



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

18 June 1981

Dear Mr. ...

Iraq and Israel: Security Council
Debate

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You will have seen UKMIS New York telegrams nos 542 and 543 of which I attach copies for your convenience. You will see that we have reached a situation in which the Americans and the Iraqis are virtually agreed on the text of a resolution (for which we could certainly vote), subject to two points only:

- (a) the inclusion in operative paragraph 2 of 'and all nations in the region'. The Americans have made this a sticking point so far because they wish to import some degree of balance as between Israel and the Arabs, even though the resolution as it now stands is directed solely at the Israeli raid on the Iraqi reactor;
- (b) a formula for a call for compensation to be paid by Israel.

2. The Iraqis have agreed to drop their call for mandatory sanctions under Chapter VII and the US/Iraqi text would contain no Chapter VII language. It seems likely that a formula for the second point can be sorted out without too much difficulty. There is an earlier resolution for which the US voted at the time, which provides a precedent. Thus the likely sticking point is the wording of operative paragraph 2. It would be disastrous if the Americans were to veto on this point alone. The resolution deals only with the Israeli raid and for that reason it would be illogical to point operative paragraph 2 at other nations in the area. Balance apart, the paragraph does no more than recommend States to refrain from providing assistance, whether military or technological, 'which would increase the likelihood of aggression or contribute to the development of nuclear arms': since no country would admit that anything it provides would do either of

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these things, the recommendation is unlikely to be of any practical effect. At the least the Americans ought to be able to abstain.

It seems unlikely that it will be possible to take this much further through the American Mission to the UN in New York and Sir A Parsons has recommended that we should speak to the Americans at a high level, in London or in Washington. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary has considered whether to do this by summoning the US Ambassador, but has concluded that it would be more effective if the Prime Minister were to agree to send a message on the direct line to President Reagan on the lines of the enclosed draft. To be useful, this message ought to be despatched not later than about 4 pm our time. If this is impossible, he proposes to instruct Sir N Henderson to speak, perhaps to Allen, along the lines of the draft message.

Yours ever,

Francis Richards

(F N Richards)
Private Secretary

M O'D B Alexander Esq
10 Downing Street

~~Master~~

~~NOT SENT~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~PRIME MINISTER'S~~

~~PERSONAL MESSAGE~~

~~SERIAL NO.~~

To go on the Direct Line.....

Not sent

MODBA spoke with

FCO



~~Draft Message from the Prime Minister to President Reagan~~

Dear Mr President,

I have been following closely the reactions to the Israeli raid on Baghdad and it has been good to see that your position and ours have been so close.

I believe it is very important that the Security Council should take a clear stand on what has happened. I know that Mrs Kirkpatrick and Sir Anthony Parsons in New York have been in very close touch with the objective of finding a text which we can all support. This would condemn Israel for a clear breach of the international rules but would not, of course, start us down the road which leads away from the close relationship between Israel and the West, and away from the prospects of peace in the Middle East for which you and we must continue to work together.

As I understand it, we are very close to solving this problem in New York. Your people are still pressing for a text which would call for all States to refrain from increasing the likelihood of aggression or the development of nuclear arms by what they make available to all the States of the region. It looks as if agreement would be possible if you could accept that this paragraph should refer only to Israel. I must say that I regard this as reasonable in this particular case, where the resolution is rightly directed solely to the Israeli attack on the Iraqi reactor. I do hope you can accept it. So often in the Middle East we are dealing with the process of escalation where it is absolutely wrong to point the finger at one side only. I know you feel strongly about this and so do I. But this is not such a case. We are dealing with a specific act by Israel which is contrary to international law, and the resolution must address itself to this unless we are to abandon all attempt to build a rule of law in international affairs.

/If you

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If you could accept such a Resolution, I am sure that we could join you in an explanation of vote which would make our commitment to evenhandedness perfectly clear. The alternative, with a vetoed resolution and possibly a split in the Western ranks, would not only damage further the credibility of the Security Council, but seriously set back all our efforts to bring about a comprehensive peace, the need for which has been so starkly brought out by recent events.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher.

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