

SUBJECT



EMBASSY OF ISRAEL  
2 PALACE GREEN  
LONDON W8 4QB  
Telephone: 01-937 8050

שגרירות ישראל  
לונדון

PRIME MINISTER'S  
PERSONAL MESSAGE  
SERIAL No. T29/79T

19th June, 1979

Jerusalem

Dear Mrs. Thatcher,

According to the information at hand there are some 70,000 Vietnamese refugees presently in Malaysia. The Government of Malaysia has publicly declared its intention to expel them to the open seas where they face the peril of drowning or death by exposure. This horrific tragedy must be prevented in this, our generation of the Holocaust.

Proposals have been made to call an international conference to debate the issue. I respectfully submit to you that such a conference would be an exercise in futility. As a Jew I cannot forget the useless conferences at Evian and Bermuda whose end results were the non-saving of even one Jewish child out of the one and a half million Jewish children who were dragged to a wanton death.

Among the Vietnamese refugees there are many children, and they too may lose their lives until such time as an international conference convenes, until its deliberations get under way and until its resolutions are adopted.

I hereby submit to you a different practical approach for your immediate consideration. Let each of the 151 sovereign countries in the world contact forthwith the High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva, Mr. Paul Hartling, and inform him of its readiness, in principle, to accept a number of the Vietnamese refugees presently in Malaysia, relative to size of territory and population. Should Mr. Hartling receive from our Governments such pronouncements he will be in a position to inform the Government of Malaysia accordingly and request that the deportations cease. There is no doubt in my mind that the Government of Malaysia would be willing to comply since it would be assured that the problem was being practically tackled with a view to a solution in a matter of weeks or, at the most, months.

/ Over .....



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I therefore respectfully submit this proposal to you with a view to your conveying to Mr. Hartling a communication in this spirit as I am doing now on behalf of the Government of Israel.

By a common effort of all our countries this staggering human problem can be resolved in a humane way without creating undue difficulty of absorption for the participating countries.

I thank you, Madame Prime Minister for your attention to this, my proposal and appeal.

Yours sincerely,

Menachem Begin  
Prime Minister of Israel

The Rt. Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, MP,  
The Prime Minister,  
10 Downing Street,  
London, S. W. 1.