

PRIME MINISTER

(and. then an Anglo-Israeli

Chamber of Commerce in A.M. who

YOUR VISIT TO ISRAEL

would give the reception (and who could determine the nos.?) and I could attend?  
not

The draft programme for your visit to Israel provides you to give a major reception, not unlike that which Mr. Peres gave at Claridges when he came here. But you should be aware that it will face us with a very considerable cost.

The problem is that we do not have an Embassy in Jerusalem and the reception will, therefore, have to be given in a hotel. The cost alone for a reception for 500 people - which is what the Ambassador considers appropriate - is some US\$14,000 (£10,000). The Ambassador is unable to find a cheaper alternative: for instance giving the reception in a park would raise security problems. Nor does he think that reducing numbers would help, since it would mean excluding significant numbers of those who might justifiably expect to be invited and thus cause disappointment and even ill feeling. Giving a dinner, which would again have to be in a hotel, would not actually save a great deal. You could hardly have less than 70 guests which would be very expensive and even then would have to disappoint a large number of people.

There are three ways of looking at this:

i) This is the first visit by a British Prime Minister to Israel and, as such, a major event. We have got to make a mark and a reception is the best way to do this. It is expensive but we should swallow hard and regard the money as well spent. We shall look a bit feeble if we cannot at least match what Mr. Peres did in London.

ii) Spending £10,000 on a party is simply not right. Rather than go for half measures we should just drop the idea from the programme altogether.

iii) We should live within our means and put a ceiling on what we are prepared to spend of say £5,000 and give the best party we can for that amount of money.

Which do you prefer please?

ed?

If we can't afford to do  
the things properly there is  
no point in going.

Either we do (i) or we  
postpone the visit.

ms

Charles Powell  
7 April 1986

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

Prime Minister

Reception in Israel.

You were perturbed at the cost of  
the proposed reception, and asked  
whether some other body could take  
it on.

I have consulted the Ambassador.

He says that there is no suitable  
body; & that there would be  
considerable loss of face in asking  
a group based in the UK to pay.

Since this is not a starter, could

I ask you please to consider the options  
in my minute again, and pronounce? CDP 17/4

86

18 April 1986

**PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO ISRAEL: RECEPTION**

Thank you for your further advice about the reception to be given during the Prime Minister's visit to Israel. In the light of the Ambassador's views, the Prime Minister agrees that he should go ahead on the basis originally proposed of arranging a reception in a hotel for 500 people.

**(C. D. POWELL)**

Robert Culshaw, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

8 April 1986

*Dear Robert,***PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO ISRAEL**

Thank you for your letter of 7 April about the problems which arise over the venue and cost of the reception to be hosted by the Prime Minister on the evening of 26 May.

There seems to be one option which has not yet been considered: that is that the reception should be given not by the Prime Minister or by HMG directly but by some other body, for instance the Anglo-Israel Chamber of Commerce. This if it were feasible would get us out of an embarrassing choice. I should be grateful if you could explore with HM Ambassador Tel Aviv whether this is a realistic option so that I can put the matter to the Prime Minister for decision.

*Yours sincerely*  
*(C.D. Powell)*

(C.D. Powell)

R.N. Culshaw, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

cc PC  
✓  
D/C

Prime Minister

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

7 April 1986

Dear Charles,

Prime Minister's Visit to Israel

You will have seen from Tel Aviv telegram number 94, a copy of which I attach for ease of reference, that Mr Squire has been examining possible venues and costs for the reception to be hosted by the Prime Minister on the evening of 26 May.

Mr Squire has recommended that he should be authorised to proceed with arrangements for a reception at the King David Hotel (at \$14,000 for 500 guests) or the Hilton (at \$12,500 for 500 guests). His advice is that the King David Hotel where the Prime Minister and her party will be staying would provide the more convenient venue. The costs quoted by the hotels do not include duty free alcoholic drinks which would be supplied by Mr Squire.

Mr Squire has examined the possibility of cheaper alternatives but believes that none would be adequate: an open-air reception in a local park would pose security problems as well as administrative difficulties; reducing the number of guests at an indoor reception would reduce costs but would involve disappointing a number of influential groups and would compare badly with Mr Peres' reception at Claridges; a dinner instead of a reception would also cause disappointment in view of the restriction in numbers and, if 50-60 guests were invited, would in any case be an expensive occasion; the Consul-General's Residence in Jerusalem would clearly be inappropriate; and Tel Aviv offers no practical alternatives.

While appreciating the large cost involved in arranging a reception at the King David Hotel, we believe that this provides the most suitable option on grounds of security, space and location. It is not seriously out of line with what a comparable reception would cost in London (Claridges now cost only 22% less). I understand that the cost of receptions hosted

/by



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by the Prime Minister is borne by the Management and Personnel Office and I should be grateful for your confirmation that they would be willing to sanction expenditure on a reception for 500 guests at the King David Hotel.

*Yours ever,*

*R N Culshaw*

(R N Culshaw)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
PS/10 Downing Street

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07 IV. 1986



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 FM TEL AVIV  
 TO PRIORITY FCO  
 TELNO 94  
 OF 271410Z MARCH 86  
 INFO ROUTINE JERUSALEM

MY TELNOS 83 AND 84: PM'S VISIT

1. WE HAVE BEEN LOOKING FURTHER AT THE POSSIBILITY FOR A RECEPTION HOSTED BY THE PM ON THE EVENING OF 26 MAY. THE KING DAVID AND THE HILTON, WHICH ARE THE ONLY TWO SUITABLE HOTELS IN JERUSALEM, HAVE GIVEN US PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES FOR THE SIMPLEST APPROPRIATE FARE. THESE, PREDICTABLY, ARE VERY HIGH. THE KING DAVID QUOTE 14,000 US DOLLARS FOR A RECEPTION FOR 500 (IN ADDITION TO WHICH WE WOULD BE SUPPLYING DUTY FREE ALCOHOL). THE HILTON FIGURE IS A LITTLE LOWER BUT STILL AROUND US DOLLARS 25 PER HEAD. WE WOULD HOPE THAT WE COULD BEAT BOTH DOWN BUT PROBABLY NOT BY MUCH. THERE ARE OBVIOUS RISKS OF ADVERSE PUBLICITY IN THE UK IF WE ARE LEFT DOWN TO FOOT A VERY HIGH BILL.
2. WE HAVE LOOKED AT CHEAPER ALTERNATIVES. IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO HOLD AN OPEN-AIR RECEPTION IN A LOCAL PARK EG THE MONTEFIORE WINDMILL. THIS WOULD PROVIDE AN ATTRACTIVE SITE AND WOULD NO DOUBT BE SUBSTANTIALLY CHEAPER. BUT THERE MIGHT WELL BE SECURITY OBJECTIONS (WE COULD DISCUSS THEM WITH THE ISRAELIS) AND THE ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR MY STAFF TO COPE WITH IN ADDITION TO ALL OTHER ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE VISIT.
3. ANOTHER OPTION WOULD BE TO GO AHEAD WITH THE RECEPTION BUT REDUCE NUMBERS. I AM RELUCTANT TO DO THIS. IT WOULD INVOLVE DISAPPOINTING A NUMBER OF INFLUENTIAL GROUPS WHO WILL EXPECT TO BE PRESENTED TO THE PRIME MINISTER AND WOULD OTHERWISE CAUSE NO END OF PROBLEMS BOTH HERE AND IN LONDON. IT IS RELEVANT THAT PERES' RECEPTION AT CLARIFAGES WAS A VAST AFFAIR. I DOUBT WHETHER WE CAN GO MUCH LOWER THAN 500.
4. WE COULD ABANDON THE IDEA OF A RECEPTION AND OFFER A DINNER INSTEAD (RE-ARRANGING THE MEETING WITH THE PALESTINIANS FOR EARLIER IN THE EVENING). THIS WOULD OBVIOUSLY DISAPPOINT EVEN GREATER NUMBERS AND IT WOULD IN ANY CASE ALSO BE EXPENSIVE AS WE WOULD FIND IT DIFFICULT TO PRUNE THE GUEST LIST BELOW 50-60.

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5. THE WHOLE PROBLEM SPRINGS FROM THE FACT THAT WE HAVE NO RESIDENCE IN JERUSALEM OTHER THAN THAT OF THE CONSUL-GENERAL WHICH WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE. AND THERE IS NO PRACTICAL WAY IN WHICH WE COULD OFFER HOSPITALITY IN TEL AVIV. I MUST RELUCTANTLY RECOMMEND THAT YOU GIVE ME AUTHORITY TO GO AHEAD WITH ARRANGEMENTS FOR A RECEPTION IN EITHER THE KING DAVID OR THE HILTON. THE FORMER WOULD CLEARLY BE MUCH THE EASIER FOR THE PRIME MINISTER AND PARTY. WE WILL DO EVERYTHING WE CAN TO BEAT THEM DOWN TO A MORE REASONABLE PRICE.

SQUIRE

LIMITED  
NENAD  
MED  
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PS  
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PS/PUS  
MR FERGUSSON  
SIR D MIERS

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