

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BRIEFING PAPER

MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS

RELEASED IN FULL

Current Situation

- o Recent significant progress in defining modalities of conference leading to direct negotiations.
- o The Government of Israel remains clearly divided on how to advance peace process; Peres' bid to force national elections on the issue has stalled.
- o Murphy-Polyakov discussions most open in years; however, major differences remain over Palestinian representation and Soviet view on the need for multilateral as well as bilateral committees; no significant change on Soviet-Israeli relations or emigration of Soviet Jewry.
- o Syrians told Walters they favored a united Arab delegation at conference; Mubarak told Murphy such a formula was a prescription for no progress.
- o Mubarak considering Egyptian meeting with Shamir which we support to focus Israeli public attention on peace process.
- o Following June meeting with Peres, Mrs. Thatcher has increased her public and private support for conference.
- o She believes there is currently a window of opportunity for progress which should not be missed.
- o She promised Peres she would press in Washington for stronger U.S. public support for conference and may give same commitment to Hussein before she comes to Washington.

Our Themes

- o Divided Israeli government makes it difficult to move forward, but we must not abandon effort.
- o Appreciate your efforts with both Peres and Hussein; you have already had an impact on developments of recent months.
- o We are still willing to explore international conference, but only if it leads immediately to and doesn't interfere with direct negotiations.
- o Soviets clearly want into the process, but we are still looking for signs that they intend to play constructive role, especially with PLO and Syria.

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Robert Homme, Senior Reviewer

SECRET
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lot #88D140, Box #5
The official visit of Prime
Minister Thatcher
P.L. 17 1987