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Subject

Lebanon Internal Situation
P 4



PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T 166A / 83

THE ROYAL PALACE
Amman Jordan

26 October 1983

Dear Prime Minister,

On 19 October 1983 I sent to our mutual friend, President Ronald Reagan, a highly sensitive personal letter. I wrote yesterday to the President on the subject of Lebanon and this entire area's present critical situation and its future, if not our world's. I discussed the content with both Her Majesty's Ambassador, Mr. Alan Urwick, and the French Ambassador to the Hashemite Court.

In the spirit of friendship and confidence which happily exists between us, I am sending you personal copies of these two letters.

With my highest esteem and warmest wishes.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

The Rt. Honourable Mrs. Margaret Thatcher
The Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
10 Downing Street
London S W 1
England

Amman, 25 October, 1983

Dear Mr. President,

You were kind enough to suggest, Sir, that you valued my counsel. I find it my duty as a long time friend of the United States and your good self, to write to you at this most ominous time in the history of the Middle East and the world. I do so as an Arab who has lived most of his life in the centre of events in this area. I do so as a free man, a soldier and a father of a soldier. I write to you in the aftermath of the most recent outrage perpetrated in Beirut which claimed the lives of many young American and French soldiers - members of the Multi-National Peace Keeping Force.

My message is, that if the arrival of that Force on Lebanese soil was a bluff, then the bluff has been called. It leaves the United States and its European partners and, indeed, the free world, the choice of either withdrawing urgently from Lebanon, and, by implication, leaving the Middle East to whatever is its destiny or taking the alternative course - if you have the resolve and the means - of calling for an urgent, total and unconditional withdrawal of all foreign forces from all sovereign Lebanese soil.

The said withdrawals must be of Israel and Syria in alphabetical order and within a reasonable limited time frame. This call must be accompanied by a demand that all factions in the Lebanon meet urgently to resolve all the Lebanese causes of past, present and possible future conflicts. Representatives of any faction who abstain from attending a final conference of Lebanese national reconciliation would bear the historic responsibilities towards their factions and communities in regard to their rights, for all times to come.

....



The conference, must thus aim at creating a just, free Lebanon, where the rights and dignity of all Lebanese are safeguarded together with their national sovereignty over all Lebanese soil. National Lebanese reconciliation must be accomplished and no further procrastination is either possible or acceptable. If the Lebanese, free of all external influences, are unwilling or unable to accomplish national reconciliation, then the Multi-National Force will withdraw once this has become apparent. Alternatively, it would withdraw once national reconciliation is attained.

Finally, the nations represented in the Multi-National Peace Keeping Force should act without reservation against any external power which refuses to withdraw its forces from all sovereign Lebanese soil within the set time frame. They should then expect the world community's total collaboration and support towards achieving these ends.

I see no other alternatives for you, Sir, your Government and people or your European partners in serving the cause of freedom and the world. The erosion of your nation's credibility and stature and the interests of so many should not be permitted to continue any further. Even assuming a remedy is possible beyond this point each passing day makes the dangers and the price more costly.

I am, Sir,

Your sincere friend,

The Honourable President Reagan
The White House
Washington D.C.
U.S.A.



The Royal Palace
Amman Jordan

19 October 1983

Dear Mr. President,

It has been a while since I wrote you, Sir, on subjects of mutual concern.

I am following with great anxiety all the developments on the Lebanese scene which relate to our common goal of establishing the sovereignty of the Lebanese Government over all Lebanese territories. We must emphasise the independence of that bereaved country through the attainment of the total withdrawal of all foreign forces and minimise the negative inputs of external influences on the domestic scene in that country. The efforts at achieving Lebanese national reconciliation to freeze, if not totally resolve, differences amongst the different communities there, are attempts with which we have been involved to the best of our ability. The success of these efforts may well provide the last chance of averting the total disintegration of the Lebanon, with the untold complications and inherent dangers to the area as a whole, if we were ever to witness such a tragic end.

Mr. President, much has happened since I wrote you on 10 April appraising you, with deep regret, of my inability to proceed on the course we discussed during our meeting of December last. We availed ourselves of the opportunity which your peace plan of 1 September 1982 afforded all concerned in the Arab Israeli problem, the root cause of Middle East instability and the major threat to peace, both in the area and possibly the world. I explained then, the reasons for the failure of our best efforts to secure Palestinian participation and Arab support, reasons that resulted primarily from the Israeli rejection of your plan. The Israelis, as is well known, responded to your proposal by intensifying

...settlement



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settlement activities and increasing repression in the occupied West Bank and Gaza. Israel procrastinated on the subject of its unconditional withdrawal from Lebanon, together with other forces there, prior to the projected date of the beginning of 1983. Furthermore, the massacres at Sabra and Shatila all but destroyed American credibility in the area. The United States was unable to envisage a Soviet role in the search for peace. Together with the United States' refusal to accept the P.L.O. as a principle negotiating partner in the proposed peace process, the United States insisted that the P.L.O. accept Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and recognise Israel's right to exist as prior conditions to any official United States P.L.O. dialogue.

All these factors, and others of which you are aware, obliged me to state to you my inability to move further, despite my most vigorous attempts, to successfully eliminate the differences at that time between the Arab Fez Summit proposals for peace, and the American Peace Plan outlined by you, Mr. President, on 1 September 1982.

We have noted since then, with deep concern, the beginnings of the implementation of the Syrian Government's plan to bring the P.L.O. totally under its control. The Government of Jordan made it clear that it regarded Syrian moves in that connection as serious, in that they undermined the legitimacy of the P.L.O.'s representation of the Palestinian people, as adopted by the Arab Summit at Rabat, Morocco in 1974.

Events in Lebanon have been the focal point of the international Community's interest in recent months, with the execution of the Syrian Governments' plans to recreate the P.L.O. as a totally subjugated instrument of its will, if not its contractual allies or others, passing without much notice.

... Mr. President



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Mr. President, I do not know if it is the United States' policy objective to give the Government of Syria the ability to add the Palestinian card to that of the Lebanon, which it appears to have secured to a major degree. However, I feel very strongly that this subject requires that we both seek the clearest understanding of our respective personal, as well as governmental and national positions.

The P.L.O. has been recognised by us as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people since 1974. We in Jordan have upheld this policy to the point of freezing constitutional parliamentary life since the Rabat decision on Palestinian representation.

We believe that the final steps are imminent in transforming the P.L.O. into a Syrian surrogate. We therefore feel strongly that we will not be able to deal with the P.L.O. if it is to fall under Syrian control. A serious crisis is predictable in our relations with Syria and their re-created P.L.O.

In the light of many developments, but most particularly after an intolerably long period of Jordan's existence without democratic parliamentary life, we are now most seriously considering the recall of the Jordanian Parliament into session. We feel unable to continue to bear responsibility at this crucial time in its absence. The Jordanian Parliament, as you well know, represents the East and occupied West Bank. Owing to the continued Israeli occupation of those territories since 1967, the old Parliamentary Assembly can, however, within the constitution, appoint representatives from the West Bank to fill vacancies, caused by the lapse of time, from West Bank constituencies. Elections could be held in the East Bank of Jordan to fill vacant positions and parliamentary democratic life would ensue.

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In the following period I hope that the concept of future relations between both Palestine and Jordan could be formulated in the most acceptable and exemplary framework to represent a commitment by all, which would be ratified through the exercise of a free plebiscite, once occupation is at an end. In other words, through the exercise of the legitimate and sacred right of self determination, Palestine may incorporate the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip. None of this however, and according to Jordanian constitution, would infringe upon the rights of Palestinians in a final settlement of the Palestinian, Arab Israeli conflict, nor would Jordan infringe on the rights of Palestinians to be involved in any peace process leading to that end.

However, in this new context of direct Jordanian involvement with the fate of the Occupied Territories, it becomes vital that we receive your commitment in unequivocal terms. It is vital to us to know in no uncertain terms that you, Sir, the Administration and the American Nation are committed to the implementation of Security Council Resolution 242 as we both formulated it in 1967 and that the United States acts immediately to buttress Jordan's capabilities to meet all challenges, not after the fact, but immediately.

Obviously all this presupposes that your Government recognises that the occupied West Bank is occupied Jordanian territory and that what applied to occupied Egyptian territories, applies to these territories in their entirety and without exception.

I need not remind you, Sir, of our commitment to the cause of establishing a just and durable Middle East peace. We are committed to the Palestinian cause and the rights of all parties to the conflict to live in peace and security, once a just, honourable peace is achieved.

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I have chosen to write to you Sir, this personal letter on these highly sensitive matters at this critical juncture, and in absolute confidence.

With my highest esteem and sincerest wishes.

Your sincere friend,
[Signature]

The Honourable Ronald Reagan
President of the United States of America
The White House
Washington D.C.
United States of America