

CONFIDENTIAL

*McB*  
*25/2*

*C.P.P.*



- 1) Mr Powell
- 2) Prime Minister

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

19 February 1985

*Agree attached message?*

*Dear Charles,*

*Dub*  
*25/2*

Israeli World Assembly to Commemorate the Defeat of Nazi Germany

The Israelis plan a four day 'World Assembly' in May to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany. In view of the militarism and probable anti-German flavour of the event, Sir Geoffrey Howe thinks we should keep our own involvement to the minimum level consistent with the need to avoid giving offence.

The Israelis have asked if the Prime Minister would send a message to the Assembly, for inclusion in a commemorative volume with other messages from Heads of Government or Heads of State. Sir Geoffrey Howe sees no harm and some good in a message reflecting our own approach. Moreover a refusal, if publicised by the Israelis, might arouse resentment in the Jewish community in Britain. We should, for presentational reasons, try to keep in step with our close Allies. Discussions with the French and Americans indicate that their thinking is not as far advanced as ours, but that they appear to agree with our general approach. We expect them to send messages in similar terms.

I enclose a draft message. If the Prime Minister is content we should clear our lines again with the French and Americans, and ask our Ambassador in Tel Aviv to convey the text to the Assembly on the Prime Minister's behalf.

*Y*

*P F Ricketts*

(P F Ricketts)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street

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DRAFT MESSAGE

*In commemorating*  
~~The British Government and people are reflecting on the fortieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War and its meaning for our own times.~~ *the British people* We recall with sorrow and pride the sacrifices and sufferings of all, *those* combatant and non-combatant alike, who gave their lives in that struggle, ~~so that justice and freedom could prevail.~~ We recall with special respect the unique and grievous sufferings of the Jewish people, ~~at that time.~~ *in that spirit* Such suffering must never be repeated. ~~For this reason we~~ *We* look forward with determination and hope to the future, ~~and~~ *and together* give thanks for our reconciliation with former adversaries; ~~together~~ *together* we renew our pledge to work for peace, justice and freedom.

# Even as we remember  
the past, we



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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

26 February 1985

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Israeli World Assembly to Commemorate the Defeat  
of Nazi Germany

Thank you for your letter of 19 February.

The Prime Minister has approved the enclosed revision of the draft message to the Israeli World Assembly. It may now be delivered subject to clearance of our approach with the French and Americans as proposed in the last paragraph of your letter.

David Barclay

Peter Ricketts Esq  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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THE PRIME MINISTER

ISRAELI WORLD ASSEMBLY

In commemorating the fortieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War, the British people recall with sorrow and pride the sacrifices and sufferings of all those, military and civilian alike, who gave their lives in that struggle. We recall with special respect the unique and grievous sufferings of the Jewish people.

Even as we remember the past, we look forward with hope to a future in which differences will be resolved by negotiation, and the dignity of man will be revered. Together we renew our pledge to work for peace, with justice and freedom.

Margaret Thatcher

February, 1985.