

WINSTON S. CHURCHILL, M.P.

cc: Mr. Garry
10/6



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

01-219 3405

2/10

9 June 1981

Dear Prime Minister,

While of course I understand that pro forma you had to condemn Sunday's raid by the Israeli Air Force against Iraq's nuclear facilities, I venture to believe that, had you been in the position of the Prime Minister of Israel faced with the clear prospect that the civilian population of Israel might have become the victim in the course of the next few years of a nuclear weapons attack that would cause hundreds of thousands of casualties, you would have taken the same decision.

I was most distressed however, that you should in your replies in Question Time today have appeared to justify, or at least condone the action of the Government of France in supplying highly enriched uranium of weapons-grade to the Iraqis. I believe you specifically expressed the view that the type of reactor could only operate on enriched uranium of weapons-grade. My understanding is that this reactor can operate perfectly well on 'caramelized' fuel in which circumstances it could not be used for weapons applications. Indeed I believe that President Giscard d'Estaing agreed to President Carter's suggestion that fuel supplied by France to Iraq should be treated in this way but that the President of Iraq was adamant - for reasons which you are as able to deduce as I - that Iraq was only interested in untreated enriched uranium of weapons-grade.

Almost a year ago I asked you to use your good offices with the then President of France to head off a situation which was clearly likely to lead to an aggravation of the situation in the Middle East. Now that this has happened I can only express the hope that you will now take the initiative in raising this matter with President Mitterrand with a view to persuading the French to discontinue their reckless and provocative policy of supplying a nuclear weapons capability to a non-nuclear state especially to one in a state of self-proclaimed belligerence with the State of Israel as well as Iran.

Yours ever,

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