

cc MARGEN  
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US Declassified A.P.

2018/5/2

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FM THE WHITE HOUSE  
TO CABINET OFFICE  
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PRIME MINISTER'S  
PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T183183

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T O P S E C R E T VIA CABINET OFFICE CHANNELS SENSITIVE WHO8748

NOVEMBER 14, 1983

DEAR MARGARET:

I HAVE CONTINUED TO WEIGH MOST CAREFULLY THE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE U.S. AND OUR MNF PARTNERS OF BOTH ACTION AND INACTION IN VIEW OF THE EVIDENCE NOW IN HAND WHICH CLEARLY IDENTIFIES THE LEBANESE TERRORISTS OF THE SO CALLED +HUSAYNI SUICIDE COMMANDOS+ OF THE SPLINTER ISLAMIC AMAL MOVEMENT. IN CONSIDERING THIS DIFFICULT DECISION, I HAVE, AS ALWAYS, GREATLY APPRECIATED YOUR COUNSEL.

ALTHOUGH I HAVE NOT YET MADE A FINAL DECISION, MY CURRENT INCLINATION IS TO TAKE DECISIVE BUT CAREFULLY LIMITED MILITARY ACTION IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE. WHILE CONSCIOUS OF THE NEED TO AVOID A CYCLE OF VIOLENCE, MY GREATEST CONCERN IS THAT ALLOWING THIS CRIME TO GO WITHOUT ANY RESPONSE WOULD ENCOURAGE FURTHER ATROCITIES AGAINST THE MNF. THE GROWING NUMBER OF INTELLIGENCE REPORTS ON PLANNING FOR OTHER TERRORIST ACTS AGAINST THE MNF IS DISTURBING. MY PURPOSE IS TO TRY TO DETER ANY SUCH ATTACKS= IN SHORT, ACTING NOW IS THE BEST MEANS OF PREVENTING FUTURE VIOLENCE. THE ACTION CONTEMPLATED WOULD BE AGAINST A DISCRETE TARGET IN LEBANON AND WOULD NOT INVOLVE DIRECT ACTION AGAINST SYRIA OR IRAN.

\* ~~~~~ \*  
\* THE EVIDENCE IS BEING REEVALUATED NOW= WE WOULD ONLY ACT IF THE TARGET IS RECONFIRMED WITH HIGH CONFIDENCE AND IF IT CAN BE ATTACKED WITHOUT UNDUE RISKS TO NON-COMBATANTS.

BEFORE MAKING A FINAL DECISION, I WOULD APPRECIATE ANY ADDITIONAL ADVICE YOU MIGHT WISH TO PROVIDE, I WOULD, OF COURSE, BE IN FURTHER TOUCH IN ADVANCE OF ANY ACTION.

BECAUSE OF THE NEED FOR ABSOLUTE SECRECY, KNOWLEDGE OF MY CURRENT THINKING IS BEING SEVERELY LIMITED WITHIN THE U.S. GOVERNMENT.

SINCERELY,

RON

0345  
£8748

\* ~~~~~ \* Passage deleted and retained  
under Section 3(4)

NNNN

Wayland

10 April 2014

FILE



COPY NO 4 OF 4

COPIES

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

14 November, 1983

*Dear Peter,*LEBANON

I enclose a copy of a message which the Prime Minister has just received from President Reagan.

The Prime Minister will chair a meeting at 1115 here this morning to consider her reply. You have kindly agreed to provide a draft.

I am copying this letter and enclosure to Richard Mottram (Ministry of Defence) and Janet Lewis-Jones (Lord President's Office).

*Yours ever**John Major*

P. Ricketts, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

TOP SECRET - PERSONAL