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OF 181200Z OCTOBER 90  
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SECRETARY OF STATE'S CALL ON ISRAELI DEFENCE MINISTER

SUMMARY

1. A CORDIAL AND DETAILED EXCHANGE ON THE SITUATION IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES, THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL'S MISSION, THE SITUATION IN JORDAN AND IRAQI MILITARY CAPABILITIES.

DETAIL

2. THE SECRETARY OF STATE CALLED ON DEFENCE MINISTER ARENS IN TEL AVIV FOR AN HOUR ON 18 OCTOBER.

SITUATION IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES.

4. ARENS SAID THAT THE IDF HAD TWO MAIN TASKS IN THE WEST BANK AND GAZA:

(A) TO PREVENT BLOODSHED AMONGST JEWS AND ARABS ALIKE. THEY HAD SUCCESSFULLY PROTECTED JEWS LIVES RECENTLY. THERE HAD FOR EXAMPLE BEEN NO SERIOUS VIOLENCE AGAINST ISRAELI CARS FOR SEVERAL MONTHS. THE FOUR MONTHS BEFORE THE KILLINGS ON THE TEMPLE MOUNT HAD SEEN NO KILLING OF GAZANS BY THE IDF AND ONLY TWO OR THREE KILLINGS IN THE WEST BANK. THE IDF HAD BEEN UNDER FIRM INSTRUCTIONS TO MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO AVOID CASUALTIES. ARENS DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THE INFLICTION OF CASUALTIES DETERRED VIOLENCE. THE IDF HAD HAD LESS SUCCESS IN PREVENTING PALESTINIANS KILLING EACH OTHER - THERE WERE 20 TO 30 SUCH MURDERS PER MONTH AND OVER A HUNDRED ATTEMPTED.

(B) TO CREATE THE RIGHT ENVIRONMENT FOR ELECTIONS AS PRESCRIBED IN THE SHAMIR PEACE PLAN, FOR REPRESENTATIVES WHO WOULD BECOME NEGOTIATING PARTNERS THE ATMOSPHERE WAS NOT YET CONDUCIVE TO THE HOLDING OF ELECTIONS FREE FROM INTIMIDATION. IT WAS STILL HARD TO FIND ANY PALESTINIANS WHO WOULD AGREE TO BECOME CANDIDATES UNLESS SPECIFICALLY AUTHORISED BY THE PLO.

4. LIVING CONDITIONS IN THE CAMPS IN GAZA WERE INTOLERABLE - TO THE EXTENT THAT THE OCCUPANTS PUT LITTLE VALUE ON LIFE - THEIR OWN, THEIR CHILDREN'S OR THEIR ENEMIES'. THE GULF CRISIS HAD PRODUCED A WAVE OF INSTABILITY. THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE, ALTHOUGH NOT UNIVERSAL, SUPPORT

FOR SADDAM HUSSEIN (MAYOR FREIJ HAD BEEN BRAVE ENOUGH TO STAND OUT ON THIS AND TO CONDEMN PARTICULAR ACTS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST JEWS). THIS COULD ONLY BE EXPLAINED BY FACTORS DEEP IN ARAB CULTURE, ZENOPHOBIA AND FAILURE TO UNDERSTAND THE VALUE OF DEMOCRACY. THE KILLINGS ON THE TEMPLE MOUNT HAD PROVOKED RAGE. THE SECURITY FORCES WERE ON A HIGH STATE OF ALERT AGAINST ACTS OF REVENGE AGAINST JEWS. THEY WERE DOING EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO RESTORE CALM. MOST CURFEWS HAD ALREADY BEEN RAISED. PALESTINIANS WERE BEGINNING TO RETURN TO WORK. BUT THE SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION WAS AN ENCOURAGEMENT TO FURTHER VIOLENCE.

5. THE SECRETARY OF STATE ASKED WHETHER PERIODICAL OUTBURST OF VIOLENCE WERE NOT INEVITABLE IF ISRAEL DID NOT MAKE REALISTIC MOVES TO DEAL WITH THE FRUSTRATIONS RESULTING FROM SUPPRESSED NATIONHOOD. ARENS ARGUED THAT THE DEATHS ON THE TEMPLE MOUNT WERE CAUSED NOT BY SUPPRESSED NATIONHOOD BUT BY MOSLEM EXTREMISM. THE ISRAELI PEACE INITIATIVE WAS VERY FAR REACHING. THERE WAS NO OTHER REALISTIC ALTERNATIVE. THE PALESTINIANS AS EVER WERE MISSING AN OPPORTUNITY. BUT ISRAELI EFFORTS TO PERSUADE THEM WERE NOT HOPELESS EVEN THOUGH THERE WERE LESS GROUNDS FOR OPTIMISM THAN THREE WEEKS AGO.

6. THE SECRETARY OF STATE ASKED WHETHER THE BREAK-UP OF TRADITIONAL SOCIAL STRUCTURES IN THE OTS AND THE POSSIBLY DECLINING INFLUENCE OF THE PLO WERE NOT MAKING THE SITUATION MORE FRAGMENTED AND DIFFICULT. ARENS ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE PLO WAS LESS MONOLITHIC THAN BEFORE BUT IT WAS STILL ABLE TO TERRORISE OTHER GROUPS. THE INTIFADA HAD DEMONSTRATED THE DIVERGENCES BETWEEN THE LOCAL POPULATION, WHO SUFFERED GREAT HARDSHIP, AND THE PLO LEADERSHIP LIVING IN COMFORT IN TUNIS. PERHAPS THE INTRODUCTION OF DEMOCRATIC PROCEDURES WOULD HAVE AN EFFECT, ALTHOUGH DEVELOPMENTS IN JORDAN DID NOT ENCOURAGE CONFIDENCE IN THIS RESPECT. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THAT THERE WAS A PROBLEM IN RECONCILING TWO METHODS OF SELECTING REPRESENTATIVES - FROM THE BOTTOM UP, OR THE TOP DOWN.

7. ARENS SAID THAT GAS MASKS HAD BEEN ISSUED TO ISRAELI ARABS AND THE ARAB POPULATION OF EAST JERUSALEM. THEY WOULD IN FUTURE BE ISSUED IN THE WEST BANK AND GAZA. IT WAS INTERESTING TO SEE THAT PALESTINIANS WERE PREPARED TO COOPERATE WITH THE ISRAELI AUTHORITIES OVER THIS.

#### UN SECRETARY GENERAL'S MISSION

8. THE SECRETARY OF STATE REHEARSED THE ARGUMENTS FOR ISRAEL'S RECEIVING THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL'S MISSION. MR BAKER AND HE HAD PLANNED TO RATCHET UP THE PRESSURE ON SADDAM HUSSEIN BY A SUCCESSION OF RESOLUTIONS IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL. IT WAS IMPORTANT TO AVOID THIS BEING SIDETRACKED BY A SERIES OF POINTLESS RESOLUTIONS ON

ARAB/ISRAEL. THE PLO REPRESENTATIVE IN NEW YORK HAD LAST WEEK BEEN MANOEUVRING FOR A U.S. VETO. HE DID NOT GET IT. WE UNDERSTOOD THAT ISRAEL WAS OFFENDED BY THE LANGUAGE IN THE PREAMBULAR PARAGRAPHS (THE OTHER SIDE THOUGHT IT TOO LENIENT) BUT IT WOULD GREATLY FACILITATE THE MOVES AGAINST SADDAM HUSSEIN IF ISRAEL WOULD ACCEPT THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S MISSION. WHAT WAS NEEDED WAS SOME DIPLOMATIC FOOTWORK. ARENS SAID HE FULLY UNDERSTOOD OUR CONCERN TO MAINTAIN THE POSITION OF EGYPT AND SYRIA AND SAUDI ARABIA IN THE ALLIANCE. BUT ISRAEL COULD NOT AGREE THAT IT SHOULD ALWAYS PAY THE PRICE. ISRAEL WAS ALREADY UNDER CONSIDERABLE DISADVANTAGE BECAUSE OF THE GULF CRISIS. IT HAD COST HALF A BILLION SHEKELS TO KEEP THE IDF IN A STATE OF ALERT. THE TOURIST TRADE HAD BEEN BADLY DAMAGED. 20 BILLION DOLLARS WORTH OF SOPHISTICATED MILITARY EQUIPMENT HAD BEEN SOLD TO SAUDI ARABIA. THIS COULD AT SOME FUTURE DATE BE USED TO THREATEN ISRAEL. THE SAUDI AIRFORCE WOULD BE ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL IN THE WORLD. ON ALL SIDES THE THREAT TO ISRAEL HAD INCREASED. ASSAD WAS ON THE SIDE OF THE WEST NOW BUT HE WAS NOT THAT DIFFERENT FROM SADDAM HUSSEIN. THE SYRIANS TOO HAD MISSILES WITH CW WARHEADS. THEY HAD SEIZED THE OPPORTUNITY OF EXPANDING THEIR INFLUENCE IN LEBANON. THE DRAFTING OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION MIGHT BE JUSTIFIABLE BY EXPEDIENCE BUT IT WAS ISRAEL THAT WAS BEING EXPLOITED. HE COMPLAINED THAT ISRAEL HAD NOT BEEN CONSULTED BY ANYBODY ON THE TEXT. BAKER AND CHENEY WERE VISITING ARAB COUNTRIES BUT NOT ISRAEL. THE SECRETARY OF STATE ALONE HAD COME TO JERUSALEM. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THESE ARGUMENTS. ISRAEL HAD HANDLED THE PROBLEMS IMPOSED BY THE GULF CRISIS WITH GREAT CARE, IT SUFFERED FROM THE FACT THAT ALTHOUGH IT SHARED THE OBJECTIVES OF THE ALLIANCE IT WAS EXCLUDED FROM PARTICIPATING. WERE SADDAM HUSSEIN TO WITHDRAW FROM KUWAIT ISRAEL COULD BE LEFT IN A NEW DANGEROUS SITUATION. WE WOULD NEED TO DISCUSS THIS CAREFULLY WITH ISRAEL AT THAT STAGE.

## JORDAN

9. ARENS SAID THAT HUSSEIN WAS RIDING A TIGER. HE COULD DISAPPEAR ANY DAY. ISRAELI INTELLIGENCE ON THE SITUATION WAS GOOD BUT NOBODY COULD PREDICT WHEN THE KING MIGHT BE ASSASSINATED OR WHEN HE MIGHT DECIDE TO CALL IT A DAY. ISRAEL'S ANNOUNCEMENT THAT IT COULD NOT ACCEPT IRAQI TROOPS ENTERING JORDAN HAD GOT ACROSS TO BOTH IRAQIS AND JORDANIANS (IT HAD PERHAPS HELPED HUSSEIN'S BALANCING ACT). A CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IN JORDAN WOULD NOT BE IN ISRAEL'S INTERESTS. THE SECRETARY OF STATE DESCRIBED HIS RECENT CONTACTS WITH THE KING AND CROWN PRINCE HASSAN. THE EVIDENCE WAS THAT JORDAN WAS NOW GRAPPLING RESOLUTELY WITH THE PROBLEMS OF IMPOSING SANCTIONS. THE KING HAD, FOR THE MOMENT, HALTED THE QUEST FOR A 'DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION' WHICH HAD MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE INFURIATED EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA. IT WOULD

BE NECESSARY TO HELP HUSSEIN BEFORE HIS POSITION COLLAPSED.

IRAQI MILITARY CAPABILITY

10. THE SECRETARY OF STATE ASKED FOR ISRAEL'S ASSESSMENT OF IRAQ'S MILITARY CAPABILITIES. ARENS SAID THAT ISRAEL HAD BEFORE THE CRISIS ASSESSED THAT THE IDF COULD HANDLE AN ATTACK BY AN ALLIANCE CONSISTING OF IRAQ, JORDAN, SYRIA AND SOME SAUDI FORCES. IT WOULD NOT BE EASY. 3-5,000 DEATHS WOULD BE INSUFFERABLE FOR ISRAEL. BUT IT FOLLOWED THAT ALLIED FORCES WHICH HAD SUPERIOR AIR POWER TO THAT OF ISRAEL AND MORE TROOPS THAN ISRAEL'S STANDING ARMY SHOULD BE ABLE TO HANDLE A WAR AGAINST IRAQ ON ITS OWN. BUT HE DID NOT ENVISAGE A VICTORY IN THREE OR FOUR DAYS. THE ALLIANCE SHOULD BE ABLE TO ESTABLISH EARLY SUPERIORITY IN THE AIR AND ELIMINATE IRAQI SURFACE TO AIR MISSILE SYSTEMS. BUT THERE WOULD THEREAFTER STILL BE A HARD SLOG AHEAD ON THE GROUND. ISRAEL HAD TO ASSUME THAT ONCE HOSTILITIES HAD BROKEN OUT BETWEEN IRAQ AND THE ALLIANCE, IRAQ WOULD ATTACK ISRAEL WITH MISSILES.

11. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THERE WAS STILL A CHANCE THAT SADDAM HUSSEIN WOULD WITHDRAW ONCE HE UNDERSTOOD THAT THE ALTERNATIVE WAS MILITARY DEFEAT. ARENS SAID THAT IF THE OUTCOME ALLOWED SADDAM HUSSEIN TO PRESERVE HIS IMAGE AMONGST THE ARABS A NEW AND DANGEIOUS SITUATION WOULD BE CREATED. THE SECRETARY OF STATE AGREED THAT THIS WOULD BE A QUITE UNACCEPTABLE OUTCOME, IT MUST BE DEMONSTRATED THAT SADDAM HUSSEIN WAS THE LOSER, BUT HE WARNED THAT SOME WESTERN COUNTRIES WERE STILL TEMPTED BY THE POSSIBILITY OF FINDING A COMPROMISE.

12. ARENS SAID THAT WHATEVER THE OUTCOME, ISRAEL WOULD STILL BE FACED WITH DICTATORIAL REGIMES WITH LARGE ARMIES. DEMOCRACY MIGHT BE SEEPING INTO THE MIDDLE EAST, BUT VERY SLOWLY. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THAT FIRST STEPS TOWARDS DEMOCRACY, EG. IN JORDAN AND ALGERIA, COULD BE DANGEROUS IN THEMSELVES.

13. AS THE MEETING BROKE UP ARENS RAISED, IN LOW KEY THE BRITISH ARMS EMBARGO AGAINST ISRAEL. THE IDF DID NOT NEED BRITISH ARMS BUT ISRAEL WAS ENTITLED TO OBJECT TO THE PRINCIPLE. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THAT ARGUMENT. BUT THE EMBARGO HAD BEEN IMPOSED AS A RESULT OF THE ISRAELI INVASION OF LEBANON AND IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO RELAX IT AS LONG AS AN IDF PRESENCE REMAINED THERE.

ELLIOTT