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PRIME MINISTER

ARAB/ISRAEL

Mr. Peres particularly wanted for you to be informed of his contacts late on 22 January with Ambassador Murphy. He therefore sent his political adviser, Dr. Nimrod Novik, to 10 Downing Street this afternoon to give me an account.

Palestinian Representation

King Hussein had proposed that an attempt be made to establish criteria for choosing Palestinian representatives for a joint delegation to an international conference. The Israelis had said that their preference would be to focus on names, but this had not been acceptable to the King who felt that he could not be seen to be acting under Israeli pressure. The United States had therefore themselves produced a list of criteria acceptable for Palestinian representatives. Although this was not yet fully refined it was basically on the lines of Palestinian participants having to be:

- people of goodwill and proven commitment to peace;
- no terrorist background;
- committed to good relations with Israel;
- ready to accept Resolutions 242 and 338;
- must renounce terrorism;
- must not be members of the PLO Executive Committee;
- must not be officials of other PLO bodies.

This last is still a contested point. The Israelis would argue that it rules out members of the Palestine National Council: the Jordanians say they should be included.

Dr. Novik said that these criteria were basically acceptable to Israel - which is hardly a surprise - and were to be put to King Hussein tomorrow.

Dr. Novik said that there was no meeting of minds on what would happen if the PLO accepted the four conditions. But the Americans understood that there would be no automatic Israeli response; there would have to be further discussions.

International Conference

The main discussion here concerned the definition of principles for dealing with an impasse. This is apparently of great importance to King Hussein stemming from his distrust of the Americans. His fear is that, because the Americans have shifted their views on the territorial implementation of Resolution 242, he may find himself in a complete impasse in a working group on territorial questions while rapid progress is being made in the groups discussing other issues. In such circumstances he would have no automatic recourse to the podium of an international conference which would enable him to enlist the support of other major powers. He was therefore insisting on the right to appeal to the conference when an impasse was reached. The Israeli bottom line, on the other hand, was that the conference could not be allowed to intervene in the event of an impasse.

As a consequence the United States was working on a sequence. This envisaged escalating meetings up to Prime Minister level, followed by consultations between the three

parties (Israel, Jordan and the United States), followed by a right to report to the other participants in the conference. This right would not imply that there would necessarily be a resumed session of the conference; but nor would it be ruled out. Dr. Novik said that, once again, Israel was broadly satisfied with this proposal though they would want to be sure that the working groups were properly insulated from the conference as a whole.

Other points made by Dr. Novik were:

- i) The King was showing some desire to resume discussions of substance. The Israelis were far from certain that this was a good thing.
- ii) Ambassador Cluverius would continue his shuttle.
- iii) There had been indications that the Chinese understood that establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel was the entry price to the international conference and would be ready to take the necessary action on the eve of such a conference.

C.D.P.

(Charles Powell)

24 January 1986

SECRET AND PERSONAL

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

24 January 1986

Dear Len,

ARAB/ISRAEL

I enclose a note which I have done of a conversation today with Dr. Novik (political adviser to Mr. Peres). He was particularly insistent that news of it should be held very tightly indeed. Could you please ensure that it is seen by the minimum number of people and that they should not reveal to the Israelis that they have had an account.

Yours sincerely

(Charles Powell)

L.V. Appleyard, Esq., C.M.G.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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