

SUBJECT

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RECORD OF A CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND SHAIKH ZAID BIN SULTAN, RULER OF ABU DHABI, IN ABU DHABI ON 22 APRIL AT 1000 hours

Present:

Prime Minister	Shaikh Zaid bin Sultan, Ruler of Abu Dhabi, Head of State
HE David Roberts,	Shaikh Rashid bin Said, Ruler of Dubai, Vice President & Prime Minister
Sir John Graham, KCMG	Shaikh Hemden bin Mohamad, Deputy Prime Minister
Sir Ronald Ellis	Mana'al Otaiba, Minister of Petroleum
Mr. M.O'D.B. Alexander	Ahmed al Suwaidi, Former Foreign Minister, now Special Adviser to Shaikh Zaid
Mr. David MacLennan	
The Hon. Douglas Hurd, CBE, MP	

Shaikh Zaid said that he was greatly honoured that the Prime Minister had come to the United Arab Emirates. It was good of her to visit at a time when there was a need to strengthen relations between the two countries. The two countries were linked by history and by continuing mutual interests. The Prime Minister agreed that the friendship between the two countries ran deep. It was her wish that the UAE and the United Kingdom should be a support to each other. In her view the world had entered / ^{the} most difficult and dangerous period in the last 30 years. There were many sources of conflict. Every sovereign state had to be prepared to protect its own way of life. Good friends had also to be staunch allies, prepared to meet any eventuality together.

Shaikh Zaid said the UAE was a small nation. Nevertheless it had attracted the attention of enemies, was menaced by threats to its well being and to its existence. It was not easy to describe the threat in detail but wealth and prosperity were always the object of envy. Threats to the UAE were also a threat to her neighbours since the security of every state in the region inter-acted with the security of the others. The UAE was taking precautions to defend itself but could only do so within its means. If the scale of the threat exceeded the UAE's capacity to resist it, the UAE would look to its friends.

There were three major sources of concern, both to the security of the UAE and to that of the world as a whole. These were:

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- (a) Israeli aggression against the Arab world;
- (b) the Soviet threat; and
- (c) the disintegration of the Arab community.

It was not easy to say in what order these problems would become critical. But undoubtedly the Israeli threat was the most serious. It would be necessary to solve this first and then turn to the others. To try to deal with all three at once would be to dissipate effort.

The Prime Minister said that she agreed that the dispute with Israel had to be solved. Everyone accepted the right of the Palestinians to self-determination and Israel's right to secure borders. The principles were not in doubt. The practical question was how to implement the principles. It would not be easy but it had to be done during the present United States Presidency. The problem could not be solved without the Americans. As a result of his recent trip, Mr. Haig had understood both the urgency and the fundamental importance of the problem. She had seen Mr. Haig in London and had made clear that the problems of the Gulf could not be solved until the Arab/Israel dispute had been cleared up.

As for the Soviet menace, it was always there. The Russians had always had an innate tendency to seek to expand. Their adoption of communism, with its techniques of subversion, had made a formidable combination. We had to proclaim the superiority of our way of life and had to prepare to resist their attempts at encroachment and to do so in good time.

As regards the disintegration of Arab unity, this was of great concern to the West. People of like-mind should seek to overcome their differences and to pursue common objectives. We were therefore very happy at the prospect of increasing cooperation among the Gulf states. Every country had to rely on its own defences in the first instance but thereafter on its friends. She hoped that General Perkins's mission had been satisfactory. Britain wished to do everything it could to help. We knew the area well and wanted to be involved. It would often be better for the UK to deal with a problem than for the super-powers with all the risks of conflict that their involvement entailed. If there were any problems, we would look into them.

/ The Iran/Iraq

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The Iran/Iraq war had been a source of alarm. Although the possibility of hostilities in the area as a result of outside intervention in Iran had been foreseen, no-one had foreseen that Iran and Iraq would resort to hostilities. It was fortunate that through the wisdom of Shaikh Zaid and others in the area the conflict had been contained. The war was a lesson in the speed with which situations could develop. It underlined the need to consider every contingency and to be prepared for it. Britain was interested in seeing every nation acquire the ability to resist aggression.

Shaikh Zaid said that he agreed with what the Prime Minister had said. On the Iran/Iraq war, he commented that it would not have started had it not been for the turbulence within Iran. This had spilled over into neighbouring countries, including the UAE. The so-called revolution in Iran was trying to export ideas and ideologues. The UAE had had to put up with a lot. Its airspace had, for instance, been violated. But the Government had remained calm. The war had now subsided. The UAE had not suffered but the situation remained a great threat to the region.

Soviet

Shaikh Zaid said that / aggression was unacceptable. No country had the right to interfere in the affairs of others. But the Soviet Union of course had the example of Israel before them. No sooner had Israel been established than it had started a policy of aggression and expansion. No-one had tried to stop them. The law of the jungle had ruled. The Soviet Union was far stronger than Israel and the injustices of its policies greater. But unless an example was made of Israel other countries would follow. They would learn that injustice paid. It was inherent in all men to covet the goods of others. Unless the temptation was constrained, the just would suffer. Envy was a contagious disease. The only answer was a categorical remedy which would end the attempts to inflict injustice.

Turning to the Rapid Deployment Force, Shaikh Zaid said that friends should always respond to the needs of friends. The weak needed the strong and vice-versa. But the Rapid Deployment Force, as it had been presented, seemed to be unjust interference. If it was sent in the absence of a request, the action would be no better than the policies of the Soviet Union and of the Israelis. It would be an unjust act. It should only be used in response to needs and if a call for it had been made. The UAE

/ were anxious

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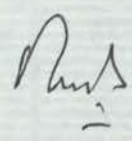
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were anxious that their friends in the United States and in the West should not force friends in Asia and Africa to run away from them. At a time when the enemy was increasing in strength, the needs of friendship were great. Friends had to be sensitive to each other's requirements.

The Prime Minister said that she knew the Americans were thinking only in terms of being ready to respond to a request for help from any part of the world. The question was not one of imposing anything on anyone but of responding to sudden requests. She agreed that friends must be prepared to help each other in practical ways. She believed that HMG could do so by the supply to the UAE of the Hawk training aircraft. She said this not because the plane was British but because it was the best of its kind in the world. Moreover, the British had a long and excellent record in the training field. It mattered to Britain that we should be able to supply this aircraft to the UAE. It mattered to the Government and to British industry. She put her personal authority behind the aircraft. She would not be doing so unless it was an outstanding piece of equipment.

Shaikh Zaid thanked the Prime Minister. He and the Prime Minister then withdrew for a tete-a-tete discussion. The plenary meeting ended at 1150.



23 April 1981

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Keep.

ABU DHABI

Zaid bin Sultan Bin NAWAYAN

~~HH Shaikh Khalifa bin Hamad Al Thani, Amir of Qatar, President of Abu Dhabi, President of OPA~~

~~HH Major General Shaikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Minister of Defence.~~

*Shaikh Khalifah bin Zaid
Deputy Supreme Commander*

Aircraft and Training Glad that team visited UK to look at RAF flying training methods. Is HH nearer to establishing future aircraft needs Hawk/Jaguar?

Air Defence Express pleasure at decision to seek UK help with joint operations centre. Any further advice willingly given. Commend Rapier to meet further missile requirements.