your letter with which I find myself in sympathy, I am bound to deplore its striking bias and total one-sidedness as unhelpful to the realisation on the aims the letter professes to serve.

For instance, it objects to the very term "Jewish State" as having "racist undertones". Would you level a similar charge against countries which call themselves Arab or Islamic states, more specifically when some of them in fact deny Jews the right of residence or even visits?

Again, you repeatedly mention ruthless atrocities against Palestinian Arabs. I too deplore any excesses, as much as you do. But it is surely only fair to view the plight of Palestinian refugees in the



Sally Soames

wider context of their sufferings in Arab lands as well. You cannot be unaware that the number of Palestinian Arabs brutally killed by fellow-Arabs in Jordan and in Lebanon exceeds by many hundreds of times the toll of the casualties caused by Israeli actions in Gaza and the West Bank. Nor can you have overlooked the horrifying accounts of the siege, over several years, imposed by Lebanese Arab militias over Palestinian refugee camps, destroying some ninety per cent of all the buildings and forcing the starving population to live "on dead cats and rats", as testified by a British doctor. I mention this not in justification of any Israeli action, but simply to ensure objectivity and fairness in judgement.

A further example. You refer to the sacrilege in 1969 of an acknowledged madman from Australia setting fire to the Mosque in Jerusalem, and you allege that Israeli "guardians" looked the other way. I seem to remember a more recent sacrilege, compounded with a carnage, at an even holier Moslem shrine in Mecca on an incomparably vaster scale, and I cannot recall similar allegations, denunciations and expressions of outrage. May I also remind you of the utter devastation of all Jewish holy places, including cemeteries, in the Old City of Jerusalem while under Jordanian occupation for nineteen years. The Arab "guardians" not only turned a blind eye but themselves perpetrated the sacrilege, and again I cannot

recall any Moslem protests.

Morality can never be selective, and being blind in one direction will hardly advance vision in another.

My interest, believe me, is not to score points, and certainly not to defend what I have myself scorned as reprehensible. Nor is it to add to the sum-total of the already excessive hatred and bitterness. But I do believe that we can only advance the prospects of harmony and peaceful co-existence if we first, each one of us, help to put our own house in order, recognising facts as they are without fear or favour, and advocating comprehensive judgements which are balanced and objective.

In your final paragraph you make an earnest plea for the great branches of monotheism to work together for peace and justice. May I respond to that plea, and as a practical beginning submit the following suggestion to your consideration.

Would you join me, perhaps together with other religious leaders, in a call to Arabs and Jews alike to abandon all violence (in word and action) and to promote the search for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East by first establishing peace within their own midst? Who knows? such a modest initiative may well generate an ever-growing momentum of goodwill, helping ultimately to secure the indispensable foundations and conditions for a solution which will provide hope for the Palestinian Arabs and security for Israel, putting a final end to the problem which has already exacted so much precious blood and so many bitter tears from all locked in this tragic conflict. So long as such a call will avoid all politics and partisanship, I am ready to subscribe to it. I hope you - and others - will feel likewise.

With best wishes,
Yours sincerely,
SIR IMMANUEL
JAKOBOVITS
Adler House, Tavistock
Square, London WC1

OBITUARY

M Servant

Mr René Massigli, who yesterday, at the age of 88, spent a lifetime of distinguished service to France in some of its most important posts, died in London.

He arrived in London in 1943 from Occupied France, becoming Ambassador in London in 1944, after the Liberation. He stayed in London for ten years and left to become head of Quai d'Orsay. He retired in 1956, at the age of 68.

His concern with French relations predated his appointment to the Quai d'Orsay. It had largely on him, as General de Gaulle's Commissioner for Foreign Affairs in the provisional Government of France, and on Duff Cooper, to preserve Anglo-French understanding when it was clouded by storms of Churchill and the General.

Massigli's appointment as Ambassador was warmly welcomed on this side of the Channel, not least by Lord Avon, who knew that he had no more reliable ally in France than Massigli, because he was a friend and also an able and forceful exponent of French policy. From the Massigli was able to speak frankly with British Ministers who knew that their words would be interpreted expertly in Paris. He explained French views in London.

But the *entente* was without its strains during his time as Ambassador, caused on this side of the Channel, some on the side, like the embarrassment arising from frequent changes of Government in France. There was the ugly quarrel over Syria; there was and, later, a growing suspicion in France of Anglo-French attitudes towards Africa. There was all the stress imposed by France's refusal to ratify the European Defence Community Treaty.

But by his persistent integrity, Massigli was all difficulties, and in the course of all this he mellowed, although he remained shy and aloof. His decision, in 1954, to leave the West European Union for station four divisions on the coast was regarded as the crowning achievement of his work. This had included negotiating the Treaty of Dunkirk and of the Brussels Pact as well as an important part in the French discussion of the North Atlantic Treaty.

His overall success was in large measure due to the fact that he liked the British home with them, and he strongly in the net

Mr David Trevor, FRC, died on January 31, at the age of 81, was an orthopaedic surgeon whose work in the field of congenital dislocation of the hip relieved following operations from the suffering associated with the condition.

Trevor was born on January 1, 1906, and educated at Tregaron County School from which he passed St Bartholomew's Hospital. He qualified in 1930, where he qualified in 1930. Practically the whole of his professional life was spent at the Charing Cross Hospital. He was also on the staff of the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital.

His interest in congenital dislocation of the hip

Copy for:

The Rt. Hon. Margaret
Thatcher, M.P.

CDD
3/2

With the Archbishop of
Canterbury's compliments

04.02.88

Lambeth Palace
London SE1 7JU
tel: 01 928 8282

Old Palace
Canterbury
CT1 2EE

Lambeth Palace London SE1 7JU

4th February 1988

Thank you for your letter of 28th January and for the eloquent and moving appeal it contained. I recognize the force of much that you say and I share your distress at recent events in the occupied territories.

As you may know, the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Jerusalem has been graced by Arab Episcopal leadership for well over a decade - the first mainstream Christian Church to be led by local people rather than by bishops from Western Europe or elsewhere. I keep in close touch with events in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza through these local Anglican leaders. Only last week I had a meeting here with Bishop Khoury, the Assistant Bishop in Jerusalem, and learned at first hand his impression of recent events.

I expect you will know of the statement issued by the heads of the Christian communities in Jerusalem, including the Anglican Bishop of the Diocese. A copy is enclosed for your interest and information. Palestinian Christians share with their Islamic brothers and sisters many of the same problems, but sometimes feel, as a minority within their own people, even more insecure.

Shortly, the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in the United States is to send a group to the Diocese of Jerusalem to express support and concern for our fellow Christians there. I have asked the Revd. Colin Chapman to represent me on this visit and to report to me on his return.

The Anglican Church in Jerusalem is self-governing, but I am ready to respond to requests from them to take whatever action seems appropriate in assisting all the people of the area to live in peace, justice and harmony. Certainly, there can be little prospect of a just solution so long as any party resorts to violent tactics.

I very much share the view that if there is to be real peace and justice in the Middle East then the three monotheistic religions must work together to help bring this about.

Dr. A. A. Mughram Al-Ghandi
Director General
The London Central Mosque
146 Park Road
LONDON
NW3 7RG

Please reply to: From:
The Chairman of
the Executive Committee
Sir Sigmund Sternberg KCSG JP
Star House
Grafon Rd
London NW5 4BD
Tel 01-485 2558
Tdex: 21277

Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing St.
London SW1

CDP
3/2.

2nd February 1988

Dear Mrs. Thatcher,

I write with reference to the letter dated 26th January sent to you from Dr. A. A. Mughram Al Ghamdi. This letter has caused great concern and I have arranged to discuss its contents during a meeting arranged with Dr. Ghamdi next Tuesday (9th February) at the Royal Society of Medicine.

I will be accompanied by Jewish representatives and the Very Revd. Sir Edward Carpenter and have suggested that Dr. Ghamdi brings one of his colleagues.

Yours sincerely,

Sir Sigmund Sternberg

(Dictated by Sir Sigmund Sternberg and signed in his absence)

Davina Webber

Davina Webber - Secretary

Dr. A.A. AL-GHAMDI
12/2



FILE
AA

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

AM/29 January 1988

I enclose a copy of a letter which the Prime Minister has received from Dr. A.A. Mughram Al-Ghamdi, Director General of the London Central Mosque.

I should be grateful if you would provide a draft reply for the Prime Minister's signature, to reach this office by 12 February.

(C.D. POWELL)

R.N. Culshaw, Esq., M.V.O.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

R29

THE LONDON CENTRAL MOSQUE TRUST LIMITED
THE ISLAMIC CULTURAL CENTRE

146, PARK ROAD, LONDON NW8 7RG TEL: (01) 724 3383-7



28th January 1988

Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher M.P.
The Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
LONDON, SW1

Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing to you in my capacity as Director General of the London Central Mosque (Regent's Park), but also on behalf of the principal Muslim organisations in this country, to express our pain our horror and our distress over recent events in the occupied sectors of Palestine. I do so in the firm belief that men and women of faith and integrity, particularly the leaders of the Christian and Jewish communities, can hardly fail to understand our distress and may even share it. I write in anger because I have a duty to express the anger of our community, but I write also in the interests of peace in the Middle East and of amity between our respective Faiths. In doing so I would like to make it clear that we are fully aware of the past sufferings of the Jewish people in Europe; but I must add that we cannot see how those sad events could be thought to justify or excuse the atrocities committed by the State of Israel against the Palestinian people who had no part in those persecutions and who are now themselves the object of merciless persecution. Their history demonstrates that they are by nature a peaceful and industrious people, deeply attached to the land of their ancestors. They suffer today for their desire to live at peace in that land.

The "Jewish State" in Palestine (and how can anyone deny that this term has racist undertones?) is intent upon survival, and this is well understood, but it seems now to be seeking its own eventual destruction by forging a legacy of hatred and bitterness. Whatever military force may be deployed this year or next, survival must in the long run depend upon an accommodation with the peoples of the area (Muslim and Christian), not least the Palestinians. Every atrocity committed against the Palestinians and, above all, every outrage against the religion of Islam, makes such an accommodation less possible and therefore less likely. Muslims do not believe that Might is Right, and it is not our way to cringe and submit before displays of ruthless military power; our resolve is only strengthened by such actions.

THE LONDON CENTRAL MOSQUE TRUST LIMITED
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146, PARK ROAD, LONDON NW8 7RG TEL: (01) 724 3383-7



- 2 -

as is the deep and enduring anger rooted in the hearts not only of those who suffer the direct impact of aggression and intimidation, but also in the hearts of all faithful Muslims who share membership in the universal brotherhood of Islam. Whatever our political differences, we make up a formidable worldwide community, and the Zionist movement - if it is realistic- must take account of this.

The history of aggression against the Palestinian people goes back almost half a century, but interests sympathetic to the State of Israel have, in the past, had great success in preventing news of these atrocities from reaching the outside world. Truth, however, has a way of eventually penetrating such artificial barriers. Over recent weeks the whole world has glimpsed the darker side of Israel's policies of survival. In this country we have been encouraged and, to some extent, comforted by evidence that the traditional British sense of fairness has begun to re-assert itself, and the media have played an honourable part in exposing the outrages committed against unarmed civilians in Gaza, the West Bank and the Holy City of Jerusalem itself. The deliberate and clearly premeditated attack on the Al Aqsa Mosque was not only a devastating blow - and a sacrilege - against the Faith of Islam; it was an act which has, we believe, aroused the conscience of all decent people for whom religion has significance. It will not be forgotten, any more than the attempt of a madman to set fire to the Mosque (while its Israeli "guardians" looked the other way) has been forgotten. As we see it, the offence against our religion goes hand-in-hand with the brutal attacks upon our Palestinian brothers and sisters (and their children), and these in turn represent a readiness to trample upon every principle of human rights.

The objective, as it appears to us, is the total elimination of the Palestinian people from their homeland through a policy of state terrorism. We remember Adolf Hitler's ambition to make Europe "Judenrein". We perceive a parallel between this and the Zionist ambition to "purify" Greater Israel (whose boundaries seem to be indefinitely extendable) from all non-Jews. We are convinced however that many thoughtful and humane Jewish people must be hardly less horrified by this policy than we are, when they consider the facts objectively. Since the peoples of Europe have felt obliged to make up for the wrongs committed against the Jews in Europe, it seems to us that they have a duty to help their Jewish friends to understand that honour and self-interest coincide when the follies and excesses of the Israeli regime are exposed and condemned.

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In God's name, let all of us who belong to one or other of the three great branches of monotheism proclaimed by the Prophet and Patriarch Abraham work together for peace and justice! On behalf of the Muslim Community in Britain, I do most vehemently appeal to you to take whatever steps you feel appropriate to halt the escalation of Israeli atrocities against the Palestinians and to act according to your conscience regarding the protection of the sacred Mosques of Islam. It is no longer possible for men and women of good will to stand aside. This is not a local problem that can be ignored in the hope that it will go away; it is a human catastrophe for which this country, as the former mandatory power, shares responsibility.

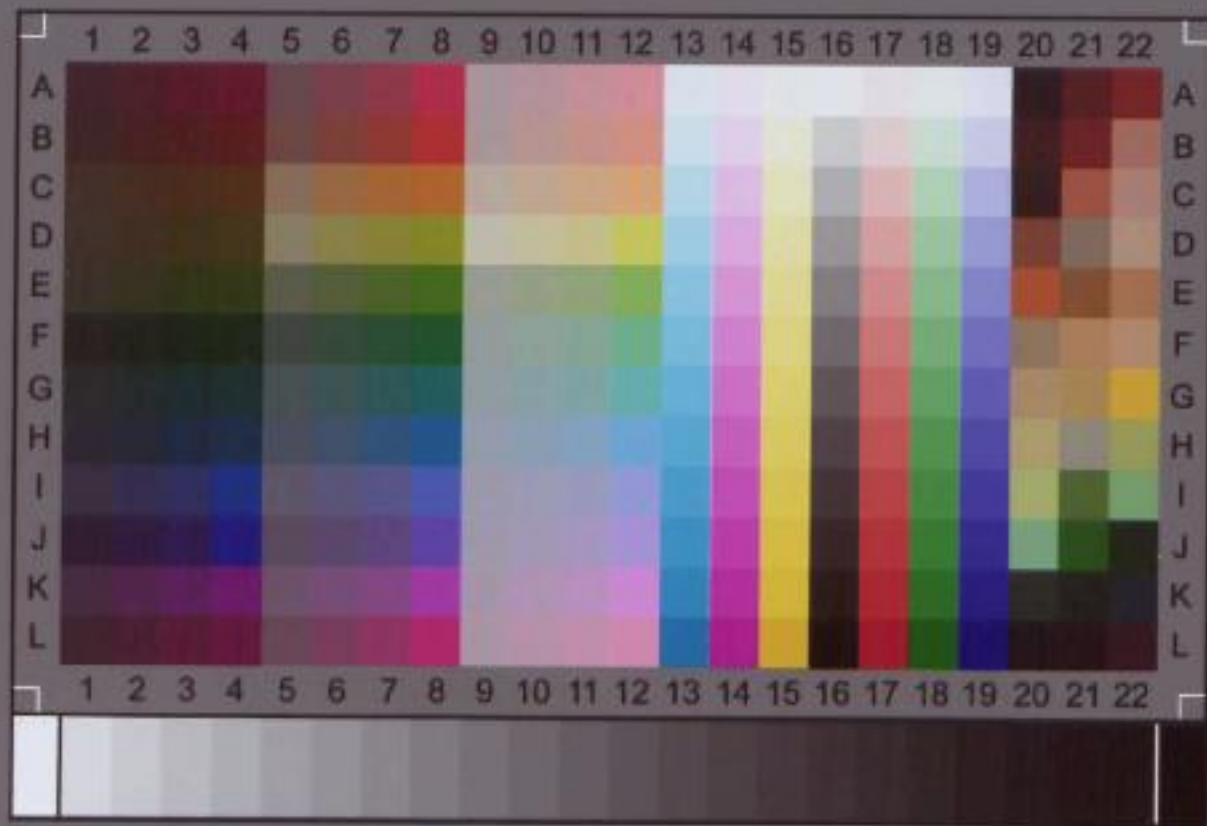
Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, sweeping loop followed by a smaller, more defined signature.

Dr. A.A. Mughram Al-Ghamdi
DIRECTOR GENERAL

The same appeal has been addressed to the persons listed below:

His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury
His Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster
Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregation
The President of the Union of Liberal & Progressive Synagogues
The General Secretary of the Free Church Federal Council
The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland
The Council of Christians and Jews
United Nations Association
Board of Deputies of British Jews
Rt. Hon Margaret Thatcher, M.P., Prime Minister
Rt. Hon Neil Kinnock M.P.
Rt. Hon David Steel M.P.
Rt. Hon David Owen M.P.
Mr. A.R. MacLennan M.P.
Sir Sigmund Sternberg K.C.S.G., J.P.



IT8.7/2-1993
2009-02

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