

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September 30, 1987

Dear Margaret:

We have been very mindful of the heightened level of Soviet activity in the Middle East. The Soviets have been using several different approaches, cleverly varying them for different countries and regions. The Soviet effort to sell MIG-29s to Jordan on very favorable terms is worrisome, particularly because the King now seems far more willing to entertain the offer than previously. We hope your efforts to create an alternative by putting together an attractive package on the Tornado bear fruit; we have already urged the Saudis to be supportive.

Another Soviet approach has been to present a reasonable and active image on the issue of peace. As your letter of September 17 pointed out, and we discussed in Washington last July, this calls for continued activity on our part.

But the activity must be reasoned and enhance the prospects for real movement, not make such movement more difficult. Unreliable or overly vague proposals which are doomed to failure will not help in the long term. The Soviets are likely to discover this. We are not going to give up on the idea of a conference, but we must face certain realities. Yitzhak Shamir, as the Prime Minister and the head of the Likud, has a great deal of political power. This is particularly true on an issue which arouses such strong popular and political feeling as peace and the future of the Occupied Territories. Recent experience has clearly shown that he cannot be ignored. The Hill mission to Israel conveyed clearly and firmly to Shamir our conviction that new momentum toward

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NLRR 107-057 #32089

BY CU NARA DATE 7/31/07

peace is a necessity. We are continuing our discussions now with all sides of that government and are proceeding quietly with King Hussein to determine the appropriate next step. Progress, though slow and not yet visible, is being made.

As a result, we believe it is time to raise the level of our involvement and press to see if we can overcome the obstacles to negotiations. Accordingly, George Shultz will be going to the region in the middle of October. We remain convinced that going to a conference or initiating negotiations makes little sense if deadlock is the immediate result. That's why we have been trying quietly to develop understandings with the parties on what the negotiations will be about and how they will evolve. The gaps between the parties are still significant, but we are hopeful that Secretary Shultz's mission will close the gaps and make meaningful negotiations possible.

As we move toward negotiations, we will need a better picture of what the Soviets actually intend on a conference. While seeing welcome signs of tactical flexibility on some of its procedures, we also see the Soviets pressing for an ongoing, authoritative role for the conference; we see them saying different things to the Jordanians, Syrians, PLO, and Israelis about how the conference will work and who will represent the Palestinians; and we see them avoiding responses to our questions posed in July on what they would be prepared to accept in a conference. We do not exclude the possibility of Soviet flexibility, but we are still waiting for signs that would demonstrate this.

The King told you that we would be surprised by what Shevardnadze had to say on the conference and Middle East peace; unfortunately, Shevardnadze showed little interest in discussing the subject. George Shultz should get a better idea of the Soviet position during his upcoming trip to Moscow, immediately following the visit to the Middle East.

As our efforts proceed, Secretary Shultz will keep you informed and, as always, we value your assessment.

Sincerely,

Ron

The Right Honorable
Margaret Thatcher, M.P.
Prime Minister
London

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32079	MEMO	CARLUCCI TO THE PRESIDENT R 2/11/2008 M07-057	1	5/18/1987	B1
32080	CABLE	131630Z MAY 87	2	5/13/1987	B1
32083	MEMO	COHEN TO CARLUCCI R 2/11/2008 M07-057	1	5/15/1987	B1
32085	MEMO	DUPLICATE OF 32079 R 2/11/2008 M07-057	1	ND	B1
32087	MESSAGE	THATCHER TO RR	2	ND	B1
32088	CABLE	071455Z JULY 87 (TEXT SAME AS 32087)	2	7/7/1987	B1

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SYSTEM II

THE WHITE HOUSE


WASHINGTON

Received 9099 S

ACTION

September 25, 1987 SEP 25 PM 3 15

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: FRANK C. CARLUCCI 
SUBJECT: Responding to Prime Minister Thatcher's Letter on the Peace Process

Issue

Whether to sign the letter responding to Prime Minister Thatcher at Tab A.

Facts

Prime Minister Thatcher has written urging you to come out more strongly in favor of an international peace conference on the Middle East. She feels Prime Minister Shamir will not present feasible alternatives and must not be given a veto on the process.

Discussion

Your response to Prime Minister Thatcher shares her concern with making progress and emphasizes our commitment to activism. While noting that we will not give up on the conference idea, it also points out that we cannot ignore the position of Israel's Prime Minister, particularly on an issue that is politically divisive in Israel; that the Soviet approach to the conference is presently not constructive and must be changed; and that, in any case, the ground must be better prepared among the parties before we could consider going to a conference. We are working quietly with the parties and feel we are making gradual--if not yet visible--progress.

Recommendation

OK No
 _____

That you sign the letter to Prime Minister Thatcher at Tab A.

Attachment

Tab A Response to Prime Minister Thatcher cc: Vice President
Tab B Letter from Prime Minister Thatcher Chief of Staff (2)

~~SECRET~~
Declassify on: OADR

DECLASSIFIED
NLS 107-057 # 32090
BY HOT NARA, DATE 2/11/08

~~SECRET~~

SYSTEM II
90998

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

September 21, 1987

SIGNED

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR FRANK C. CARLUCCI

FROM: ROBERT B. OAKLEY *RO*

SUBJECT: Prime Minister Thatcher's Letter on the
Peace Process

Prime Minister Thatcher has written to President Reagan urging greater activity on our part in support of Peres and the international conference. She says Shamir must not be allowed to veto progress, particularly because he will not, in her words, come up with proposals acceptable to others. The consequence of giving him a veto will, she believes, erode Peres' position and create an opportunity for the further spread of Soviet influence in the area. Her message follows a meeting with King Hussein and is essentially the same as that which she delivered personally in talking to the President in July.

Attached is a draft reply to Prime Minister Thatcher. It acknowledges Soviet activities and our need to be responsive in supporting an alternative to the MIG-29s and in fostering the peace process. But it also observes that our actions will be shaped by several realities:

- Shamir, as the Prime Minister of Israel, cannot simply be ignored; there is no consensus in Israel over the conference idea, and Shamir has demonstrated his domestic political power.
- The Soviets, at this point, show little interest in doing anything but posture on the issue of the conference. They are saying different things to Jordan, Syria, the PLO, Israel, and us about what they will go along with. And they have yet to respond to the specific questions we posed--and they promised to answer--back in July. (Shevardnadze stayed away from this area, though we made clear we were prepared to talk about it.)

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Declassify on: OADR

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NLS MO7-057#32091

BY LOT, NARA, DATE 2/11/08

-- The ground needs to be better prepared before we would consider going to a conference. We must have some understanding on what the negotiations will be about and how the parties expect them to proceed, lest we convene a conference that immediately deadlocks.

The State Department has approved the draft reply.

Fritz Ermarth ^{WHE} concurs.

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign the memo to the President at Tab I.

 A Approve _____ Disapprove

Attachments:

Tab I Memo to the President

Tab A Response to Prime Minister Thatcher

Tab B Letter to Prime Minister Thatcher