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SUBJECT

RECORD OF A CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS AT THE HOUSE OF COMMONS ON TUESDAY 12 MAY 1981 AT 1530 HOURS

Present:-

Prime Minister	Dr. Waldheim
Hon. Douglas Hurd, MP	Mr. Perez de Cuellar
Mr. M.O'D.B. Alexander	Mr. Mautner-Markhof
Mr. N.C.R. Williams	

Northern Ireland

Arising out of a discussion of Prime Minister's question time, which he had just witnessed, Dr. Waldheim asked whether there was hope of progress on Northern Ireland. The Prime Minister was pessimistic. She emphasised the essential role that British troops were playing in preventing a civil war that would engulf the Republic as well as Northern Ireland. She noted that the present Government in the Republic were being unprecedentedly helpful over cross-Border security co-operation.

East/West Relations

Dr. Waldheim described the talks he had had with Mr. Brezhnev during his recent visit to Moscow. Brezhnev had seemed fit and mentally alert (more so than in 1977) and had spoken fluently. He had emphasised the Soviet desire for dialogue with the United States while expressing resentment of provocative American statements and the abandonment of positions taken by the previous Administration. Dr. Waldheim had told Mr. Brezhnev that President Reagan had told him that he was interested in a dialogue but was gravely concerned about Soviet expansionism. Mr. Brezhnev had "exploded" at the word 'expansionism'.

/Afghanistan

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- 2 -

Afghanistan

Dr. Waldheim said that Mr. Brezhnev had welcomed the exercise of the Secretary-General's good offices and the mission of Mr. Perez de Cuellar. The Russians had also accepted that the United Nations should participate in regional talks on the problem, whereas they had previously insisted that the UN could only be an observer. It remained to be seen what this would mean in practice. It was far from certain that the Russians were interested in moving forward. When the Prime Minister expressed reservations about allowing the puppet regime to participate in talks, Dr. Waldheim said that in Soviet eyes Karmal was expendable. Mr. Hurd drew attention to the importance of adhering to the principles of the General Assembly's Resolution, including the withdrawal of Soviet troops. Dr. Waldheim replied that there was no prospect of withdrawal without negotiations. He added that even the Pakistanis now saw some merit in ambiguity about the relationship between current diplomatic activity and the Resolution. In response to a question about the position of Pakistan generally, Dr. Waldheim said that Mr. Shahi had been greatly impressed by the offers of assistance he had now received from the United States but was anxious to avoid giving the impression of alliance with the Americans, thus prejudicing Pakistan's position in the Non-Aligned and Islamic Movements.

Iraq/Iran

Dr. Waldheim said that no solution was in sight. Both sides, and indeed the world at large, had grown accustomed to the war and neither would contemplate concessions. He had seen Mr. Palme in Geneva the previous day. Mr. Palme would be visiting the area again later in May.

Lebanon

The Prime Minister doubted whether the Israelis would actually take action against the Syrian missiles. Dr. Waldheim thought that there was no prospect of the Syrians removing them without concessions from Israel. He did not exclude rash action by Mr. Begin, whose toughness was evidently popular in Israel. The Russians were being active and were not interested in provoking a war.

CONFIDENTIAL/Cambodia

- 3 -
CONFIDENTIAL

Cambodia

Dr. Waldheim said that in accordance with his obligations under the General Assembly's Resolution, he would now be convening an international conference. It would be boycotted by Vietnam and her friends and he did not expect much to come of it. ASEAN thought the conference might adjourn after a general debate, but remain formally in being. On his return to New York he would be sending a note to all Member States asking them if they would wish to participate.

Namibia

The Prime Minister noted that Mr. Pik Botha would be visiting Washington soon. She regretted the rapid move to voting during the recent Security Council meeting. The reaction to the Western vetoes in Africa had however been fairly calm. Dr. Waldheim said he had done his best to encourage the Africans to compromise. They were however very suspicious of the attitude of the Five, especially of the Americans, to Resolution 435. It was necessary now for the Five to put a 'chapeau' on 435 to complete it by reference to the need to protect minorities and human rights. The Prime Minister noted that the need for co-ordination among the Five made Namibia more difficult to handle than Zimbabwe.

Middle East

Discussing the impressions she had gained during her tour of the Gulf, the Prime Minister noted the high quality of many of the present generation of Gulf rulers. They had been remarkably successful in developing their own countries and were playing their part in helping the rest of the world. It was to be hoped that there would be no big oil price increases during the next two years, though political developments might change this. There was a danger that Iran might lash out at the weak Gulf States. The Syria/Israel conflict might escalate. The rich Arab States were generous and had sometimes been able to buy peace. But they looked to us to do something. Could we persuade the PLO to abandon its formal position that Israel must be abolished? Dr. Waldheim said that Arafat felt that this was his only card and must not be played lightly. It was clear that the Middle Eastern countries

/welcomed

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- 4 -

welcomed activity on the part of the European Community. The Prime Minister noted that only the Americans could bring about a settlement. European activity had initially been useful as a way of filling a vacuum. It was now necessary to put some flesh on the bare bones of the Venice ideas. The question of the right of Palestinians to return needed examination. This was a matter of grave interest to many Gulf States, where immigrants greatly outnumbered the indigenous inhabitants.

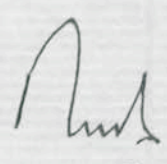
South Lebanon

Dr. Waldheim said that UNIFIL must not be withdrawn, despite the anxieties of the troop contributors.

Cyprus

In a brief reference to Cyprus, Dr. Waldheim mentioned the need for another diplomatic effort in July.

The meeting ended at 1615 hours.



13 May 1981

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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

CFCO

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United Nations

Prime Minister

[Handwritten signature]

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13 May 1981

Dear Prime Minister, *mt*

On my return to New York, I should like to express my sincere gratitude for the cordial welcome extended to me during my visit to London.

It was most kind of you to find time for a meeting in your very busy schedule and I was, as always, particularly pleased to be able to have an exchange of views with you on matters of mutual concern. I found our discussions extremely useful and I greatly appreciated the encouragement you gave me in my efforts to find solutions to the many serious problems facing the international community at this time.

May I take this opportunity to thank you again for the strong support which you personally and your Government are so consistently lending to the United Nations.

With my renewed thanks and warmest good wishes,

yours sincerely

Kurt Waldheim

Kurt Waldheim

Her Excellency
The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher M.P.
Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
L o n d o n

DISTAFF LIBER



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

13 May 1981

Call by Dr. Waldheim

I enclose a copy of the record of the conversation between the Prime Minister and the Secretary General of the United Nations at the House of Commons yesterday.

M. OD. E. ALEXANDER

Roderic Lyne, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH



M O'D B Alexander Esq
No 10 Downing Street
London SW1

Type for signature
13 May 1981

Amel

Dear Michael

I enclose a draft record of yesterday's call by the United Nations Secretary-General on the Prime Minister. I take it that you will wish to issue this, with any amendments you think desirable, from No 10 in the usual way.

Yours ever
N C R

N C R Williams
United Nations Dept

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DSR 11 (Revised)

RECORD OF CONVERSATION

DRAFT: ~~minute/letter/telegram/dispatch/note~~

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

Reference

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

RECORD OF A CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS AT THE HOUSE OF COMMONS ON 12 MAY 1981 AT 3.30 PM

CAVEAT.....

Present

Prime Minister

Mr Waldheim

Hon Douglas Hurd MP

Mr Perez de Cuellar

^{M.O.D.}
Mr Alexander

Mr Mautner-Markhof

^{NCR}
Mr Williams

Northern Ireland

1. Arising out of a discussion of Prime Minister's question time, which he had just witnessed, Mr Waldheim asked whether there was hope of progress on Northern Ireland. The Prime Minister was pessimistic. She emphasized the essential role that British troops were playing in preventing a civil war that would engulf the Republic as well as Northern Ireland. She noted that the present Government in the Republic were being unprecedentedly helpful over cross-Border security cooperation.

Enclosures—flag(s).....

/East/West Relations

East/West Relations

2. Mr Waldheim described the talks he had had with Mr Brezhnev during his recent visit to Moscow. Brezhnev had seemed fit and mentally alert ^{(more so than in 1977) & had spoken} ~~and spoke~~ fluently. He had emphasised the Soviet desire for dialogue with the United States while expressing resentment of provocative American statements and the abandonment of positions taken by the previous Administration. Mr Waldheim had told Mr Brezhnev that President Reagan had told him that he was interested in a dialogue but was gravely concerned about Soviet expansionism. Mr Brezhnev had exploded at the word 'expansionism'.

Afghanistan

3. Mr Waldheim said that Mr Brezhnev had welcomed the exercise of the Secretary-General's good offices and the mission of Mr Perez de Cuellar. The Russians had also accepted that the United Nations should participate in regional talks on the problem, whereas they had previously insisted that the UN could only be an observer. It remained to be seen what this would mean in practice. It was far from certain that the Russians were interested in moving forward. When the Prime Minister expressed reservations about allowing the puppet régime to participate in talks, Mr Waldheim said that ^(in Soviet eyes) Karmal was expendable. Mr Hurd drew attention to the importance of adhering to the principles of the General Assembly's Resolution, including/withdrawal of Soviet /troops.

troops. Mr Waldheim replied that there was no prospect of withdrawal without negotiations. He added that even the Pakistanis now saw some merit in ambiguity about the relationship between current diplomatic activity and the Resolution. In response to a question about the position of Pakistan generally, Mr Waldheim said that Mr Shahi had been greatly impressed by the offers of assistance he had now received from the United States but was anxious to avoid giving the impression of alliance with the Americans, thus prejudicing Pakistan's position in the Non-Aligned and Islamic Movements.

Iraq/Iran

4. Mr Waldhiem said that no solution was in sight. Both sides, and indeed the world at large, had grown accustomed to the war and neither would contemplate concessions. He had seen Mr Palme in Geneva the previous day. Mr Palme would be visiting the area again later in May.

Lebanon

5. The Prime Minister doubted whether the Israelis would actually take action against the Syrian missiles. Mr Waldheim thought that there was no prospect of the Syrians removing them without concessions from Israel. He did not exclude rash action by Mr Begin, whose toughness was evidently popular in Israel. The Russians were being active and were not interested in provoking a war.

/Cambodia

Cambodia

6. Mr Waldheim said that in accordance with his obligations under the General Assembly's Resolution, he would now be convening an international conference. It would be boycotted by Vietnam and her friends and he did not expect much to come of it. ASEAN thought the conference might adjourn after a general debate, but remain formally in being. On his return to New York he would be sending a note to all Member States asking them if they would wish to participate.

Namibia

7. The Prime Minister noted that Mr Pik Botha would be visiting Washington soon. She regretted the rapid move to voting during the recent Security Council meeting. The reaction to the Western vetoes in Africa had however been fairly calm. Mr Waldheim said he had done his best to encourage the Africans to compromise. They were however very suspicious of the attitude of the Five, especially of the Americans, to Resolution 435. It was necessary now for the Five to put a 'chapeau' on 435 to complete it by reference to the need to protect minorities and human rights. The Prime Minister noted that the need for coordination among the Five made Namibia more difficult to handle than Zimbabwe.

Middle East

8. Discussing the impressions she had gained during her tour of the Gulf, the Prime Minister noted the high

quality of many of the present generation of Gulf rulers. They had been remarkably successful in developing their own countries and were playing their part in helping the rest of the world. It was to be hoped that there would be no big oil price increases during the next two years, though political developments might change this. There was a danger that Iran might lash out at the weak Gulf States. The Syria/Israel conflict might escalate. The rich Arab States were generous and had sometimes been able to buy peace. But they looked to us to do something. Could we persuade the PLO to abandon its formal position that Israel must be abolished? Mr Waldheim said that Arafat felt that this was his only card and must not be played lightly. It was clear that the Middle Eastern countries welcomed activity on the part of the European Community. The Prime Minister noted that only the Americans could bring about a settlement. European activity had initially been useful as a way of filling a vacuum. It was now necessary to put some flesh on the bare bones of the Venice ideas. The question of the right of Palestinians to return needed examination. This was a matter of grave interest to many Gulf States, where immigrants greatly outnumbered the indigenous inhabitants.

South Lebanon

9. Mr Waldheim said that UNIFIL must not be withdrawn, despite the anxieties of the troop contributors.

Cyprus

10. In a brief reference to Cyprus, Mr Waldheim mentioned

the need for another diplomatic effort in July.

11. The meeting ended at 4.15 pm.

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