



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Prime Minister

Agree that the Ambassadors
in Tunis may speak to
Arafat about this:

17 December 1982

A. J. C. 12.12

I think this operation
will be useless and could
be damaging. Either I send
a message to Pym or send
something why we have decided
to participate in the

Dear John,

MNF

You may wish to know that Mr Pym is instructing our
Ambassadors to make high-level approaches to the Israelis,
Syrians and PLO between now and 22 December urging them
to break the deadlock and withdraw their forces from
Lebanon. Our decision to the participate in the MNF gives
us a particular reason for taking this action now in
support of US efforts. It will also be helpful to refer
to these representations in explaining our decision to
participate in Parliament (which will be announced through
a written question on 20 December and explained further
during oral questions on 22 December).

between
force -
we
leave it
alone.

In the case of the PLO, the most effective approach
would be by HM Ambassador in Tunis to Arafat himself. I
would be grateful if you could let me know whether the
Prime Minister is content with the idea of such a meeting,
(which would not of course set any precedent) as soon as
possible on 20 December. Mr Pym considers that such a
meeting might also be useful in the context of our difficulties
over the Arab League mission to London (about which I shall
be writing separately soon). Although we must conduct
discussions over how to resolve the PLO problem through
King Hassan, he will then have to clear his lines with the
PLO and a direct contact with them at a high level might
be valuable.

It would
be especially
unhelpful
in the
case of
it is need to
go through
our Ambassadors
network.

Yours ever
for these I have

(J E Holmes)
Private Secretary

no objection
to an Ambassadorial
approach, because there
we do not deal
through Ministers.

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 1AA



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M.F.T.



Lebanon

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

21 December 1982

MNF

We discussed your letter of 17 December. As you know, the Prime Minister had some reservations about the idea of high level approaches to the Israelis, Syrians and the PLO urging them to withdraw their forces from the Lebanon. But I have explained to Mrs. Thatcher that the primary purpose of the approaches was to explain our decision to participate in the MNF and that action was already in hand.

As I told you on the telephone, the Prime Minister saw no objection to an Ambassadorial approach to the PLO since this did not infringe our policy that there should be no contact between British Ministers and that organisation.

A. J. COLES

John Holmes Esq
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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