



Prime Minister
Afex A ?

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

1 August 1980

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Dear Michael,

I believe we should only do this in concert with the U.S. and that any statement should be made jointly as far as the U.S. are concerned.

HM Ambassador in Tel Aviv has reported that a decision on the move of Mr Begin's office to East Jerusalem is imminent. There is now little doubt that Mr Begin will receive the support of his Cabinet for such a move and will seek to implement it quickly. This raises practical problems over our dealings with Mr Begin's office.

substantively with U.S. mb

Since the unilateral Israeli unification of Jerusalem in 1967 it has been a rule that HM Ambassador in Tel Aviv and ministerial and official visitors may not call on Israeli ministers in offices in East Jerusalem. The only such office in East Jerusalem to date has been that of the Israeli Minister of Justice. The background to this lies in our view that Israel's rights in East Jerusalem do not go beyond those of an occupying power, in contrast to West Jerusalem where we accept that Israel exercises de facto authority. It would not be consistent with that view to conduct ordinary government to government business with Israeli offices in East Jerusalem. Lord Carrington therefore believes that if the move goes ahead HM Ambassador in Tel Aviv should be instructed that he cannot call on Mr Begin in East Jerusalem but should offer to call on him in his Knesset office and that correspondence with Mr Begin's office should be routed through the Israeli foreign ministry. Lord Carrington proposes to seek the agreement of the rest of the Nine for this policy.

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The US view is similar to our own. The US Ambassador in Israel has already made strong representations to Mr Begin against moving his office. While the final US decision is difficult to predict during a presidential election year, there is good reason to believe that they will adopt a similar policy to that proposed above if the move goes ahead.

/Under-

Mr M O'D B Alexander
10 Downing Street



Under-Secretary Newsom told Sir Nicholas Henderson on 28 July that the Americans had taken the decision that American officials should not call on Mr Begin in his East Jerusalem office.

Yours etc
Paul

(P Lever)
Private Secretary